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Research-in-Progress

12-2pm, Wednesday 6 June
Room G35, Jubilee Building

Marilyn Hall, Doctoral Researcher, PhD in Education

Pupil Attainment, Teacher Perspectives:

Exploring the Evidence for Reform in Science Education in England

Marilyn's study uses a mixed-methods design to investigate:

- What evidence is being used to drive the current reforms in science education?
- What factors shape teachers' practice in terms of improving attainment?

Whilst the quantitative aspect of the study makes use of secondary data provided through the National Pupil Database to address the first question.

The qualitative part of the study uses a structured questionnaire completed prior to interviewing the participants to explore changes to teacher practice.

The analysis looks at the qualitative data through a theoretical framework that positions teachers as Street-Level Bureaucrats (Lipsky, 1980) and explores their agency as a Chordal Triad (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998).

Wendy Ashall, Doctoral Researcher, PhD in Education

In a Muddle with Mixed Methods?

Wendy's research into the expectations, experiences and outcomes of Social Science Foundation Year students involves a range of data types: qualitative semi-structured, in-depth interviews, survey responses - with both open and closed questions - and student administration data (entry and exit qualifications).

A 'layered approach' may establish a more robust knowledge base, but different methodologies produce different kinds of substantive knowledge (McCall, 2005) and rest on differing epistemological and ontological assumptions. How does a researcher ensure that the different strands of the research 'speak to each other', rather than past or over each other? In this presentation, Wendy assesses the ability of the mixed methods approach of Creswell (2014) in reconciling these tensions.

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