Dive into my Professional Doctorate research

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Background & Intent
In 2020, PADI revised its global Instructor Development Course (IDC) curriculum, replacing didactic lectures with e-learning and collaborative workshops. This research aims to illuminate how comparative cultural contexts across international IDC cohorts might shape learning experiences and “training transfer”. Training transfer relates to learning application, including maintenance and generalisation of learning in new situations. Understanding how to optimise new dive instructors’ training transfer is vital: not applying safety-orientated learning can be fatal (Divers Alert Network, 2019).

Professional Field
The Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) is the world’s largest scuba diver training agency.

Key Themes
- Training transfer
- Blended learning
- Diverse cultural contexts

Main Research Question
How might comparative cultural diversity across cohorts of international trainee dive instructors shape training transfer?

Underpinning Theoretical Framework
- Blended learning (Sims et al., 2008)
- Training evaluation (Kirkpatrick, 1998)
- Training transfer (Baldwin & Ford, 1988)
- Cultural dimensions (Hofstede et al., 2010)

Academic Field
This Education Doctorate research is being conducted from 2020 - 2024 with UK’s Open University.

Methodology & Impact
This collective case study (Stake, 1995) will longitudinally compare learning outcomes for IDC cohorts across Thailand, Honduras and UK. It follows Merriam’s (2001) structure and uses mixed methods (Yin, 2018). Pragmatically, quantitative and qualitative data will be sought from purposefully-sampled stakeholders: 9 Instructor Trainers & 18 cohorts of Instructor candidates. Data will be collected through artefacts, virtual semi-structured interviews & anonymous online questionnaires.

Cross-country statistical & thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021) will compare training transfer after one year. Insight created will beneficially inform Instructor Development practices & help fill a literature gap.

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