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Empowering Teachers for Innovations: The Case of Online Teacher Learning Communities

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ABSTRACT

Implementing innovations in classrooms often evokes a variety of recurrent difficulties, especially feelings of resistance among experienced teachers. Modern teacher education aims at reducing their opposition by empowering these teachers for developing new knowledge, beliefs, and skills. A growing number of these teacher courses is designed as teacher learning communities (TLC-s). A specific category of them, online networks, is the scope of the present paper. Main values and attributes of these communities are addressed. This is followed by presenting some leading principles for designing TLC-s. Important principles are: (i) creating subcommunities within large-scale online networks, (ii) combining online activities with face-to-face meetings, and, (iii) facilitating more equality in online group participation. These principles are illustrated by examples of real practices. Finally, main conditions for successful new online TLC-s are presented. Prospects for advanced studies of practices of these communities are also given.

KEYWORDS

Teacher Learning; Online Communities; Network Design Principles; Network Practices

Cite this paper

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