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Claire Largan

Postgraduate Researcher

Current Status

Currently completing the Independent Specialist Research Module on year 3 of the Professional doctorate in Learning and Learning Contexts

Research Topic

An investigation into the experiences of progression and transition from Foundation Degree (FdA) to Bachelor of Arts (BA) for part-time, mature, female students.

Research Summary

My research explores the progression of part-time, female, mature students from a Foundation degree Arts (FdA) Professional Studies in Early Years on to a 'top-up' Bachelor of Arts (BA) Degree in Early Childhood Studies focusing on whether they perceive their newly attained FdA as a foundation for this progression. Embedded within this is the potential discovery of new conceptualisations of the formation of academic identities through qualification routes accessed. In this research, the FdA is presented as a route of access but one that can be problematic in terms of its currency within the workplace almost rendering as a 'stepping stone' for higher level BA study. Additionally, focusing on marginalised students, there is an opportunity to explore personal narratives of 'success' against definitions of attendance which see them described as gaining increased access to HE as non-traditional students, over the age of 21 from under represented socio-economic groups or from minority-ethnic backgrounds (Yorke and Longden, 2010; Gorard et al, 2006). This notion of problematised attendance is echoed in current research which appears to conceptualise female, mature, part-time engagement as 'difficult' and problematic (for example see Reay et al., 2002; 2003; Reay, 2001, 2002; Crozier et al., 2008; Paechter, 2003; Leathwood and O'Connell, 2003; O'Donnell and Tobbell, 2007). Therefore, this research seeks to investigate whether a more 'balanced' view of their participation could be (Crozier and Reay, 2011; Shaw, 2011; Sheard, 2009) possible; one that emerges regardless of the qualification attained but one that sees women as 'legitimated' in the process of their study.

Research Interests

- life-long learning
- female 'voice' in HE
- non-traditional students

Funding

Self Funded

Membership of Research and Professional Organisations

Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (pending)

Supervisor

Professor Christine Skelton (/staff/profiles/education/skelton-christine.aspx)

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