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Perceptions of Professional Academic Development: Barriers and bridges between physics lecturers and physics education researchers.

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Abstract content
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Although physics lecturers are experts in evidence-based research, they often rely on anecdotal experience to guide their teaching practices. Adoption of research-based instructional strategies (pedagogical approaches that has shown effectiveness through empirical measurement) remains surprisingly low, despite a large body of physics education research and extensive dissemination efforts by physics education researchers. Addressing the low adoption of research-based instructional strategies is becoming increasingly important in the context of undergraduate physics teaching in South Africa.

As part of a larger study focusing on introductory physics teaching, five lecturers were interviewed to uncover their perceptions of Professional Academic Development. Qualitative content analysis, using 'disciplines as epistemic cultures' as conceptual framework, was employed to analyse the lecturers' interviews. The findings of the study provided valuable insights into the barriers between physics lecturers' perceptions regarding the provision of Professional Academic Development, and physics education researchers with a professional development agenda. In particular, the findings suggested that if the agenda is to enhance undergraduate physics teaching, greater emphasis should be paid to contextualizing Professional Academic Development for 'hard' disciplines such as physics.

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Primary author: Dr LOMBARD, Elsa (NMMU)

Presenter: Dr LOMBARD, Elsa (NMMU)

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