Farmer First Revisited
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at the Institute of Development Studies, Brighton, UK

Presentation, Theme 3c, New Professionals: Changing Agricultural Education Systems

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3c. NEW PROFESSIONALS: Changing agricultural education systems

1. Li Xiaoyun, Xiuli Xu, Gubo Qi, Min Lu and R. Vernooy. China’s higher education policy reform in practice: rejuvenating rural development studies


3. J. Petit. Which farmers first: power and resistance in learning from agriculture for development

4. A. Catley. From marginal to normative: institutionalising participatory epidemiology

5. R. Rhoades. Participation, paternalism and practicality: reconciling sustainability science and indigenous agendas

Pilot study to implement policy reform for education for a ‘well-to-do society’

Case: (2005) novel course in CBNRM for 24 MSc and PhD students. 10 staff from CAU and research

Participatory curriculum development and modern adult education theory

Complements CBNRM field research activities. Students visit field (later with scholarship)

Mixed methods: seminars, proposal writing, groups field research reports, producing an audio-visual, etc.

Not teaching: facilitation
Case: 2-year pilot experiment to change mindsets of 26 agric. lecturers at Makerere U.

Grew out of RF-funded Bellagio Conference

Focus on mindsets and competences before considering curriculum review.

Motivate lecturers by appeal to improvement of their marketable skills (e.g., consultancy, action research).

Embed experiment in university system.

Address pressure on U. by e.g., local governments.

Focus on holistic and interactive learning.

Facilitation: feedback, external facilitators.

Think piece by teacher of development practitioners.

Have change-oriented approaches shifted asymmetrical relations of power and knowledge?

Learners bounce back, resilience of old forms

Look for reasons that are internal to the progressive pedagogies themselves

Their principles: experience, cycles, and reflection, i.e. focus on discursive, cognitive learning

But how about: embodied knowledge, innate forms of intelligence, emotional intelligence and spiritual understanding?
Andy Catley

- Overview of the transformation of formal veterinary science by participatory epidemiology (PE) (involvement of farmers/pastoralists in mapping and prioritising livestock diseases)
- Story of strategic and deliberate effort: PAVE project
- Initially no link with science, not possible to publish qualitative outcomes in journals
- PAVE: coins PE; comparative assessment of PE; builds in quantification; results published and used as training material in CAPE to train senior academic staff and epidemiologists in 5 African countries
- Support to post-graduate research students
- Use PE for impact assessment, influence policy and create support community-based delivery
By 2000, PRA had taken on many of the characteristics of earlier ‘top down’ approaches: ‘Tyranny of participation’

Difficult for scientists to extrapolate beyond field scale. Sustainability research requires more rigour and need for global relevance than techn. utilization

What deals with local communities? Enriching research instead of extractive research?

Case: Cotacachi, Ecuador: UNORCAC and SANREM-Andes (e.g., questionnaires, water samples): negotiation for approval; reconcile scientific interests and community needs

Examples: scholarships; ancestral futures farm; 3-D Maqueta Model; Diagnosis of water systems; Atlas
Framing the papers

- New professionals through new ways of university teaching (Li et al.), and through developing new mindsets among university staff (Hagmann et al.)

- But does this training address the ability to deal with power relations? (Petit)

- Scaling up by making participatory methods respectable science (Catley)

- Creating a by-pass: negotiating space for ‘extractive research’ by investing in ‘enriching research’ (Rhoades)
Ensuring favourable conditions at higher system levels

- Experimenting with content of new book of new Minister of Education (Li et al.)
- Attention to involvement of deans, provosts, vice chancellor, and to needs of clients of university (Hagmann et al.)
- Addressing embodied knowledge, emotions and other layers than discursive cognition (Petit)
- 5-day course for senior epidemiologists and veterinary researchers, gaining academic respectability through publication (Catley)
- Careful negotiations with local powers to make an acceptable ‘deal’ and win-win situation (Rhoades)
Institutional dimension

- Rules of the game that reduce uncertainty in human interaction (North 2005…but Stephen Biggs)

- Incentive structure (e.g., faculty not rewarded for teaching performance, so link training to better commercial performance as consultants; give grades for team work)

- Address embodied heuristics (e.g., pack behaviour)

- Create space for new professional roles (e.g., community-based animal health professionals and use of PE of animal health assessment; interactive teaching; ‘safe spaces’ for giving feedback)

- Falling back (retrogressing, resilience) to old behaviours (also in FFS facilitators)
Questions

- How do we create greater expertise and professionalism in dealing with institutional issues?
- We are always talking about ‘scientists’. What is a new professional in economics?
- How do professionals stay ‘honest’: what mechanisms do they have for accountability to resource-poor farmers?
- What does new professionalism mean for expertise?