

A radical fault in the questionnaire assessment of teachers by students: considerations on the discontinuity between our way-of-being and positivist rationality as a way of knowing

T FitzPatrick

2 *Crossexaminer* 2 (Autumn 1993) pp 12 - 15

Argues that the validity of questionnaire assessment cannot be assessed in isolation from the students' interpretive framework; to do so is to accept the distorted reality of positivism, and thus the use of such questionnaires is ill-conceived and highly selective. The teacher, or the unit being assessed, is part of a rich multidimensional reality. He argues that a questionnaire is a two dimensional exercise carried out in a relatively infinitesimal period of time which conveys a relative minimum of information (usually in the format of a one-dimensional scale). How can it possibly convey the "thickness" and complexity of lived experience?

FACILITIES

[no material in this issue]

FINANCIAL ASPECTS

[no material in this issue]

GOVERNANCE

Quality law, or a nightmare for administrators?

M Tsamenyi & E Clark

28 *Aust Lawyer* 3 (April 1993) pp 14 - 18

Discusses the question of whether Australian law schools should be accredited. Issue arises against the background of doubling in number of law schools, increases in intakes of students, and an increasing national and international perspective on legal education, coupled with concerns about resources, schools being run "on the cheap", the need for diversity and a changing role for law schools themselves.

Arguments against accreditation include the danger that it will increase the control of the practising profession over law schools, that non-accredited schools may become second-class schools, and that it may become an administrative nightmare.

Authors argue that whilst these concerns are legitimate, law schools must act on the issue of quality: otherwise others will act. They argue that the time has come to raise the issue for debate: not put it on the back burner.

They refer to other professional faculties, and to the experience with American law schools, which use accreditation as a means of quality assurance and public accountability.

Funding for law is inadequate, and the authors argue that

accreditation along the lines suggested by them may prove a valuable mechanism by which law schools may ensure a level of equitable funding.

Arguments in favour include the fact that the reaccreditation process forces law schools to do serious thinking about their program, it would help promote uniform admission requirements, and would facilitate greater discussion amongst law schools of educational issues.

Discuss issue of whether it would result in increased control by the practising profession. Also outline the procedure for reaccreditation in the United States.

HISTORY

[no material in this issue]

INDIVIDUAL SUBJECTS/AREAS OF LAW

Training the Modern Lawyer: Incorporating the Study of Mediation into Required Law School Courses

B Blaustone

21 *SW U L Rev* p 1317

This article argues for the introduction of the study of mediation into law school as part of a "modern" lawyering curriculum. The study of mediation confronts students with a shift in perspective requiring them to develop critical thinking skills and making them more capable problem solvers and advisers. Students also gain a deeper