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Providers, consumers and the horizons of the possible

A Case Study of Marketisation and Physical Education Teacher Education

Pedagogical Discourse

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Abstract

Framed within a shift from a highly centralized system of higher education (HE) to a de-regulated system in Norway, this paper addresses how the foci upon student recruitment and incentives in the governmental funding of HE have stimulated market dynamics which affect local configurations of bachelor degrees in sport, physical education and outdoor pursuits, which in turn, can affect the content knowledge of physical education teacher education (PETE) degree. Analyzing data generated via in-depth interviews with Deans and Heads of programs at three significant national providers in the field of HE sport and physical education, the paper illuminates how marketisation permeates the communication of education values and, thus, the institutional pedagogical discourse (Bernstein, 1996). The paper problematises the ways in which PETE pedagogical discourse currently reflects market values embedded in new managerialism in local strategies to recruit students at university colleges in Norway, rather than educational or professional values.

Keywords

Higher education, deregulation of academic freedom, marketisation, new managerialism, physical education teacher education degrees, pedagogical discourse.

Introduction and background for the study

Analogues to the global trends in higher education (HE) the last decades, a major consequence of the ideological and structural changes in the 2003 'Quality Reform of HE' in Norway (UFD, 2000-2001; UFD, 2003), has been the significant increase in the

competition between institutions to recruit students in the marketplace of education and to keep them (Aasen, 2003; Morley, 2003; Ball, 2006; Dodds, 2006; Marginson, 2007). In effect, these conditions have enabled the partial dissolution of old dividing lines between state and the market (Marginson, 1999) and transformed the public sector into 'markets regulated by the State, or quasi-markets' (Whitty, 2002). Embedded in the Norwegian discourses of the welfare state (Karlsen, 2002), the HE market is aimed to work as a facilitator and regulator to stimulate institutions to meet local needs. In this context the de-regulation of the 'academic and artistic freedom' in HE (KD, 2005), the sector of university colleges, most of them former regional teacher education and professional colleges, were upgraded to authorize bachelor degree. The regional university colleges, playing a significant role in the Norwegian system of HE, were directly stimulated to develop new fields of knowledge and programs of study to define their role within the national HE (Kyvik, 2002).

Traditionally, the education system in Norway has been part of the governmentally regulated policy of providing democratic, public goods (Solstad, 1996). Underpinned by national notions of democratic values and social justice, during the last three decades the system of HE has gradually become a significant part of the strategies to stimulate growth in the many sparsely populated districts (and keep them populated). With a population of 4.8 million spread across a country geographically larger than the British Isles, the provision of access to HE in all parts of the country the last three decades has been a significant ambition in Norwegian policy. Thus, in the national welfare state discourse access to HE through available and flexible alternatives within the system of HE, is seen as promoting democratic and social values. In this context, and in the policy regulating the education quasi- market, the roles of the regional university colleges are crucial (Kyvik, 2002).

During the last decade the Norwegian commitment to the Bologna process (Bologna-Bergen document, 2005; Karlsen, 2007) has also been ideologically and politically significant for the development of HE. Norway was in fact one of the first European

countries to aim to accomplish the national implementation of the principles of the Bologna Declarations by 2010, and in particular the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and the system of easy readable degrees. Gornitzka et al (2005) emphasize how the Bologna discourse was applied nationally to meet clash of interests between different academic, cultural and professional identities. Accordingly, the ideological and structural underpinnings of the EU's strategy to meet the challenges in the HE market globally have also been significant tools to meet and regulate the domestic challenges related to the different institutional cultures, identities and roles in HE.

Despite this international influence, and compared to the system of academic degrees in many other countries, a distinguishing feature of the Norwegian system is that students are not required to start and complete a degree at one and the same institution. On the contrary, the system encourages students to combine packages of ECTS from different national, as well as international providers. In the national context, the de-regulation of academic freedom, the ECTS discourse and discourses of flexibility are strongly interrelated in practices aimed to provide access to HE. Illustrating how flexibility in the Norwegian system currently provides opportunities different from the traditional academic orchestration of the university degrees, the local university colleges provide the students '*The bachelor degree of the candidates' own choosing*'. The local program guide (HINT, 2007, p.8) informs the reader: 'In a bachelor degree of the candidates own choosing, you put together the programs (subjects) you choose to study by following the guidelines laid down by the university college'. Importantly, there is considerable financial advantage for the institution to keep the students until they complete 180 credits for a bachelor degree. Consequently, the combination of deregulation, greater autonomy, incentives in the funding system and the new managerialism (Deem, 1998), which currently regulate the development within HE, create the market dynamics to which the national HE institutions are responding.

In Norway, the 2003 deregulation has contributed to a significant increase in 'menus' of eligible courses and programs (a variety of 30 and 60 ECTS credits with additional

combinations) to meet students interested in physically active life styles, sports and outdoor pursuits. According to national statistics in the period 2003-2006 (Graham and Reinertsen, 2006), outdoor pursuits was the subject with the highest number of new established programs of study in the Norwegian HE. At present many of the 15 HE institutions that during the last decade have become providers of bachelor degrees with different names in the field ('Physical Education and Sport Studies', 'Outdoor Pursuits and Sport Studies', 'Sport, Physical Activity and Health' etc.) are competing in the marketplace to recruit students to the local university college by promoting flexible, pragmatic, exiting – and sometimes adventurous and exotic (Kårhus, in press) - ways to meet the student customer's interests.

As new providers of bachelor degrees many former teacher education colleges and small regional colleges are currently able to provide one-year programs (60 credits) of 'Practical and Didactic Education' in the school subject 'Physical Education' (PE) equivalent to the post-graduate certificate in education, PGCE (UFD, 2001-2002). This '3+1 year model' after the de-regulation of the academic freedom represents the most flexible and popular form of physical education teacher education (PETE) in Norway. With this contextual development as a backcloth, the paper explores ways in which a sample of the regional university colleges, now operating in a market of new providers of a generic bachelor degree and the related PETE degree, are responding. Drawing upon Bernstein's (1996) theoretical framework, the paper explores ways in which market forms and behavior, or 'marketisation' (Marginson, 1999), currently find expression within the structural and ideological changes, and thus how the reform of HE mediate the recontextualization of pedagogic discourse in the local configurations of bachelor and PETE degrees.

Theoretical framework

Bernstein's (1996) theoretical framework provides the lens for my analysis of how knowledge is constructed and communicated within the current discourses of Norwegian HE policy. However, this analysis also draws upon research into the social construction and transmission of knowledge, and ways of knowing in the educational contexts provided by the likes of Apple (1995); Sadovnik (1995); Kirk *et al.*, (1997); Macdonald *et al.*, (1999); Penney and Evans (1999); Kirk & Macdonald, (2001), Apple (2003); Evans & Davies (2004) and Evans & Davies (2006).

According to Bernstein (1996, p.46) 'pedagogic discourse' is a principle for transmission, de-locating and re-locating knowledge, values and other ways of knowing between sites and educational settings. Bernstein defines pedagogic discourse 'as a rule which embeds two discourses: a discourse of skills of various kinds and their relations to each other, and a discourse of social order'. The former is called 'instructional discourse' and the latter 'regulative discourse'. Pedagogic discourse is the rule that leads to the embedding of instructional discourse in the regulative discourse and thus creates one discourse.

Exploring how marketisation affects the local configurations of the 3 + 1 PETE degree, in this paper pedagogical discourse and the relationship between instructional and regulative discourses is crucial. The regulative discourse is 'the moral discourse which creates order, relations and identity' (Bernstein, 1996, 46) and thus, the dominant discourse. Bernstein argues that 'the whole order within pedagogical discourse is constituted by regulative discourse' and 'there is no instructional discourse which is not regulated by regulated by the regulative discourse' (p.49). In contrast to instructional discourse, the regulative discourse in this analysis is formed by an array of discursive practices that are not necessarily specific to subjects or programs of study within the academic or vocational fields of sport, physical education or outdoor pursuits. In the current education policy, market dynamics will act upon the ways the institutions discourses of academic autonomy inform the administrative, academic and professional decisions open to local flexibility. The ideology and the market discourses, which underpin the PETE institutions' policy and managerial priorities, infuse into what Kirk & Macdonald (2001,

p.444) in their application of Bernstein's theory, make mention of as 'raw material' which constitutes regulative discourse that creates order, relations and identity. Analyzing how pedagogical discourse might be affected by competitions and trends in the market, it is crucial that

The recontextualizing principle not only recontextualized the what of pedagogic discourse, what discourse is to become subject and content of pedagogic practice. It also recontextualizes the how; that is the theory of instruction. This is crucial, because the selection of the theory of instruction is not entirely instrumental. The theory of instruction also belongs to the regulative discourse, and contains within itself a model of the learner and the teacher and the relation. The model of the learner is never wholly utilitarian; it contains ideological elements (Bernstein 1996, p. 49).

Currently, the ideological elements embedded in regulative discourse are constituted by the neo-liberal education policy discourse, the economical incentives and the dynamics in the market to which the local HE providers of sport, outdoor pursuits and PETE are responding. The analysis emphasizes the significance of 'surrounding texts' (Penney & Evans, 1999, p.25) and the discursive fields within which texts arise and are responded to. In my analysis of PETE in the current Norwegian market, I have located university colleges as knowledge producers and agencies in the social configuring, and reconfiguring, of knowledge production that followed the 2003 HE reform.

Data collection

Using purposeful sampling (Patton, 1990), three regional university colleges ('UCA', 'UCB' and 'UCC' in pseudonyms) were chosen as appropriate sources of information because for decades they have been among the most influential Norwegian HE institutions in terms of traditions and number of programs and students in PETE, sport and outdoor pursuits. Data were collected by in-depth interviews with three Deans of the university colleges' departments of sport studies and teacher education, and the three Head of programs (HoP) in the same three departments. Informed consent was sought

from the Dean of each department, from each HoP, and the Norwegian Social Science Data Services. In pseudonyms the Deans are John, David and Paul and the HoPs: Curt, Ken and Mary. The biased 'distribution' of men and women in my sample illustrates the general picture in terms of the gendered organizational structures within departments responsible for sport programs and PETE in Norway (Kårhus, 2004; Dowling, 2006), and thus, indicative of the overtly gendered nature of the 'new managerialism' in HE institutions elsewhere (Deem, 1998).

On the basis of the theoretical framework above, in the period November 2007 - March 2008 the data were collected by in-depth interviews with the Deans and HoPs. The analysis and discussion was generated from an interview guide (Mason, 1996) where themes and questions were related to national and institutional policy documents, local information texts, program guides and curriculum documents. These documents were accessed by me from the university colleges' websites. I personally conducted all the interviews in the interviewees' own offices at times chosen by them. The recorded conversations lasted from 1.5 to 2 hours, and thereafter were transcribed ad verbatim by me. Each interviewee received a copy of the respective transcribed text with an invitation to comment on it and provide comments and/or elaborations. Two interviewees responded that the interviews were 'really interesting about quite important issues' confirming general statements after each of the interviews were finished.

Being a member of the national PETE community for several decades the collection and analyses of data required me to be reflexive about my familiarity with the PETE culture (Delamont, 2002) and my own perspectives with regard to HE policy and reform processes. I have emphasized the importance of understanding the local institutions' and the interviewees' 'surrounding texts', and how they are currently locally read and communicated by the heads of the university colleges departments of sport, outdoor pursuits and PETE. However, trying to explore how ideologies and policies inform pedagogical discourse within HE and PETE practice, the researcher is of course not a value-free participant or observer and needs to be reflexive about that. From my point of

view the combination of market dynamics and new managerialism as a regulator in the local developments of programs of study in different ways may represent basic ethical and social challenges to the professional communities providing credits in PETE degrees, which formally qualify teachers to deal with both compulsory PE and the social challenges in the national comprehensive school system. I am well aware that HE in general, including the institutions which have constituted the national PETE community of practice, there have of course existed many serious (and unsolved) challenges in times before the neo-liberal winds swept into our campuses and regulated many of the recontextualization processes into which currently we in different ways are involved. I nevertheless believe that the governmental incentives and quasi- market dynamics as national ‘surrounding texts’ have changed significantly during the last 10 years compared to former decades, and it is against this backdrop that I have asked in what ways do these ideological and structural changes affect institutions which provide bachelor degrees that form part of the local PETE degrees.

Presentation and analysis of data

Reading the surrounding texts

The HoP at UCA, Curt, illuminates his university colleges’ reading of the education policy context to which they are responding, and then, the local order of discourse which constitutes the ‘raw material’ of the regulative discourse that creates order, relations and identity:

‘Actually, we are all taken by the competition in the education market. The institutions need to get hold of.... I mean, we all have to recruit the number of students needed to maintain budget status. And we do so, too! Consequently, the challenge is to offer programs of study that the students find attractive.’

The wording ‘taken by the competition’ combined with the need ‘to get hold of students’ because the institutions ‘need to maintain the budget status’, reflects the institutions ‘particular way of seeing’ (Fairclough, 1995) the surrounding texts to which they are responding. Curt frankly reveals how marketisation, and the managerial discourses

implied by it, form part of the ‘raw material’ from which regulative discourse in educational program are created. Specifically, the aim in focus, underpinning ‘order, relations and identities’ (Bernstein, 1996, p.46) is ‘to offer programs of study that students find attractive’. Consequently, embedded in the moral discourse of the market, the particular skills and knowledge of the instructional discourse are increasingly shaped by, or chosen to be those, which are attractive to the students.

Asking the Dean at UCB, David, what he has found to be the main challenge to his department after the 2003 reform, he stresses the ways in which HE is steered by market values locally is read as a top-down policy demand:

‘In relation to the reform of higher education and all that, it’s quite clear that our owner, the Ministry of Knowledge, wants us to offer programs of study which are attractive in the market. You know, nowadays, the policy of funding is based on production and results, right?’

Related to his department’s deeply appreciated contribution to the local university college budget, the Dean continued:

‘The fact is that all the physical activity programs of study do recruit many students to our university college. No doubt, these sport studies contribute very positively to our university college! Therefore, institutionally they have been allowed to develop. This illustrates how popularity and recruitment rule in the development of the university colleges, as we all know. Actually, the nation needs young people with degrees in math, science, and those things, right? However, *that’s not good business for us*. Sport, outdoor pursuits and physical education have much better recruitment, and indeed, *that’s good business!*’ (italics = stressed by the Dean).

The passage exemplifies how programs in the field of sport and physical activity are framed within the new managerial discourse of ‘student production’ as a matter of business, and thus, how market dynamics and the logic of supply and demand affects the regulative discourse. In the transcribed interview with Dean David wider social or

epistemological perspectives on the development of academic or professional knowledge, are subordinated to what counts in relation to strategic moves in the market aimed at student recruitment. Concerning the rules that underpin the principle for relocating ‘values and other ways of knowing’ (Bernstein, 1996, p. 46) related to corresponding readings of the surrounding texts, John, the Dean at UCA, illustrates the current logic of his department at the university college competing in the market:

‘To day, all the university colleges have to compete to recruit students... all of us are competing with the others.. And listen, *nowadays* it’s the customers’ market, right? It’s *the customer* who is interested in outdoor pursuits-- and then, *that’s our focus*. The students want modules so they can build a Bachelor Degree, and the fundamental thing in our department is: We have to find a balance between what the students prefer and our resources to meet them, right?’ (italics= stressed by the Dean).

To this transcribed text it should be added that when Dean John talked directly to me like he did, he definitely thought I had missed his main points in our ongoing conversation about what he called ‘the situation’ when I vaguely comment, while carefully checking the recording tape, ‘I see..., you’re competing, then (?)’. John frankly tried again by using their recent offer of credits in outdoor pursuits as a concrete and simple example of how competition, demand and supply currently work in the market, and how they recontextualize the challenge and respond.

Locating professional identities in pedagogical discourse

The following analysis reflects how new roles in the education marketplace challenge institutional and professional identities of HE institutions still having education roles to play in the public sector different from other businesses. During the interview, Mary, HoP at UCC, in different ways and contexts mentioned the importance of ‘trying to read the market’ and ‘be aware of from where and how to recruit new students’, and I asked her to elaborate the way she expressed herself. Her elaboration reveals how the values

that underpin the identity of her department, most of all mirror what the students enjoy and want:

After all, our university college is an institution in the service sector. Consequently, our programs of study shall meet the interests of our students, right? To us that's crucial. First of all, in our department our concern is to be service minded, although we don't like the words 'service' or 'service minded'. *However, that's what it's all about.* Accordingly, we have to think untraditionally and alternatively knowing that in the education market the students are shopping for things they enjoy, and particularly, the student of ours fancy sport activities. Remember, *times have changed*, nowadays the students can afford to choose activities and shop the courses they want - leaving behind, or rather put on hold, all thoughts of 'what do I become', 'what kind of profession do I have in sight' (italics= stressed by the HoP).

Mary kindly reminds me that the 'times have changed'. Complying with the notion that the students are 'shopping' around for what they like, at her regional institution, the 'raw material' constituting the regulatory discourse is underpinned by notions of competing 'in the service sector'. In this local market discourse, the 'the university college has to be service minded' as a mantra in the UCC's policy affects values which create the pedagogical discourse. Although the staff do not like the words, they see the role of their service institution as offering the student consumers the courses of sport and physical activity they enjoy- and can afford to buy. These data illuminate, highlighted by Fairclough (1995, 141) in his study of marketsation in HE, how the institutions operate as 'if they were ordinary businesses competing to sell their products to the consumers'. Operating as if their students were buyers and consumers in the configuration of courses and degrees, Mary's Department of Sport Studies and PETE plays down difficult questions about the academic basis and the professional direction of their programs provided. When Mary above emphasizes what 'it's all about' there is no notion that neither the state nor the future kids to be educated in schools are the clients. Seen through Bernstein's (1996) conceptual lenses, Mary's text shows how the local instructional

discourse, embedded in the regulative discourse of marketisation, puts on hold, or rather sets aside, significant relations of skills and knowledge, in the courses that the department approve to form part of their local 3+1 PETE program. Mary's reflections about the ways that the university college (the 'service institution') adjusts to the wishes of students is founded upon seeing students as 'customers' rather than 'learners' and conveniently overlooks, as problematised by Morley (2003), how such differences might impact upon knowledge production and notions of quality. More directly than the other local leaders in this study, Mary elaborates the local discourses of 'service institution' and marketisation as 'something' imputed to them:

Our collaboration with 'NN College' is a consequence of the market situation. We would not have studies in Bali *if it were not the fact that the students absolutely wanted to go to Bali!* But at present exotic activities and places are popular, and therefore we decided to offer this exotic 30 ECTS program of sport in Bali (italics = stressed by the HoP).

'NN College' (a pseudonym) is one of two commercial enterprises that in partnership with Norwegian university colleges, are active providers of 30 and 60 ECTS credit courses in sports and outdoor pursuits located at exotic destinations. Two of the three university colleges studied in this paper, provide courses in collaborations with the commercial providers. Mary's interview text illustrates how the pedagogic discourse regulated by the aims to be 'service minded' is informed by what students want as consumers of life time experiences configured in terms of ECTS, and thus, how trends and logics of the market (the regulative discourse) work to construct the local instructional discourse that constitutes the bachelor degrees in the broad field of physical activity. Through the partnership with external agencies providing courses based on sport and recreation thrills and lifetime experiences, the ECTS modules offered by the local university colleges illuminate how, as pointed at by Tomusk (2004, p.88), 'product developers are working on transforming European higher education into marketable products and packaging'. In Bernstein's (1996) terminology, this transforming of education 'products and packaging' creates transformation of knowledge by relocating ways of knowing between sites and settings. None of my informants framed the courses in exotic places within discourses of a knowledge base related to PETE. On the contrary,

Mary's Dean at UCC, Paul, confirmed that the recruitment strategy and discourses of marketisation and managerialism pervade the local pedagogic discourse: 'Our program of study in collaboration with "NN College" in Bali is a strategic move in the market. Indeed, to us it pays'. However, when it comes to the configurations and approvals of the local degrees, the courses promoted as part of the recruitment strategy and the credits they represent in the students' ECTS collections, are approved to form part of the local Bachelor Degrees of sport science, outdoor pursuits and/or physical activity and health to meet the customers. Consequently, in several ways the strategies to meet the student customers by approving activities and courses they want, through Bernstein's (1996) analytical lenses forms part of the instructional discourse representing selection of skills and knowledge in the bachelor degree and PETE curricula. In the dialog with Dean Paul at UCC I commented: 'Listening to the way in which you talk about the relevance of your department's programs of study, I think it's fascinating how the relevance seems primarily decided by what the students want.. and not what you as a university college find important as part of a bachelor degree in sport and outdoor pursuit relevant to a PETE degree'. Paul responded by elaborating the principle for relocating 'values and other ways of knowing' (Bernstein, 1996, p. 46) regarding their readings of the surrounding market texts, and thus currently 'what counts' (Luke, 1995) to autonomous providers of the de-regulated academic degrees:

To me it's not problematic that the students' interests and choices decide which courses are the most relevant in programs of study at this university college. Indeed, our university college is very engaged in adapting our programs of studies to what the students want. Quite obviously, *we can't say 'no' to students* and as a consequence lower our production and loose a lot of money, and probably threaten our jobs, too. Generally, in this context, *sport programs of study are the thing!* By adapting our bachelor degrees to the interests among the students in the market, *the recruitment is just fantastic!* Indeed, the fact that we recruit the students into our bachelor programs by adaptation to what they want, is our strategy to keep them. Quite clear, it is (italics= stressed by the Dean).

Pedagogical discourse and paradoxes

Decades ago, Evans and Davies (1986, p.14) argued that, independent of the researchers theoretical inclinations, the most significant notion produced at that time within the sociology of education, was 'that the *form* and *content* of educational practice *both* matter greatly'. According to the data analyzed in this paper, in terms of the providers academic or professional considerations, notions of form and content of educational practice seems to matter much less than to listen to the consumers choices in the marketplace. Listening to how Dean Paul (ref. the transcribed text above) elaborated the significance of adapting programs to the students choices, I asked him: 'It's interesting listening to the way you again stress the importance to meet the students' situated interests ..., but still, I'm sure that questions of what should form part of the knowledge base in a bachelor degree approved to form part of your PETE could not be a matter of disregard to either you as the Dean of the department or to your professional staff?' Dean Paul at UCC responded:

Of course, no... our department has to approve all the units that form part of our Bachelor Degrees and the PETE degree. However, I have to say that we are quite liberal in our bachelors in terms of the knowledge base ... and the curriculum. I can't say we are strict at all..... *There should have been better steering*, because quite often the students choose the easy way, or the most enjoyable concerning physical activities and sports. Actually, quite often that means the same... *and that's a pity* (italics = stressed by the Dean).

Within the market discourse that constitutes the surrounding text for the institutional pedagogic discourse, and regulates the institutional identity promoted in the marketplace, the Dean points at his departments lack of academic and professional steering as a pity. Reflecting upon market dynamics, Paul seemingly plays the part of an outside commentator to his own management of education policy, values and degrees. Questions about the professional knowledge base in bachelor and PETE degrees are not neglected, but the departments are 'quite liberal and not strict at all' when packages of credits are approved. In the context of competition with other institutions, and even between the

departments within the local university college, the end seems to justify whatever means and strategic moves found to be useful in recruiting and keeping the students in their programs. Paul, the Dean, further illuminates how his department's policy at one level is part of the regional university college's common strategy in the national market, but internally is aimed at the competition between departments:

I think it's correct to say that we are more sensitive to the students' individual wishes than the teachers in the other departments at this university college. Yes, I have to put it that way. In relation to other institutions in the field of sport and PE, but even internally in relation to the other departments at our university college, our departments' strategy is to build and keep our popularity among the students through being sensitive to the students interests, and thus, contribute to the positive recruitment of students to the university college... and of course our region. It's crucial to strengthen our region.

Again, embedded in a market language, the analysis illuminates situations within which a strategy to meet what the students want rather than contesting the form and content in academic and professional programs, in my sample of regional university colleges strongly underpins the policy of the departments of sport, outdoor pursuits and PETE.

Generally, the transcribed interviews in this study are constituted by a combination of diverse genres and discourses traditionally associated with trade, industry and economic life. In this context the transcribed interview texts voices particular education values and silences other. Aims and values that count beyond the instrumental and promotional efforts to maintain the local budget status are silenced. Critical reflection about values, traditionally basic to the academic and professional identities within HE, have a vague or no voice in the interview texts in this study. Knowledge or qualifications crucial in teacher education and the teaching of PE in the complex social, cultural and gendered context of compulsory schooling, are given less attention than interests and choices among students as situated customers. Drawing upon Marginson (1999, 233), in my data the leaders' talk of consumers and choice, competition in the market and recruitment strategies 'itself conditions educational practices and shapes the horizon of the possible'.

Exceptionally, some of the informants in this study pointed to paradoxes in the way their department and staff primarily run their programs of study for the local bachelor degree aimed to meet the student customer. While illuminating the discourse of commodification of knowledge in the current higher education, listening to the way he expressed himself, the Dean at UCA, reflected as follows:

Listen - nowadays we regard our courses in sports and PE to be our commodities in our qualification of PE teachers. In our system, we allow our students to choose, and mix our commodities. If I may say so, *that's how it is!* However, when I'm talking like this, you may ask, *why not* take a more *firm* leadership? And I don't know why In the market way of thinking within higher education, I feel that the ideological debate has become silent. It's all about the demands to recruit students. Accordingly, we have to meet their interests, right? (italics = stressed by the Dean)

By the reflective 'when I'm talking like this', related to the local mix of commodities, John the Dean reflects the dominant managerial discourse at his regional university college. Being the Dean of the department of sport and PE within which the bachelor degree is organized as a technical mix of commodities, he has the feeling that the current culture within HE, voices the market way of thinking and silences ideological debates. However, the commodification of knowledge underpinning the pedagogic discourse does not cause any reflection about the values currently comprising the local degrees, and the Dean in our conversation conveys that he has not put any critical discussion with regard to the local working of the discourses of marketisation on the agenda in his department. When I questioned the lack of critical debates about different values and qualities of the PE in the schools and PETE, another Dean, David at UCB, simply pointed to 'a kind of paradox': 'Nowadays I think there is not much reflection or debates in our staff around what really count to be a quality, professional PE teacher... Actually, replying to your question about such quite crucial issues, there is obviously a kind of paradox'. David's HoP, Ken, frankly answers why this paradox is left off any agenda in the department:

Do you mean if each combination of the 180 credits based on the students' own choices fits a professional education to teach PE? (*I am nodding*). I don't think we have discussed it...Indeed, we don't have any debates at that level.

Firstly, reflections regarding whether or not the students' individual choices of credits or activities take care of the academic and/or professional quality of PETE, are regarded as 'high level professional activity'. Secondly, in the local discourse the wording 'Not any debates at that level', reveals the seeming absence of critical reflection about the development of the local PETE, strongly indicated also by Dean David's statement about the lack of critical debates about values and qualities of PE and PETE curricula and teaching. Answering my question 'In relation to the PETE provided by your department, what kind of themes are most often put on the agenda when members of your staff are debating PETE as a professional degree?', Dean Paul at UCC, voices the kind of paradox which seems to be general among the regional university colleges in the study:

Do you mean debates about issues in any specific PETE context?-- (*I am nodding*)- No, actually, in our department of sport and PE just a few staff members really have a genuine interest in the school system and kinds of professional thinking related to teaching PE in school. Then, back to your question: No, we don't have people in our staff deeply involved in debates about professional issues in PE teacher education - or staff members who question where our programs of study within sport leads - and so to speak, plotting out the lines, no.

Contributing to the illumination of paradoxes which pervade the instructional discourse of PETE in the sample of regional colleges in this study, the Dean adds:

Obviously, it's a paradox that it is possible that our bachelor in outdoor pursuits can form part of our PETE degree (a good laugh) ...You know, the students are *not interested* in PE and school, and probably not stimulated in that direction in our teaching either (a short laugh). However, the guidelines for the teacher education based on the bachelor degree simply are 180 credits according to the reform and the ECTS, *and that suits us*, even if it's not ideal. I mean, *it's not ideal*

in the education of *good* PE teachers... Indeed, I have to put it that way (italics = stressed by the Dean).

Even if it is not argued to be ideal in relation to notions of the education of quality PE teachers, the recognition that the ECTS suits them in meeting the challenges in the market underpins the pedagogic discourse. Accordingly, Dean Paul, like all my informants in this paper, confirms that the university colleges of sport and PETE in my purposeful sample currently play the role of technical administrators of the local bachelor and PETE degrees framed within the Norwegian implementation of the Bologna Declaration's ECTS and easy readable degrees. In the process, pedagogical discourse is recontextualized into ways of managing the individual student choices in terms of the system of credits. The hegemonic local pedagogic discourse at the university colleges legitimates teachers in the departments of sport and PE to be disinterested in PE and the role as PE teacher educators. Moreover, in the institutional discourses of meeting the consumers' interests to recruit them, many of the teachers' interests in activity-based courses in outdoor pursuits and sports are legitimated and appreciated, even though they might have a tenuous connection with school PE or PETE. Framed by the neo-liberal market driven regulative discourse illuminated in the analyses, the instructional discourse of PETE at the regional university colleges reflects both student preferences and staff interests in active sport and outdoor pursuits. In the market discourse questions of knowledge base and pedagogy relevant to school PE and PETE become casualties.

Concluding comments

Contextualized by the neo-liberal era within the Norwegian policy of HE, these analyses illuminate how trends in self-regulation and choice making, have 'become annexed to the market project, so that "choice" and "markets" become treated as one and the same' (Marginson, 1999, p. 231). Drawing upon Bernstein's (1996) theory of pedagogic discourse, production and transmission of knowledge, this paper reveals ways in which individual choices in the market inform the instructional discourse in several de-regulated degrees in sport, outdoor pursuits and PE, and thus, strongly affect what currently is

taught in the PETE degree. At the three Norwegian regional university colleges that formed the focus of this study, the social meanings and outcomes attached to the 3 + 1 model PETE degrees are strongly regulated by market mode of operation in the recruitment of students. Accordingly, the analyses illuminate how marketisation works as a principle for locating and relocating of knowledge in terms of ECTS. Rather than focusing primarily on the needs of students as potential learners and future PE teachers, institutional planning in these regional university colleges now foregrounds targets related to the incentives in the governmental funding of HE within which the recruitment and ‘production’ of credits and degrees are crucial. In that context this Norwegian case study illuminates how educational values, pointed at by Maton (2005, p.599), ‘are being supplanted by value for money’. Following Bernstein (1996, p.87) knowledge is thereby increasingly detached from the knower and commodified such that it can ‘flow like money to wherever it can create advantage and profit’. By the blending together of marketisation processes in the HE policy and the populist movements and trends within sport and outdoor pursuits, this paper problematises the ways in which basic epistemological questions and professional values easily become silenced among leaders at institutions fully dependant on the market. The Norwegian case illuminates ways in which university college leaders read the ‘surrounding texts’ in HE and how regulative discourse creates contexts for ‘relays’ of recontextualization (Tyler, 1995) of marketisation and new managerialism rationalities within the local configurations of bachelor and PETE degrees.

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