Program Planning in German Continuing Higher Education: a view on planning action

Maria Kondratjuk

International conference “Cultures of Program Planning in Adult Education: Policies, Autonomy, and Innovation”
Leibniz University Hanover, Germany
September 28th - 29th, 2015
Outline

- Overview: Continuing Higher Education (CHE) in Germany
- Program planning embedded in educational management
- Research Project „Professionals in CHE“: State of Research, Research Interest, Research Design
- Findings regarding planning action: contents, scientificalness, sustainability, institutionalization, heterogeneous actors, handling with paradoxies
- Outlook: Implications for program planning in CHE
Overview: CHE in Germany

- lifelong learning society
- demographical change
- universities as providers of AE/CE
- structural change of the management of HE (NPM)
- CHE as core activity
- manifold potentials to offer CHE
- re-organization process of CHE

not realizable without the professionals
Overview CHE in Germany: Hard Facts

• CHE as part of University Lifelong Learning

• claims: new target groups, competence orientation (EQF/NQF), flexibility and permeability: access to HE and recognition of prior learning

• Formats: part-time and full-time studies, short courses, blockseminars, distance learning, extra–occupational, additional, blended learning, E–learning

• Fees: free (PhD) to 30.000€ (MBA)

• Contents: profile–related, wide–range, interdisciplinary, strong disciplinary, competence–related

• Programs: PhD, research–oriented studies, guest auditors (extra–mural students), university lecutures for mature students (learners in later life, study 50+), teacher further education
• Degrees: certificates, Bachelor, Master, Confirmation of Participation

• Counselling and Service to answer the special and individual demands of the target groups

• Organizational structure: very diverse; spin-offs, central units, decentralized

• Networks: German Association for University Continuing and Distance Education (DGWF) on national level and smaller networks/task groups on regional level or content-oriented; European University Continuing Education Network (EUCEN) on European level

• Cooperation: very important!!! Examples: regional Chamber of Industry and Commerce, regional schools, German Medical Association, huge companies
• Funding:
  - Initiatives and Programs from the Government:
    "Getting ahead through education", Federal Government–Länder qualification initiative "Advancement through Education: Open Universities", "Transitions from vocational to higher education", the follow-up program to its initiative “Recognition of Vocational Competences in Higher Education", "Stu+Be: Study for people in work – Success factors for lifelong learning at institutions of higher education“ and on the federal state level
  - University budget funds (very limited)
  - “cross” funding
  - corporate-funded study-programs
  - participation fees
all these facts influence planning action!

in accordance to:

• „tangled mass of subsidies“ („Fördermittelwust“)
• the double coupling to the system of the educational market as well as to the scientific system
• didactic of the discipline, didactic in general and adult education didactic
The Continuing Higher Education in Germany is today located „(...) in stress conditions between the act upon the maxim of scientific adult education which has to comply with the societal mandate of education on the one hand and from the economic point of view the possibility of an additional source of income on the other hand“.  

(LUDWIG 2010: 39).
Program planning embedded in educational management

program planning is a complex process influenced by the requirements of the economics of education as well as by educational sciences and by technological developments and the framework of educational policy

portfolio: ambitious, interdisciplinary, wide-ranged

- *target-group-specific development, allocation and commercialization of programs* (educational offerings)

includes: planning and development, implementation, marketing, event management, support service and counselling, administrative accounting, documentation, evaluation
Program planning is a complex process influenced by the requirements of the economics of education as well as by educational sciences and by technological developments and the framework of educational policy.

Portfolio: ambitious, interdisciplinary, wide-ranged

UNIVERSITY

Includes: planning and development, implementation, marketing, event management, support service and counselling, administrative accounting, documentation, evaluation.
Phd research project:

Continuing Higher Education (CHE) – Profiles, Potentials, Professionalism: Actors of Continuing Higher Education, their strategies of action and their professional self-conception
Desideratum: Professionals/Actors of CHE

- Higher Education Research: Professionals
- Adult Education Research: Professionals
- Continuing Higher Education Research: Structures
Research Interest

Identification and reconstruction of the strategies of action with regard to the (professional) self-conception of the actors of CHE within their operational procedures, structures and general conditions at the universities

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:
Which strategies of action are using the actors of CHE?
Which professional self-conception do actors of CHE have and what general conditions/structures do they encounter?

connection between
a) the perspective of actors in their structures and
b) the consideration of the university as organization with its dynamics

typology of actors (roles, subjective factors) for a theoretical construct
depiction of actual state with prospects and constraints, variances and opportunities
deduction of potentials and formulation of recommendations
Research Design

Grounded Theory as methodological framework

context/structure

subjective sense

Interviews with experts with special expertise in CHE

analysis and description of organizational structures of CHE

problem-centred interviews with actors of CHE

qualitative
Findings

• **institutionalization** „chaos of structures“
• developing of a new working field with new working profiles
• working on interfaces, feeling of ‘beeing in-between‘, blurred boundaries > working in **third space**
• no classical adult educators : working pedagogically?
• heterogenous professionals, different types of actors, for example: the scientific, the educator, the manager, the pragmatic
• phenomenon **scientificalness**
• phenomenon appreciation
• Influences of actors: reference science, ethics, customers and clients, sphere of activity, knowledge, profession, standards, values
• **handling with structures in organizations**: to be addicted from structures, design structures, interdependency
• Sustainability and project-based/project-related work
Standards of Institutionalization

- Scientific Leader
- Service
- Research
- Organization
- Profit
- decentral
- central
- "An-institute"

outside the university

inside the university
Third Space (Celia Whitchurch 2010: 10)

**Professional staff**
- **Generalist functions**
  - eg registry, department/school management
- **Specialist functions**
  - eg finance, human resources
- **‘Niche’ functions**
  - eg quality, research management

**‘Perimeter’ roles eg**
- Outreach/study skills
- Access/equity/disability
- Community/regional partnership

**Examples of Institutional Projects in Third Space**

**The Student Transitions Project eg:**
- Life and welfare
- Widening participation
- Employability and careers

**The Partnership Project eg:**
- Regional/community development
- Regeneration
- Business/technology incubation

**The Professional Development Project eg:**
- Academic practice
- Professional practice
- Project management
- Leadership/management development

**Academic Staff**
- Teaching
  - Pastoral support
  - Teaching/curriculum development for non-traditional students
  - Links with local education providers
- Research
  - ‘Third leg’ eg public service, enterprise
one theoretical approach: social worlds/arenas

Outlook: between pedagogy and management

• With focus on the function of adult education at universities we have to ask which role are playing the contents of programs?
  > discrepancy between financial pressure/educational mandate

• What implies the fact that CHE is arranged by professionals not working pedagogically?
  > appreciation of education as part of self-concept

• How affect the structures at the universities the work of the professionals in CHE?
  > permanent negotiation process between actors&organization
  > handling with political settlements
Thank you for your attention!

Maria Kondratjuk

Maria.kondratjuk@ovgu.de