

Qin, Guohao & Yang, Jiyu (2018). **“Kindergarten could be a men’s garden!”**

How kindergartens work as Professional Learning Communities to support male teachers development----- an exploration study from China and Norway

Paper presented on the 28th EECERA Annual Conference, 30.8.2018, Budapest, Hungary.

Abstract

This research aims to explore how professional learning communities (PLCs) act as platforms to support male teachers' professional development in China and Norway. With 8.5% male teachers in kindergarten (SSB, 2017), Norway is famed for gender-equity culture to build up PLCs. In China, a lower percentage of male teachers embraces PLCs to create a more inclusive environment. With communicating professional skills and knowledge and building a sense of belonging (Harris & Jones, 2010, Harris 2011, Brody & Hadar, 2015), PLCs could help to solve male teachers' obstacles like Lack of support, feeling isolation and struggling on constructing identities (Rolfe et al, 2003, Brody, 2015). Based on an ecological view of teacher professional development (Zhu & Zhou, 2007), this research use Shulman & Shulman (2004) model to analyse teachers' development from individual and community levels. A qualitative model incorporating in-depth interviews, focus groups and on-site observation of male teachers in kindergartens concerning their perspectives on professional development, kindergartens as learning communities and how they get supported through cooperation. All the participants are provided with consent forms and information sheets. All the materials used have been confirmed by participants. Pseudonyms are used to avoid being identified. Findings show that in Norway, an equal working culture helps to build their identities and ownership, and guidance between teachers supports their professional learning. In China, a kindergarten-based coaching system and a male-exclusive Union helps to build on their identities and give professional supports. This research would give implications on how to build up a more competent and gender-equity workforce in kindergartens.

Keywords

male kindergarten teacher, professional learning community, professional development, China, Norway

Authors

Guohao Qin & Jiyu Yang, Beijing Normal University, China

Qin, Guohao & Yang, Jiyu (2018). "Kindergarten could be a men's garden!" How kindergartens work as Professional Learning Communities to support male teachers de-velopment----- an exploration study from China and Norway Paper presented on the 28th EECERA Annual Conference, 30.8.2018, Budapest, Hungary.



**"Kindergarten could be a men's garden!"
How kindergartens work as Professional Learning Communities
to support male teachers development
----- an exploration study from China and Norway**

Guohao Qin, Jiyu Yang
Beijing Normal University

CONTENT

01 Introduction

02 Methods

03 Findings

04 Discussions

Qin, Guohao & Yang, Jiyu (2018). "Kindergarten could be a men's garden!" How kindergartens work as Professional Learning Communities to support male teachers de-velopment----- an exploration study from China and Norway Paper presented on the 28th EECERA Annual Conference, 30.8.2018, Budapest, Hungary.



Introduction

Introduksjon

Introduction



Teacher professional development (**PD**): A shifting perspective from individual to **context**

(Hargreaves & Fullan,1992; SHULMAN& SHULMAN,2004; Zhu&Zhou,2007)



Professional Learning Communities (PLC) A new platform to support teachers development

(Dufour, 2004; Hord, 2008; Brody &Hader,2015; Tam,2015)



Feeling lonely ,struggling on constructing identities and lack of supports, obstacles for male kindergarten teachers

(Sumsion,1999,2000; Rolfe et al, 2003;Brody,2015;Heikkilä & Hellman,2016).

Qin, Guohao & Yang, Jiyu (2018). "Kindergarten could be a men's garden!" How kindergartens work as Professional Learning Communities to support male teachers de-velopment----- an exploration study from China and Norway Paper presented on the 28th EECERA Annual Conference, 30.8.2018, Budapest, Hungary.

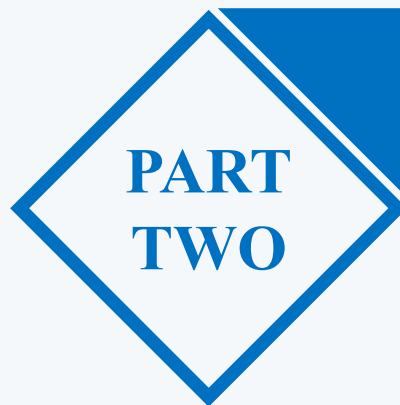
◀ **Research question**



How kindergartens work as Professional Learning Communities to support male teachers development?

- 1、 How male teachers work and learn collaboratively with their colleagues within the kindergarten?
- 2、 From their own perspectives, what kind of supports or changes they gained from this community?

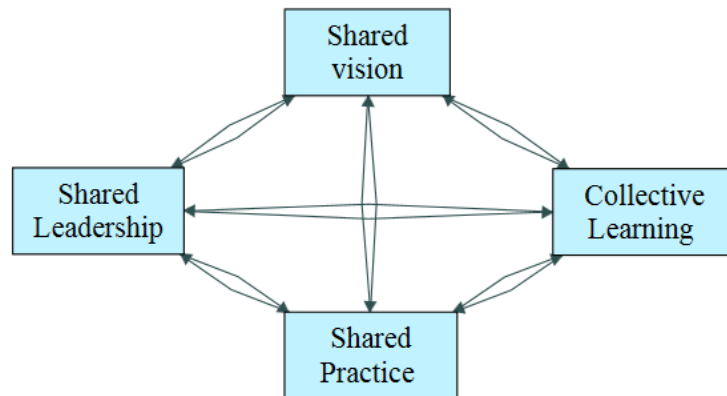
04



Methods

◀ Theoretical Framework

Based on the teachers learning within professional learning community models(Shulman & Shulman,2004), this framework is further revised by combining PLCs common features.
(Huffman & Hipp,2003; Dufour,2004; Hord,2008; Song,2013)



17

◀ Data collection



A Qualitative method



In-depth interviews: Two rounds of one-hour interview for each participants.



On-site observation: two hours to half days on-site non-participant observation, leaving as observation notes



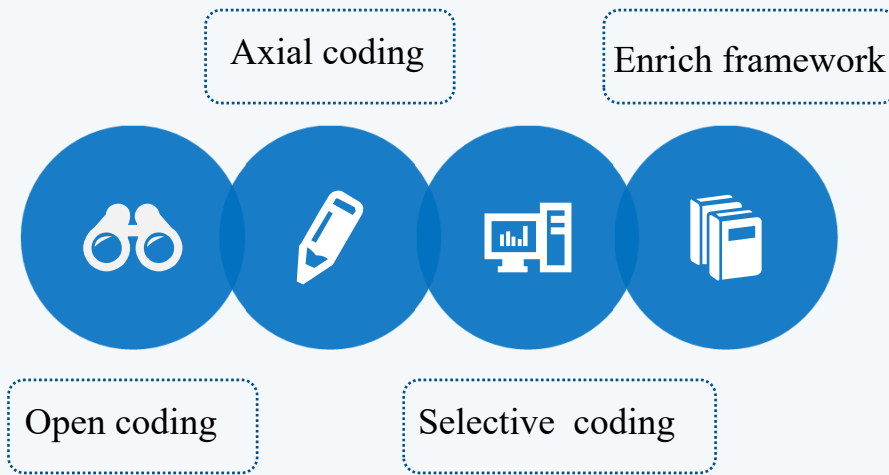
Text and video analysis: Added materials for further analysis



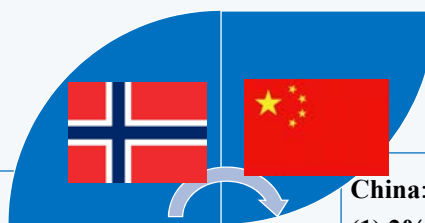
All the materials are transcribed into text (25729 words in English and 40095 words in Chinese)

12

◀ **Data analysis: Grounded theory** (Glaser & Strauss, 1967)



◀ **Research contexts**



Norway:

- (1) **10%:** A Leading role in male teacher ratio in kindergarten (SSB,2017)
- (2) 2004 Governmental Action Plans for Gender Equality Networks for Men in Kindergartens
- (3) Outdoor course were popular for men (Peeters ,et al 2015; Emilsen & Koch 2010)

China:

- (1) **2%:** A lower place in male teacher ratio in kindergarten (MOE,2017)
- (2) 2011: Three years Action Plan for preschool education in Shanghai and Chongqing mention to recruit more men
- (3) Regional Mentor groups exclusively for male kindergarten teacher organized by local education committees

Qin, Guohao & Yang, Jiyu (2018). "Kindergarten could be a men's garden!" How kindergartens work as Professional Learning Communities to support male teachers de-velopment----- an exploration study from China and Norway Paper presented on the 28th EECERA Annual Conference, 30.8.2018, Budapest, Hungary.

 **Case information**

Information of the kindergartens					Information of male teachers		
	Name (Nation)	Public /Private	Teaching staff number	Ratio of male teaching staff	Teacher name	Education background	Working years in kindergarten
1	B(Norway)	Public	12	10%	R	Bachelor	25
2	V(Norway)	Private	40	40%	T	Bachelor	1
					F	Master	3
					J	Bachelor	30
3	X(China)	Private	30	3%	H	Bachelor	7
4	H(China)	Public	40	2%	A	Associate degree	2



Findings

Case 1: Norwegian B kindergarten

01 Shared vision: Confident to try and express themselves

"My first is to inspire them. I don't need to be best in class in drama, but I need to be curious about it and a little bit confident about it, enough to make an environment for kids that they can express themselves in it.

02 Shared leadership : "Being included is more important than being a leader"

"The leading part is "we want to focus one thing". But how to work together, how to come to this part, that's up to the team to figure out...I have to show being more humble to my colleague. not so much critical about what I want it. That's not so important any more.

03 Shared practice: Feel confident to try new skills and ask for helps

it's important that you try at least, use the knowledge and skills from colleagues. I am not good at sport, but I have three or four boys(in my group), of course I need to do some sports like football

04 Collective learning : Crucial help for emergent issues

07

Case 2: Norwegian V kindergarten

01 Shared vision: Children's ownership

We don't want our kindergarten being rushed, to push them more than their ability to do

02 Shared leadership: Teachers' ownership but leader takes the role

' I want them to get from A to B, the goal is to get B, if you want to go through C to B because you like C, I don't mind, as long as you got B.

03 Shared practice: Straightforward communication

"her gossip skill doesn't have room to build up because we don't gossip, we just say how it is so it don't have chance to develop.

She often said, Yes, Let's do it. She just got me immediately, seems very inspiring for it .It is also being inspired for me that we could make this basic change

04 Collective learning : Teachers meeting as platforms for different needs

Novice security fence: people coming to this meeting should feel confident, go out with new knowledge and spirit.

Pedagogical Discussion: I feel the trust from my colleagues, they respect me theoretical knowledge and it also helps me to develop really listen

07

Qin, Guohao & Yang, Jiyu (2018). “Kindergarten could be a men’s garden!” How kindergartens work as Professional Learning Communities to support male teachers de-velopment----- an exploration study from China and Norway Paper presented on the 28th EECERA Annual Conference, 30.8.2018, Budapest, Hungary.

Case 3: Chinese X kindergarten

01

Shared vision: Give children special experience

“I don’t want to follow old patterns like female, I want to make something big, to give children special experience: like going camping or sleeping outside

02

Shared leadership: We are a family with mutual respect

I am the leader of class, of course my colleagues should assist me. But also, I would listen to them, or even make compromise, as long as we could make something... Sometimes, treat your colleagues just like comfort your girlfriends with some sweet word.

03

Shared practice: do it “alone” : action speaks louder

“The leaders want to see your detailed plan before permission, but I am not good at writing it and it limits possibility of the project. So I just do it by myself, collect materials and build up a big pool.”

04

Collective learning : a “live brand” in woman’s world

You could feel that you are weaker: when you try say something at the meeting, other female would come up to criticize and deny all your suggestions, so gradually you lose your confidence on your profession, you just listen quietly and follow what they said

07

Case 3: Chinese X kindergarten



07

Qin, Guohao & Yang, Jiyu (2018). "Kindergarten could be a men's garden!" How kindergartens work as Professional Learning Communities to support male teachers de-velopment----- an exploration study from China and Norway Paper presented on the 28th EECERA Annual Conference, 30.8.2018, Budapest, Hungary.

Case 4: Chinese H kindergarten

- 01 Shared visions: develop children key-characters**
"My ideal children, firstly are brave and resilience; and the parents also have expectation on developing children masculinity in my class.
- 02 Shared leadership: Children center , standard reference and mind map driven**
"She will tell me monthly plan and give me mind map for helping new activities planning, and then I would write my education plan and environment preparation with standard ; sometimes we find children interests during play and a new theme emerge through our discussion.
- 03 Shared practice: cooperate with different caring styles**
'Being children's playmates instead of adults"
"Go play with the kids, I would stand here to watch" "He won't criticized the children, so I have to take this role" (Observation notes)
- 04 Collective learning : develop in male teachers union**
Learn by doing: have clear knowledge framework of physics education
"Helping group" close thoughts with diverse education backgrounds
"Safety valve ": share negative experience and support each other

07

**PART
FOUR**

Discussions

Discussions

Shared vision

- (1) Visions rooted in kindergarten culture and tradition and further discipline male teachers practice
- (2) In a broad and vague visions, male teacher may select his own vision or receive specific expectation from colleagues and parents in relation to gender

Shared leadership

- (1) Organization structures and education traditions may legitimate different modes of authority (legal authority and Charisma Authority)
- (2) Contextual factors : including male ratios, generation gap and stereotypes on male teachers, influencing how much symbolic capital the male leader have to negotiate and share power with the other colleagues, but also relating to male teachers own leading style.

Discussions

Shared practice

- (1) Doing and undoing gender in relation to contextual factors : male ratios and working culture
- (2) Doing gender and constructing professional identity through interaction with other colleagues
- (3) How to collaborate and distribute work further display education values and even gender relations at family in different culture

Collective learning

- (1) Collective learning could provide a safety environment for male teacher to express ,learn ,but also feeling supported and confident
- (2) How much collective learning could work partly depending on how much it satisfies teachers needs and gives ownership to male teachers.

Qin, Guohao & Yang, Jiyu (2018). **“Kindergarten could be a men’s garden!” How kindergartens work as Professional Learning Communities to support male teachers de-velopment----- an exploration study from China and Norway** Paper presented on the 28th EECERA Annual Conference, 30.8.2018, Budapest, Hungary.

Further reflections

- A combination of workplace culture, teacher policies and gender roles can explain their differing perspectives about PLC.
- However, cultural-historical contexts and ongoing policies about continuous professional development in ECE need a much more in-depth reflections in the next step.

Acknowledgement

- This research is co-supervised by Professor Minyi Li from Beijing Normal University and Professor Åsta Birkeland from Western Norway University of Applied Science
- Teachers of ECEs from Western Norway University of applied Science also contributed to recruit participants and revise for interview protocol.

Qin, Guohao & Yang, Jiyu (2018). **“Kindergarten could be a men’s garden!” How kindergartens work as Professional Learning Communities to support male teachers de-velopment----- an exploration study from China and Norway** Paper presented on the 28th EECERA Annual Conference, 30.8.2018, Budapest, Hungary.



**“Kindergarten could be a men’s garden!”
How kindergartens work as Professional Learning Communities
to support male teachers development
----- an exploration study from China and Norway**

•—————•
Guohao Qin Jiyu Yang