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AREAS OF PROFESSION IN LIFE LONG LEARNING STRATEGIES OF TEACHERS

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Abstract: There seems to be a disparity in the lifelong learning strategies of teachers in Austria. After a quick glance at teachers' motivation for selecting a specific seminar, the result is that teachers are willing to attend seminars, but do not really find appropriate ones. In many cases, teachers are free to make their own choices when it comes to further training so they choose the seminar which best fits their personal interests. The subject of this ongoing research is to develop a model, which visualises teachers' personal areas of profession. The main aim is to improve teachers' professional development against the background of strategies of the state educational authorities. This should be achieved by an appropriate offer of seminar by the University Colleges of Teacher Educations, which are responsible for the teachers' further educational opportunities.

Keywords: lifelong learning, professional development, teacher, seminars.

1. Introduction and starting point

Teacher training in Austria is organised at the various University Colleges of Teacher Education (Pädagogische Hochschulen). Seminars and courses are planned and organised in cooperation with the state education authorities according to specific requirements.

1.1. Application statistics for the winter semester 2011/12

The following statistical evaluations are based on the applications to seminars in the winter semester 2011/12 at the "Pädagogische Hochschule Burgenland". Only teachers with an active public employment contract in the Burgenland (a federal state of Austria) have been considered. These currently account for 5,230 teachers. The different types of schools involved are:

- *other:* Members of the state education authority, teachers at the PH Burgenland, teachers at vocational schools and special needs schools, kindergarten and nursery-schools teachers

- *VS*: Volksschule (= Primary school, age 6 to 10)
- *HS/NMS*: Hauptschulen und Neuen Mittelschulen (= Secondary school, age 10 to 14)
- *AHS* :Allgemeinbildenden höheren Schulen(= Secondary school, grammar school, age 10 to 18)
- *BMHS*: Berufsbildenden mittleren und höheren Schulen (= Vocational secondary school, age 14 to 19)

The first two evaluations refer to the group of teachers who had attended at least one course (3,814), the last evaluation shows how many courses teachers attended.

1.2. Frequency by types of schools

In figure 1 the frequency of application to different seminars is illustrated. The sum of applications is because of multiple applications higher than the number of teachers due to multiple applications.

Frequency by types of school

	Frequency	Percent
Other	1605	18,3
VS	1961	22,3
HS/NMS	2541	28,9
AHS	988	11,2
BMHS	1697	19,3
Total	8792	100

Figure 1: Frequency by types of schools

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1.3. Frequency by age

In figure 2 you can see the ratio between the number of applications and the age structure of teachers in Burgenland. Depending on the type of school, the average age of teachers is between 45.0 and 49.7 years. Depending on the type of institution (nursery school or after-school care), the average age of kindergarten teachers is between 35.0 and 39.3 years.

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Frequency by age

	Frequency	Percent
up to 30	598	6,8
31 to 40	1800	20,5
41 to 50	3133	35,6
over 50	3261	37,1
Total	8792	100

Figure 2: Frequency by age

1.4. Frequency by number of application

This evaluation is based on the whole number of teachers in Burgenland. In figure 3 you can see how many teachers attended how many seminars split in types of schools.

Frequency by number of applications

	Type of school					Total
	Other	VS	HS/NMS	AHS	BMHS	
0	395	248	218	203	352	1416
	29,30%	23,10%	20,00%	31,90%	32,50%	27,10%
1-2	576	329	328	246	366	1845
	42,80%	30,60%	30,10%	38,60%	33,80%	35,30%
3-5	304	335	353	130	267	1389
	22,60%	31,20%	32,40%	20,40%	24,70%	26,60%
6-10	49	142	146	46	88	471
	3,60%	13,20%	13,40%	7,20%	8,10%	9,00%
11-20	18	19	43	10	9	99
	1,30%	1,80%	3,90%	1,60%	0,80%	1,90%
over 20	5	1	1	2	1	10
	0,40%	0,10%	0,10%	0,30%	0,10%	0,20%
Total	1347	1074	1089	637	1083	5230
	100,00%	100,00%	100,00%	100,00%	100,00%	100,00%

Figure 3: Frequency by number of application

1.5. Conclusion and Abstract

The above figures show, that there is a connection between the motivation to attend a seminar and the type of school. One the one hand, teachers of "Hauptschulen" and "NeueMittelschulen" (q.v. section 1.1) attend

in most cases three to five seminars on average. On the other hand, teachers of "AllgemeinbildendenhöherenSchulen" and "Berufsbildendenmittleren und höherenSchulen" attend one to two seminars. The average number of applications for each type of school is shown in figure 4 .

Average number of applications per type of school

	Applications	Teachers	Average
Other	1605	1347	1,19
VS	1961	1074	1,83
HS/NMS	2541	1089	2,33
AHS	988	637	1,55
BMHS	1697	1083	1,57
Total	8792	5230	1,68

Figure 4: Average number of applications per type of school

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2. Criteria for the selection of specific seminars

2.1. TALIS-Evaluation of 2008

In the article called "Need for continuous teacher education: Disparity as a function of type of school, age and gender of teachers"¹ by Kast (2010) the results of the TALIS-Survey from 2008 (Schmich & Schreiner, 2009) are discussed with respect to type of school, age and gender. One distinctive result was that 45 percent of the teachers would like to attend more seminars, if the offer of seminars was more appropriate. Another interesting result was that only 15 percent of teachers, who attended a seminar, are convinced that the seminar had a positive influence on their personal development. The need for further education was split in eleven subject areas. The main focus of the Study was on teachers from "AHS" and from "HS/NMS"

(q.v. section 1.1 . The need for th various seminar topics is described in figure 5.

¹ German Title: "Fortbildungsbedarf: Disparitäten in Abhängigkeit von Schulart, Alter und Geschlecht der Lehrer/innen"

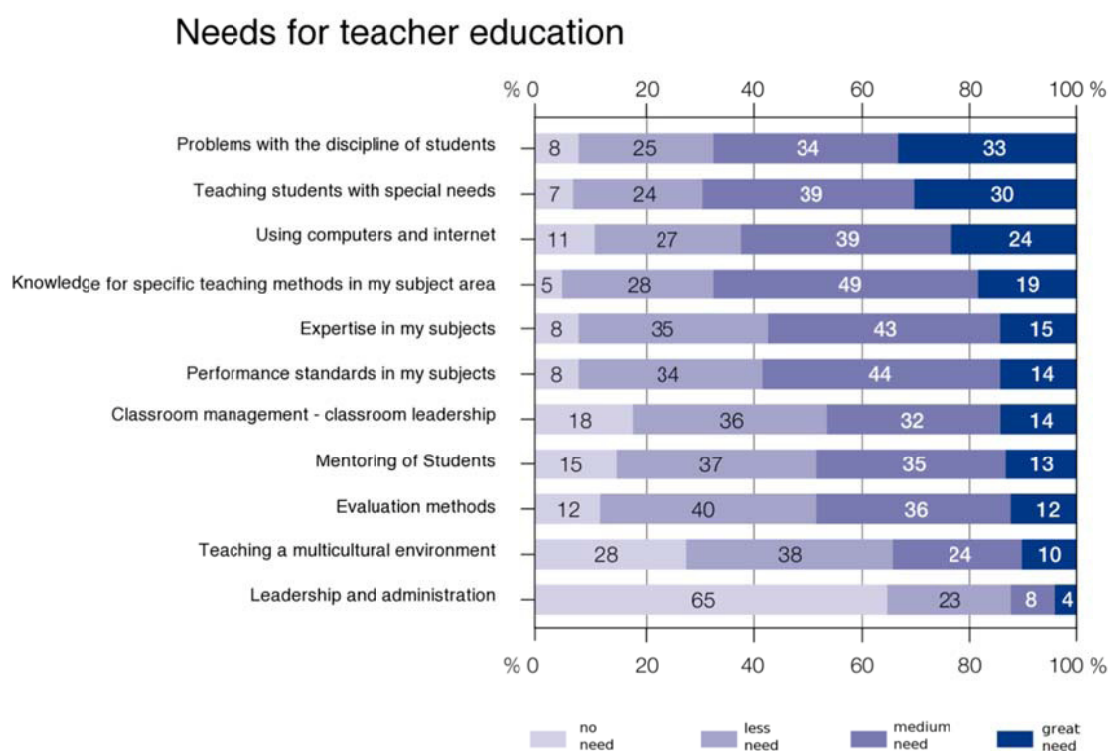


Figure 5: Needs for teacher education

In TALIS the quality, the design and the goal-orientation of the seminars was not evaluated. However, basically there is a willingness to attend seminars and there is also a need for further education in the various areas of profession. In short, there are two different conceptual designs for seminars for teachers in Austria. But there is no empirical data to prove this evidence (Kast, 2010). If there is no strategy in school to determine the educational needs of the teachers (to establish a working human resource development) and there are no restrictions, which control the choice of seminars by the teachers, the attended seminars are chosen to maximize the personal advantage. The interests of the individual dominate and are not restricted by the principal or the state education authorities. Teachers in HS and NMS (q.v. section 1.1)) attend their obligatory seminars (see Seel et al., 2006: 103).

On the other hand, there is a strategy to determine the educational needs: every school identifies the specific needs for further education and develops a school specific plan for required seminars particularly with regard to school profile, human resource management and objectives of the superior authority with the personal development of the teacher in a professional context in mind. So the selection of the seminars is more goal-orientated. Educational controlling is in balance with human resource management.

2.3. Conclusion and Abstract

Comparing the results of the applications statistics and the results of TALIS 2008 interesting questions arise:

Under which conditions do teachers choose specific goal-oriented seminars?

How can objectives of the principal or the state educational authorities lead to a personal need for further education?

Thesis: If the personal areas of profession are graphically displayed, the selection of the seminars offered is more goal-oriented

3. "Lehrerprofessionsfelder" – Teachers' areas of profession

In the course of this ongoing research the model "Lehrerprofessionsfelder" will be developed and evaluated.

3.1. Starting points and references

According to Krauss et al. (2004), professional decision-making and responsibility originate from the interaction of: Specific declarative and procedural knowledge; Professional ethical values, beliefs, subjective theories, and aims; Motivational orientations; and Meta-cognitive skill. Core-expertise according to Miller (2004) includes: self competence, relationship competence, consultation competence, professional competence and management competence. As a result of the aggregation of the above basics, the model "Lehrerprofessionsfelder" will be developed.

3.2. Goal of the model "Lehrerprofessionsfelder"

As a consequence of the visualisation of teachers' own areas of profession and competences, the personal need for further education emerges. The combination of one's own areas of profession and the goals of the principal or the state educational authority results in an individual concept of further education.

3.3. The model "Lehrerprofessionsfelder"

The model is an octagon (Figure 7). Every zone represents an area of profession.

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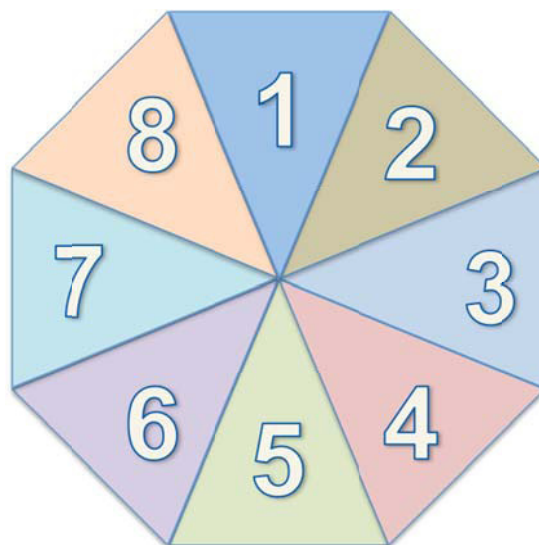


Figure 7: Model "Lehrerprofessionsfelder"

In the first draft the following areas of profession are defined:

- Professional development
- educational strategies in practice
- soft skills in practice
- communication, self-reflection and rhetoric
- ICT-competence development
- management, strategies and quality management
- resource management
- educational controlling and grading

Basic conditions for the model could be:

- organisational development (school-specific focus)
- human resource management
- personal development

4. Prospects

At this early stage of the research project, the main focus is on optimising and evaluating the model. A next step should be the testing of the model with selected teachers and implementing the feedback afterwards. The main part of the model is self evaluation in every zone of the model. Therefore, it is important to develop a specific instrument (e. g. a questionnaire or a similar instrument) to measure various skills. Please consider this paper as a work in process at an early stage.

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PROFESIONALNA PODRUČJA U IZBORU CJELOŽIVOTNOG OBRAZOVANJA UČITELJA

Sažetak Ako pogledamo učiteljsku motivaciju za izbor određenog stručnog skupa, vidjet ćemo da su učitelji spremni ići na stručne skupove, ali oni koji im se nude ne zadovoljavaju njihove interese. Najčešće učitelji slobodno biraju svoje daljnje obrazovanje pa žele izabrati stručne skupove koji odgovaraju njihovim profesionalnim interesima. Predmet istraživanja koje je u tijeku jest razvijanje modela, koji će prikazivati učiteljska individualna područja u profesionalnom napredovanju. Glavni je cilj unaprijediti stručno usavršavanje učitelja koristeći kao polazište ponudu koju osiguravaju obrazovne vlasti. To će se ostvariti dodatnom ponudom seminara u organizaciji Učiteljskog fakulteta, koji je zadužen za mogućnosti cjeloživotnog obrazovanja koja su dostupna učiteljima.

Ključne riječi: cjeloživotno učenje, profesionalni razvoj, učitelj, stručni skupovi.

FACHGEBIETE BEI DEN STRATEGIEN DES LEBENSLANGEN LERNENS FÜR LEHRER

Zusammenfassung: Wenn wir einen Blick auf die Lehrermotivation bei der Auswahl eines bestimmten Fachsymposiums werfen, werden wir sehen, dass die Lehrer bereit sind, an Fachkonferenzen teilzunehmen, aber meist befriedigen die angebotenen Konferenzen ihre Interessen nicht. Meistens wählen die Lehrer selbstständig ihre Weiterbildung, so dass sie sich für Fachsymposien entscheiden, die ihren beruflichen Interessen entsprechen. Der Untersuchungsgegenstand der im Gange befindlichen

Forschung ist die Entwicklung des Modells, das die einzelnen Bereiche des beruflichen Fortschritts der Lehrer aufzeigen wird. Das Hauptziel ist Verbesserung der beruflichen Weiterbildung von Lehrkräften, indem als Anfangspunkt das Angebot der Bildungsbehörden genutzt wird. Dies wird durch zusätzliche Seminare erreicht, die von der Fakultät für Lehrerbildung organisiert werden, die für die Möglichkeiten des lebenslangen Lernens für Lehrer zuständig ist.

Schlüsselbegriffe: lebenslanges Lernen, berufliche Entwicklung, Lehrer, Fachkonferenzen.