

0001

Undergraduate involvement in research projects: a productive systems approach

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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In 1998 the Boyer Commission report *Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America's Research Universities* set out a vision for greater use of inquiry-based learning approaches in undergraduate education (Katkin 2003). In the U.K. work has been undertaken on behalf of the higher education academy on the various dimensions of the 'research active curriculum' (Healey and Jenkins 2009), and 'student as producer' initiatives have encouraged the collaboration of students and academic staff in research activity. In addition to broadening and enhancing the student learning experience, the benefits of supporting inquiry-based learning could include challenging 'the very organising principles upon which academic knowledge is currently being transmitted and produced' (Neary and Winn 2009: 208). However, this may not articulate seamlessly with increasingly prescriptive models of research funding and wider changes in higher education policy.

The concept of the productive system, as developed originally by Wilkinson (2002) can be used to analyse the possible roles of undergraduate (and taught postgraduate) students in the production of knowledge in higher education, incorporating analysis of both the structural context, and tensions and opportunities in the different 'stages' of production. While inquiry-based learning strategies have considerable potential for transforming undergraduate education, opportunities for research collaboration between academic staff and taught students are set in contexts in which the extent of 'mutual interests' and the dynamics of 'relative power' (Wilkinson 2002) may not always be conducive to the achievement of meaningful outcomes for all parties. There is often a marked dislocation in the activities of the various stakeholders within the contemporary 'multiversity' (Kerr 2001), leaving major challenges for initiatives that aim to bring together staff and students with disparate interests and motivations. Using exemplars of research projects I will illustrate the potential of this analysis, and suggest how mutual interests could be advanced while offering students the opportunity to gain both valuable skills and 'powerful knowledge' (Young 2008).

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0003

“What are Student Nurses Perceptions of their Experiences of Safeguarding Children whilst on their first Planned Community Placement within their Pre Registration Programme?”

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Newer Researchers Conference

Abstract submitted for consideration to present as an individual paper

Theme: The Student Experience

Presentation: It is envisaged that this presentation will share the journey so far of undertaking a professional doctorate using interpretative phenomenology to explore

“What are Student Nurses Perceptions of their Experiences of Safeguarding Children whilst on their first Planned Community Placement within their Pre Registration Programme?”

- The journey will be a timeline of events commencing with reasons for undertaking such a study.
- Choosing and understanding the most appropriate methodology
- Clarifying the research question, how this happened and significant events during the journey
- Submitting the initial proposal
- Applying for ethical approval, where to start, when to apply

Nature of the Research/Methodology

The research that is being undertaken uses interpretative phenomenological analysis. This is a qualitative research methodology which recognises the importance of phenomenology, hermeneutics and ideography when exploring a lived experience (Smith et al 2009). The aim of the research is to investigate an area of education appropriate for a professional doctorate.

- At the time of the conference in December the pilot study and full study interviews will have been completed.
- Study sample: The rationale for this study is underpinned by a dearth of literature on the student's experience of safeguarding and research has argued that safeguarding for qualified nurses can be a difficult subject that they have to face during their professional career (Rowse 2009). A point of discussion within this presentation will be why the experiences of adult student nurses have been selected as opposed to other branches of pre registration health. The Nursing Midwifery Council has also recently cited the importance of adult nurses having adequate training and preparation in safeguarding (Nursing and Midwifery Council, 2011).
- Analysis of at least half of the interviews will have been completed by December and it is envisaged to present to the delegates how the analysis was undertaken using IPA.

Findings

- A brief resume will be presented of the findings to date, what has worked well and what could be improved
- Looking to the future

Annual progression-

- How to prepare for this, writing up the thesis and preparing for the viva

Survival-

- Combining a full time career as a senior lecturer with part time study, how to achieve this and maintain sanity.

References

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Keywords: Interpretative phenomenological analysis, adult student nurses, safeguarding

0004

Curricular Peer Mentoring: Supporting the Changing University

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Poster

Author's preference: Poster

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Higher education is the shared home in which students and educators come together in a spirit of collaboration to construct and create knowledge. At least, this is what higher education could be.

Building a home requires a sturdy foundation. Universities, however, are shifting as they adapt to the changing structure of higher education. Class sizes continue to grow, administrative budgets continue to shrink, and professors continue to balance teaching with research and publication. Therefore, we need to draft a solution that provides stability by addressing the competing demands higher education faces in a manner that is cost-effective for the institution, yet engages students and faculty in the mutual pursuit of academic success.

With its blueprint based on the learner-centred paradigm (Cullen & Harris, 2010), and the integrity of its architecture assessed by The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), higher education can find that solution; curricular peer-mentoring is a possible strategy through which it can do so.

By examining the University of Calgary Arts Peer Mentoring Program, this study sought to determine (i) What good peer-mentoring practices are; and (ii) How these practices can be successfully programmed, facilitated and adapted from one institution to another. Key findings indicate that peer-mentoring programs are (i) cost-effective, (ii) lead to engagement, and (iii) are transferable. Data gained from this qualitative case study is now being used to inform the design of a pilot peer-mentoring program scheduled for implementation in Fall 2013 at Memorial University of Newfoundland.

This study is part of a larger project that recognizes the importance of student engagement on student success (Trowler & Trowler, 2010), and evaluates the potential curricular peer-mentoring has to facilitate engagement as identified by the five overarching NSSE survey benchmarks to be: the (i) level of academic challenge offered by institutions, whether theirs is a (ii) supportive campus environment that places an emphasis on (iii) active and collaborative learning, with potential for (iv) student-faculty interaction; and (v) enriching educational experiences (Kuh, 2003).

Key Words: Administration; Engagement, Mentorship, Student Success

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0005

The Creation of an Internal Quality Assurance System for Performance Evaluations of Japanese University Students based on the British model

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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The problems of the current Japanese system for internal quality assurance in performance evaluations is addressed in the Report entitled 'Toward the Creation of an Undergraduate Curriculum' (24th November, 2008) by the Central Council for Education in Japan. It is pointed out that 'In our nation's universities, performance evaluations are assigned fully to individual academics, and systematic methods of handling them are inefficient'. To encourage reform, the Report calls for 'an objective, systematic method to evaluate learning—with mutual understanding among academics—that starts with the introduction of the Grade Point Average (GPA) system as well as the establishment of performance evaluation criteria and final objectives for each module or subject'. In addition, as part of the detailed improvement plan, the following is stated: 'In order to see if the results of the evaluations are in accordance with the evaluation criteria, a systematic follow-up check should occur. To improve the validity of the performance evaluations, a mechanism to request the participation of third parties unrelated to the academics involved should be examined' (the Central Council for Education in Japan, 2008: 26-27).

As mentioned in the Report, since performance evaluations are entrusted to academics' discretion in Japan, grading and performance evaluation standards tend to be largely inconsistent and ambiguous. Nonetheless, as long as trust in performance evaluations remains very low—regardless of whether individual levels of attainment (student achievement) are clearly reported—society will have little confidence in them. Accordingly, in this paper, I present an example of a British autonomous internal quality assurance system for performance evaluations. Then, I try to explain why this system is able to function despite the restricted working condition where more than two academics have to not only prepare examination contents but also grade results for each module. Through comparing curriculums, I apparently show that the total number of examinations in British universities is much lower than in Japanese universities. Then, using the British system as an example, I propose an internal quality assurance system for performance evaluations as well as describe the environment and infrastructure needed to construct this system.

0006

Investigating the Impact of Learning Culture on Students' Engaged and Creative Use of ICT in Higher Education: An Ethnographic Study

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Key words: ICT-supported educational innovation, higher education, learning culture, learning activities, technology-enhanced learning environment

Based on findings of an empirical study, this presentation will demonstrate the impact of learning culture on students' engagement in ICT-enhanced learning environment in HE. A generic working framework will be grounded based on the research findings, which offers suggestive ideas to researchers in other countries to diagnose culturally anchored characteristics that impact students' learning experience with technologies and manage more efficient ICT-supported pedagogical innovation.

With a growing interest in using new technologies as a 'revolutionary tool' in learning, researchers from around the world have been exploring ICT-supported educational innovation. However, most of the studies only concentrate on teacher's perspective; direct investigations of students' opinions and activities regarding the ICT usage are conspicuously absent from the literature. This renders the picture incomplete since researchers neglected the dynamic nature of university students, who are considered to be 'digital natives', in bringing innovation to their learning through the use of ICT. This study is designed to address this research blind spot by paying a particular attention to university students. The anticipated understandings will draw policy makers' and educators' attention to the demands of the equally important constituency.

This study documents and critically analyses the learning culture in a selected university, in order to understand its impact on how students perceive, perform and persist in ICT-supported learning activities.

A single-site ethnographic study over three months was conducted in 2010. This study was carried out in a university in the Southern part of China, which is a pioneer institution for implementing ICT in learning. Choosing a China's university as the research context provides an opportunity to witness the dramatic tension between a typical traditional Eastern pedagogical philosophy, and the impact of new technologies with embedded Western epistemologies. Such potential tensions portray an animated picture of how culture works on students' ICT adoption in learning.

Findings garnered through a series of interviews and observations uncover evidence that six culturally-anchored factors have shaped significantly students' understandings, needs and use of ICT. They are 1) epistemologies, 2) educational values, 3) trust, 4) power distance, 5) context culture and 6) uncertainty avoidance that are generally shared by the group of students under investigation. The addressed students' ICT-related beliefs and behaviors are justified as the visible symptoms of a deeply rooted cultural impact which has hindered the innovation efforts of HE. The study outcomes contribute to the current knowledge base by illuminating the significance and complexity of learning culture in integrating ICT into teaching.

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0007

Why work in academia? A comparative analysis of motivation and prestige factors of academics in different national contexts.

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Being an academic often now includes engaging in highly applied research that may be closely linked with industry (Gibbons et al, 1994; Molas-Gallart et al, 2002). Although the extrinsic motivator of money is widely used in many societies, there is prima facie evidence that some academic work is not motivated principally in this way. Much academic activity is not financially advantageous, including many collegial activities (McNay, 1995), such as reviewing journal articles and research grant applications (Lamont, 2009). At times of budgetary cutbacks, increasing workloads and associated stress, an understanding of academic motivation seems vital. This paper reports on a project investigating academic motivation and perceptions of the role of prestige factors—those that carry honour, respect and standing—in different national HE contexts. Although not representative of national context, this project looks at the interaction between national factors and institutional and departmental levels. Semi-structured interviews with 5-12 academics in different departments were conducted in America, Ireland and Iceland, and compared with previously collected data in England (for a total of 60 participants in 32 individual interviews and 28 focus group participants).

Major themes emerged around levels and locations of prestige in the previous work done in England, where the impact of the RAE/REF scheme dominated notions of prestige. The interviews conducted in America drew to attention the notion of 'networks' of prestige, and the importance of national and regional institutional hierarchies. In Iceland, the development of a 'research points' system with an institution, with individual high-stakes cash rewards, funnelled notions of prestige, leading to a valuing of international, peer-reviewed journal articles. In Ireland, the lack of national frameworks did not impede the pressures academics faced to produce 'prestigious' research, and tensions were high due to hiring and promotion freezes and increasing numbers of short-term contracts. Analysis of the data will be completed by the time of the conference.

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0008

Shifting Themes in OECD Higher Education Discourse

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Shifting Themes in OECD Higher Education Discourse

Introduction

It is widely believed that OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) substantially influences domestic policy fields including education (Jessop, 2002). As the political economy and OECD have changed since the 1980s, scholars note shifts in OECD discourse away from classic neoliberal perspectives in some policy fields (McBride & Mahon, 2008). This study examines OECD discourse in higher education (HE) for evidence of similar shifts.

Addressing Neoliberalization

The problematic term neoliberal does represent some trend in policy practice and discourse strengthening in the early 1980s. Its core assumptions include:

- self-regulating markets are efficient, government intervention is almost always undesirable,
- entrepreneurialism advances human well-being,
- markets must be created where they do not naturally exist (i.e. education),
- growth is key and requires competition, rational self-interested choice and individual responsibility (Harvey, 2005; Mirowski & Plehwe, 2009).

Methodology

A thematic and critical discourse analysis was conducted on over 100 OECD documents published between 1989 and 2012. Documents included reviews of HE systems of several countries and documents associated with ongoing and recent projects. Of interest were data segments associated with values, constructions and assumptions about higher education, learners, and the economy.

Findings

Instead of redirecting, neoliberal assumptions are strengthened in recent discourse. Two shifts were identified:

- From HE meeting needs of individuals to HE meeting demands of the knowledge-based economy.
- From temporary financial constraints in economic crises to a permanent re-evaluation of levels of public funding.

Earlier documents addressed student-demand-driven massification and getting people jobs during high unemployment and temporary economic crises. Later documents lamented under-skilled human capital promoting HE expansion and reform for innovation and permanently reducing HE's reliance on public funds.

The first shift constructs HE primarily for public benefit justifying expansion. The latter reconstructs HE primarily for private benefit justifying greater private financing. If nations require HE reform, a logical error is committed in claiming students are the largest beneficiaries and should therefore bear more of this cost. This contradiction requires examination.

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0009

The decision-making processes of former apprentices who progress to higher education

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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This paper will present findings from a study investigating the attitudes towards learning of former apprentices in higher education. It will specifically focus on the decision-making process to progress.

Apprenticeship progression has received increasing attention during the last decade. This is partly due to the ambition set out in the 2006 Leitch Report that in England 40% of all adults need to be qualified at level 4. Despite this, only low numbers appear to progress from non-academic routes to higher education (Smith and Joslin, 2011).

Few studies have looked in detail at the decision-making processes of apprentices. A small number of projects have concentrated upon improving aspirations, like those carried out by Lifelong Learning Networks (LNNs) and Aimhigher (Thomas et al. 2012). However, no study has specifically investigated decision-making of those that complete the transition to higher education.

Nineteen individual interviews were carried out with former apprentices in higher education across the south of England. Reflecting a critical realist approach, the results were analysed with reference to modes of reflexivity as described by Archer (2007). These are autonomous reflexives, communicative reflexives, meta-reflexives and fractured reflexives. It was then possible to review the data to identify patterns and anomalies.

Preliminary findings show that decision-making could be mediated by both personal powers and socio-cultural factors. For some of these participants, the social aspects of the workplace and learning environment were integral to their learning experience and decision-making. However, as Dyke and colleagues (2012) found, participants presented different modes of reflexivity depending on the context.

From this paper emerges a complex picture relating to learner identity and transition that can inform future research. It addresses what this group of learners regard higher education to be for and suggests ways to support learners wishing to move between vocational and higher education pathways.

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0010

Recognition of Prior informal Learning: Researching the Learner's Experience

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Introduction

This paper will present the findings of a recently completed study exploring the impact of Recognition of Prior informal Learning (RPL) from a learner perspective, to ascertain if the RPL process is transformative, particularly for learner identity. In addition to providing a starting point for an evidence base within Scotland, this research has the potential to enhance future development within RPL both from the Higher Education Institution (HEI) and sector wide perspectives. RPL is a complex field of study which has been explored worldwide (Andersson and Harris, 2006) and has become increasingly relevant in the Scottish Government's Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning agendas and Skills Strategy (Whittaker, 2011). RPL has been indicated to have the potential to be 'transformative' for learners (Whittaker et al, 2006). While much of the research undertaken on RPL is of great value, there is a dearth of research which pertains to the actual learners' experiences in this area, particularly within HEIs in Scotland and it is this that the present study seeks to address.

Methodology

A constructionist theoretical approach, within the qualitative paradigm, was adopted – as was a case study design, enhancing the researcher's ability to develop a deep and defining meaning, and as such contextual understandings of the learner experience of RPL. This enables the researcher to identify connections between the RPL process and learner identity. Semi structured interviews with RPL learners provided rich data. A purposive sample was selected from one Scottish university who had undertaken the RPL process. Key principles of data analysis were considered and analysed inductively to produce a manageable and meaningful set of data for reporting.

Findings

The study found that that learner identity fluctuates throughout learners' experiences and therefore the development of learner identity is not a linear process. A number of issues ultimately impact upon learner identities and includes the role of others and the RPL mechanisms and processes. This research concluded that RPL has the potential to be transformative for some learners and recommends that there are areas which are worthy of further exploration.

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Key words:

Recognition of Prior informal Learning, Learner Experience, Learner Identity

0011

Promoting Creativity at the University: a Pedagogical Model for Higher Education

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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The research discussed how to promote creativity in the context of higher education. A pedagogical model was proposed based upon a systematic literature review of psychological research.

The literature review focused on the perspectives of personality, social, and cognitive psychology. It indicated that creativity derived from synergy of specific individual motives, attitudes, personality traits, thinking skills, and social environment. First of all, creativity is related to properties of self-belief and bravery to be different, willingness to experiment and take risk, tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty, openness to experience and ideas, perseverance in the face of obstacles and so forth (Barron & Harrington, 1981). Secondly, psychologists advocated that knowledge and domain-specific skills are prerequisites for creativity (e.g., Weisberg, 2006). Third, creative thinking process was a dynamic blend of normal thinking processes (e.g., critical thinking, deductive and inductive thinking) and creative thinking processes (associative thinking, imagination, imagery, insight, intuition, inspiration, etc.). Different constraints were employed in different thinking phases (Finke, Ward, & Smith, 1992). Fourth, creativity was supported by a motive milieu mainly comprising intrinsic motivation, yet complemented by extrinsic motivation (Amabile, 1996). Finally, a rich and safe environment, which encourages and rewards creativity, was valuable.

Based on this literature review, a pedagogical model was constructed in five dimensions guiding teaching and assessment in higher education. (1) Teachers, as the instructor, could encourage creativity-conducive personal attitudes and traits. (2) Teaching should focus on building sophisticated knowledge structure and mastering skills, methodologies and paradigms, to enable students to realize and advance the boundary of their disciplines. In addition, both specialized and general education is crucial, since creativity is fertilized by knowledge of relevant fields. (3) Teachers could design appropriate problems and engage students to improve creative thinking skills. (4) Teachers should emphasize intrinsic motivation, for example, joy, interest, curiosity, pursuit of truth or beauty, wish for self-growth. They need to be careful in controlling extrinsic motivation through feedback and reward, such as material rewards, sense of accomplishment, power, and esteem of others. (5) Higher education institutions should build a culture which values creativity, and a rich community which encourages exchange and collaboration between diversified members.

Key References

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Keywords

Creativity, psychology, higher education, pedagogical model

0012

Learning Conversations: student and academic partnership as a catalyst for student engagement

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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This paper explores the learning experiences of two PhD students at Birmingham City University, who were engaged in a four-month student academic partnership programme (SAP). In particular, we explore our learning conversations which occurred throughout the project as part of a reflexive and analytical dialogue. These conversations helped us to recognise our evolving identities as PhD students and members of the community of practice at Birmingham City University.

Student Engagement.

Student engagement has been a key focus for Birmingham City University as a consequence of the 2009 National Student Survey which identified that students 'didn't feel part of the academic community'. The university developed the concept of student engagement by integrating students into teaching and pedagogic research communities via the SAP. The aim of this was to generate a sense of pride in the institution and student involvement as a member of the academic community. Throughout this paper we will refer to 'student engagement' as:-

'the interaction between the time, effort and other relevant resources invested by both students and their institutions intended to optimise the student experience and enhance the learning outcomes and development of students and the performance, and reputation of the institution.' (Trowler, 2010)

Our learning conversations.

Throughout the course of the SAP programme dialogue became a continuous process between the students. This formed the central methodological feature of our self-reflexive practice. This dialogue explored:

- Our identities of being lone PhD students
- How to balance PhD studies with additional research responsibilities
- Our opinions of the benefits of being part of a university wide research community and the intricate relationship between us as research students
- How to disseminate the SAP project in a mutually beneficial way, but with a focus on enhancing our academic profiles.

Conclusions.

Newbury (2002) identified the doctoral learning student experience as a solitary process. The SAP project invited us into the community of practice at Birmingham City University, where we engaged in a process of joint enterprise, mutuality and trust with academics (Wenger 1997). This was an active process through which we were encouraged and supported to engage in a process of sense-making and collaboration as student-academic partners.

Keywords.

Student engagement, Community of practice, identity, reflexivity, dialogue

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0013

"It's not all about gin and tonic": Investigating an experiential approach to developing employability skills of PR students

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Purpose

The paper aims to contribute to wider consideration of the use of experiential learning strategies to enhance student employability.

Nature of the research

This research reviews student perceptions of the learning achieved using a range of experiential techniques in a 12 week case-based simulation. By December 2012, an initial qualitative study will have been completed in addition to a review of experiential learning literature.

Methodology

Four focus groups will be conducted, representing approximately 50% of the 2012 cohort for a postgraduate degree in public relations.

Pre-study findings

- Average module marks were 7% higher than the overall programme average.
- 61% of students strongly agreed they were 'fully engaged' with the module – the next highest module achieved 48%.

Interestingly, these achievements were accomplished for a module that was only loosely structured. As suggested by Laverie (2006), it appears that working cooperatively in groups to make decisions on the direction and intensity of study delivered exceptional levels of classroom engagement and student activity.

Further, anecdotal evidence from recent graduates and students going for interview has highlighted the practical relevance of the exercises undertaken.

Study findings

Final presentation will review:

- Student perceptions of simulation as a highly effective learning method, as suggested by Vos & Brennan (2010), for developing employability skills.
- Ability of students to fulfil each of the key elements of an experiential learning exercise – involve, observe, reflect, conceptualise, integrate, decide and solve problems (Kolb 1984, p. 236).
- Attitudes towards multiple role-play situations within the classroom and online.
- Effects of conducting exercises in real time to better simulate the time pressures facing PR practitioners.
- Impact of a range of role-play teaching styles (Baruch, 2006).
- Effectiveness of reflective activities in formative and summative assessment.

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0014

What is the benefit of research for learning? Chinese and Dutch university teachers' beliefs

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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As Healey (2005, p.183) puts it, "linking research and teaching is a topic of international interests". Many institutions tend to incorporate research and teaching, but how teachers connect research in their teaching is unknown. Besides, the research-teaching nexus becomes more complicated in the face of many challenges, for example, a changing context of higher education (e.g. Robertson & Blackler, 2006). Comparative studies between Chinese and Dutch universities may help to see how teachers from different cultural contexts experience the current challenges. Such understandings may serve as starting point for further research into the nature of the nexus between research and teaching.

Research question

The study will focus on university teachers' beliefs about the role of research in their teaching activities. For this purpose, we asked the following research questions: What are university teachers' beliefs about the role of research in their teaching activities, and what are the similarities and differences between Chinese and Dutch university teachers' beliefs?

Method

To answer the questions, a questionnaire was developed on the basis of recent literature about teacher beliefs, teaching approaches, and the research-teaching nexus. The questionnaire asks teachers about the research culture in their institution, beliefs about teaching and learning, and beliefs about the goals of including research in both their ideal teaching and actual teaching. Teachers responded on a five-point Likert scale. Around 130 responses were collected from each country.

Preliminary results

I now report some preliminary findings from the initial analysis of a sub-set of the Chinese participants.

Significant differences between the ideal teaching and actual teaching were found with regard to teachers' beliefs about the role of research in their teaching. Teachers are positive in linking research and teaching to benefit student learning in the ideal situation, but neutral or slightly negative in the actual teaching. Moreover, fostering a creative disposition is believed to be the most important goal for teachers to include research in their teaching. The goal to foster a sense of creativity in students has the highest mean score of 4.30 (.78) in the ideal situation and 3.59 (.87) in the actual situation on a five-point Likert scale.

At the conference I would like to discuss the results of my questionnaire study. Currently data collection is complete. By the time of the presentation, I will be able to report on a complete analyses of teachers' beliefs and comparisons between Chinese and Dutch teachers.

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0015

Negotiating access to higher education in Nigeria: how have disabled students fared?

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Felix Olakulehin

University of Leeds, Leeds, West Yorkshire, UK

Over the past two decades, policymakers in Nigeria and other countries have worked to increase access to higher education. This orthodoxy of massification however, masks some underlying inequities in access and participation of disadvantaged groups who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education. Thus, the National Open University of Nigeria, a distance education institution, was established in 2002 to increase access opportunities of disadvantaged Nigerians, including the disabled, to higher education. Despite the overall increases in enrollment, disabled people (estimated as 20% of Nigeria's 167million population) remain underrepresented in higher education (Ojerinde 2008).

Purpose: This paper reports the lived experiences of disabled students at the National Open University of Nigeria, to illuminate how powerful social and structural factors shape their diverse experiences of participation in higher education. The report forms part of a wider doctoral study, which explores access of disadvantaged groups to higher education in Nigeria.

Fieldwork combined semi-structured interviews of disabled students, university academics and administrative staff, with analysis of some key policy documents. Theoretical frameworks that facilitated data analysis are the social model of disability (Oliver 2009), and Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of capital, field and habitus (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977).

Disabled students reported experiences of discrimination, low self-esteem, and restrictions from disabling physical environment, financial inadequacy, and rigid course registration and examinations procedures. There is also general anxiety about post-graduation job prospects based on previous discriminatory experiences. Moreover, findings indicate that disabling university practices and structures impede effective participation of current students, and potentially restrict prospective disabled students from gaining access to university education. Insights from university academics reveal differing views and responses ranging from outright ignorance and disinterestedness to informed awareness about the experiences of disabled students.

Higher education leaders, policymakers, and academics need to be aware that: i) disabled people's identities and experiences are shaped by complexity of factors including policies and practices within the university social structure (Shah and Priestley 2011); ii) the interpretation and implementation of access policies are affected by the understanding of university staff; and iii) disabled learners have disproportionate resources and opportunities that could complicate their engagement and participation compared with non-disabled students. Bourdieu's work have some relevance in explaining how the identities and subjectivities of disabled people impact on their access to, performance in, and overall experience of, higher education in Nigeria.

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0016

Learning outcomes, assessment led curricula: discussion and dissent

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Sharon Edwards

Buckinghamshire New University, Uxbridge, UK

Purpose:

This paper will attempt to debate the issue of learning outcomes and the assessments that arise from them and start to open up some opposition to these concepts that are generally regarded in nurse education as unproblematic and seen as inherently positive. The issues of learning outcomes and assessment raise questions and issues, which need to be analysed by the discipline of education.

Nature of the paper:

Critical analysis of methodologies and methods that we use to understand Higher Education

Key arguments:

There is currently a change in the underlying values of education. The ethos is such that every individual aspect of education must be capable of being judged in isolation against criteria. Each module, course and teaching lesson should have learning outcomes or objectives, which clearly demonstrate that something of value has been achieved. Hussey and Smith (2002) point out that learning outcomes are used to specify precisely what a student shall know or understand, and what skill or capacities they will have at the end of a specific period of learning. Their use is now widely mandated within the educational system; they are lauded by managers and insisted upon by the QAA and clearly seen as a good idea (Hussey and Smith, 2003).

Learning outcomes do have legitimate uses and there is no doubt that learning outcome-driven measurement system provides critical information to educators on the effectiveness of the design, delivery and direction of an education program. In this way the focus of an institution's assessment efforts is on the measurement of student learning outcomes in a systematic and valid manner.

The importance of assessment is clearly stressed. Assessment tasks can be derived from learning outcomes; they can be designed to measure what students can do (Furedi, 2003). Not only that, assessment criteria can be devised which can then be distributed to assessors and assessed. If educators fail to assess it, it may not be covered, the students will opt out and the curriculum then becomes learning outcomes and assessment led. Students will not bother to learn an area if it is not assessed, and, as such a topic will fail to have any impact.

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Key words:

Learning outcomes, assessment, learning

0017

Student consumerism in the UK: Assessing the impact of the 2012 tuition fee increases in a nationwide comparative survey

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Nesrin Gokcen

University of East London, London, UK

Purpose:

This presentation seeks to share with delegates preliminary findings from a UK-wide survey of first-year undergraduates' consumerist attitudes towards higher education as a function of the present increases in tuition fees.

Background:

Student consumerism has been widely debated in the United States since the 1970s. Whilst some arguments affirm advantages of student consumer identity, most contend it interferes with student-scholar relationships and causes instrumental learning (Delucchi & Korgen, 2002). UK debate on consumerism has increased following more recent marketization and introduction of tuition fees, with similar criticisms to those in the US, particularly since the 2012 fee increase (Wakeling & Jefferies, 2012). Because these debates are predominantly theoretical, empirical assessment of the impact of rising tuition fees on student consumerism is required to support students/institutions and inform future policy in this area (Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005).

Present work:

Building on the rise in consumerism following marketisation and tuition fees observed in the US, we hypothesise similar changes in the UK may also be associated with increased student consumerism following the 2012 fee rises. Scores from the Consumerist Attitudes Toward Undergraduate Education Scale (Fairchild et al., 2007) were collected as part of a larger project from 1035 first-year undergraduates in 2011-12 (pre-fee-rise) across England, Scotland, and Wales. This data is to be compared with consumerism scores from a similar sample of first-year undergraduates in 2012-13 (post-fee-rise), to be available by December 2012, across nations, STEM/non-STEM disciplines, and domicile and debt statuses.

Conclusions:

If results support our hypothesis, it will be argued that current fee changes may be associated with trends such as student-scholar relationship deterioration and instrumental learning in the future. Further empirical work assessing the prevalence, correlates, and predictors of student consumerism in the context of ongoing fee increases is required to substantiate arguments regarding its implications for professional practice. This in turn will enable evaluation of the policy for its contributions to bettering the sector and guidance on future policy in this area.

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0018

Learning from practice: the value of story in nurse education

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Sharon Edwards

Buckinghamshire New University, Uxbridge, UK

Nature of the research:

Reporting on completed research

Background

Currently there are two strong tendencies in our approaches to nurse education. One is a 'top down' managerialist tendency, which is theory focused, and where 'reflection on action' is from a theoretical perspective or in the light of extrinsic criteria related to assessment dominates. The other is a 'bottom up' tendency, focussed on practice itself as a resource for learning, and recommending 'reflection in action' (moment to moment decision making), which unfortunately is difficult to assess and teach. However, to be effective, professional practice must unite the two in some way or other.

Literature around the use of story

The nature of story has been described through types and characteristics (Elliott, 2006), but focuses on the humanness of stories (Squire, 2009) and how they can be used to express emotions (Christiansen and Jensen, 2008). The two traditions of learning e.g. Vygotsky and Piaget (Daniels, 2005) were considered to help understand any role story might have. In general, however, it is proposed that story is not being used to its full potential.

Methodology, approach and sample:

The research approach chosen is narrative methodology and the methods used to collect data are developed for application with student nurses' written stories, to explore story as a potential aid to learning from clinical practice. The research approach includes the use of students' as participants and as researchers (Reason, 1994). I collected 55 students written stories and their learning. The analysis of student stories used Leiblich et al (1998) narrative analysis.

Key argument, findings, implications, and/or conclusions

This research suggests that story can have a revelatory role, an exploratory role and be used as an aid to learning. The use of story as an aid to learning attempts to combine the two traditions of learning and the two strong approaches to nurse education. This evidence supports the idea of teachers finding time to engage with their students' stories and to encourage them to explore story as an individual and in groups.

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Keywords

Story, learning, practice, student lived experience

0019

'A lot of people don't understand that you've done a BTEC that isn't hair & beauty' Vocational learners at elite universities

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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University of Bath, Bath, UK

This paper will report on a mixed method study into the experiences of vocational learners in selecting higher education (HE) and specifically a local Russell Group and 1994 Group institution. The research has sought to identify possible opportunities for synergy between the vocational and widening participation agendas, identify the inclusivity of selective university environments and the effectiveness of vocational education and training (VET) in preparing learners for HE.

There are low, yet increasing numbers of learners with vocational qualifications progressing to elite universities. Participation in level 3 VET has increased (Colley et al. 2003) yet less than 50% of VET learners progress to HE by the age of 21 compared to 90% of learners with two or more A Levels (Connor et al 2006). A-level qualifications continue to be the predominant pathway for those entering highly selective degree courses at pre-1992 universities (Hoelscher et al. 2008). Learners from VET backgrounds do widen rather than simply increase participation (Hoelscher et al. 2008) but it remains a question whether the distribution across the HE sector constitutes fair access.

Questionnaire responses have been received from 49 vocational learners at two selecting HE institutions, followed by 16 in-depth interviews exploring social and educational background, HE expectations, preparation, experiences of academic and social integration and the development of learner identities. Findings confirm those of Hoelscher et al's (2008) that learners with VET are likely to be from lower socio-economic groups, have a parent without a HE qualification and live in low participation neighbourhoods. VET learners are more likely to withdraw from HE, but those who persist can achieve a good honours degree highlighting the importance of ensuring learners chose the right institution and course. Vocational learners often come to see themselves as potential selective university material later in their learning career, with the impetus to apply often coming from the advocacy of a post-16 tutor.

The challenge is to ensure that all learners irrespective of background, context and previous educational experience feel that the HE environment is inclusive. The paper will explore implications for HE institutions and open up for discussion the recommendations.

Keywords: vocational, widening participation, selecting universities, transition

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0020

PHARMACY ACADEMICS: COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE AND IDENTITIES

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Sue Burton¹, Shirley-Anne Boschmans¹, Christopher Hoelson²

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Purpose and nature of presentation:

This presentation will describe how membership of multiple communities has contributed to the development of the identity of pharmacy academics. It presents the findings of completed empirical research, contained within a broader, qualitative study aimed at identifying the self-perceived professional identity of pharmacy educators, within the South African context.

Background:

Current thinking views identity as a dynamic, negotiated process, involving a relationship between individuals and the social structures in which they are situated (Whitchurch & Gordon, 2010). Structures within higher education find academics, particularly those in vocational programmes, such as pharmacy, situated within numerous academic and vocational communities (Winberg, 2008). Within this context, academic identity becomes what Wenger (1998, p. 163) describes as a "nexus of multi membership" requiring a "process of reconciliation across boundaries of practice". Furthermore, the work required to reconcile these various facets of identity can be a source of personal growth and a stimulus for social cohesion with identity both a consequence of and a determining force for social structure.

By identifying and describing the communities which pharmacy academics perceive as being primary to their identity, this paper will consider the reciprocal relationship between academic identity and the social structures within which they are negotiated.

Methods:

Located within a constructivist-interpretative paradigm, the study involved in-depth, interviews with eight pharmacy academics, selected using purposive sampling. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analysed using an inductive, content analysis approach. Issues of trustworthiness and authenticity of data were considered and addressed, and due regard was given to ethical considerations.

Key findings and conclusions

A diverse range of academic identities emerged, influenced by an array of communities, including the discipline or department, the faculty, teaching and/or research communities. However, most participants, irrespective of their level of active involvement with pharmacy communities external to the university, viewed membership of the broad community of pharmacy as underpinning their identity, and providing a distinctive sense of value and purpose in the academic context. The findings that will be presented, suggest that even within a narrow discipline, such as pharmacy, academic identities are contextual, multifaceted, and dynamic. The community within the university which is most perceived to support a constructive identification of the academic with the pharmacy profession, is often viewed as their primary community of practice.

Keywords: pharmacy; pharmacy academic; academic identity, professional identity, community of practice

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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0021

The academy and community: seeking authentic voices inside higher education

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Poster

Author's preference: Individual paper

Julie Worrall

University of East Anglia, Norwich, Norfolk, UK

Individual paper and poster presentation

The purpose is to introduce doctoral research on, 'The academy and community: seeking authentic voices inside higher education.'

The research

The author, an insider researcher, is exploring the idea of community as perceived and experienced by a purposive sample of eleven academics at one higher education institution through a series of extended conversations and focus groups. She is employed at the institution in a new management role that relates to the research area and has recently delivered a national programme aimed at changing the culture of her own institution.

Theoretical framework

The author has devised a theoretical framework utilising Bourdieu's concepts of field, habitus and agency, and relevant concepts of academic identity as featured in the literature which highlights a strong correlation between individuals, institutions and identity. This provides an analytical lens through which she may see how to embed and connect academics' perspectives on community. It also enables her to utilise the concept of identity as a social as well as an individual construct. Significantly, Bourdieu's notion of epistemic reflexivity enables her to legitimately embrace her subjective reality as a part of the research.

Agency: 'the idiosyncratic: the unique perspectives of individuals'

Habitus: 'embedding institutional and collective actions'

Field: 'the paradoxical: sites where individual perspectives are contested'

Epistemic reflexivity: the author as, 'native to the research'

Emergent themes

Community make-up, a sense of belonging, of community; hidden and unheard voices, big and little stories; being subversive, serving usefulness; connections and attachments, and disengagement from the official narrative.

Selected references

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Keywords

community, belonging, voices, academic, subversive

0022

Neo-charismatic Leadership: A New Theory for Effective Leadership in Higher Education

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Ghada Angawi²

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This presentation reports on a completed research that focused on exploring leaders' behavioural roles in the context of strategic decision-making in higher education (HE). The research aimed to enrich HE leadership theory and practice in response to local and global demands for transforming the future of HE. Leadership in HE is a field that was considered under researched until recently (Bargh et al, 2000; Bryman, 2007; Middlehurst, 1993; Tight, 2003). The research used the neo-charismatic model (NCM) as a framework for analysis to test its applicability to the HE context (Conger and Kanungo, 1998; Mendonca and Kanungo, 2007). The model emphasise an ethical dimension, which is further explored in the research.

Methodology

A qualitative case study approach was used which involved three leaders of HE in two cases in the UK and three types of strategic decisions: (1) location and reorganisation, (2) input (buildings and funds), and (3) boundaries (Butler, 1998). Two main methods were used in this research: document analysis and semi-structured interviews.

Conceptual framework

The theory encompasses seven leadership behavioural roles for transforming institutions in three consecutive stages:

- (1) The search for opportunity: involves three roles: assessing the environment, being sensitive to people's needs, and challenging the status quo.
- (2) Formulating a shared vision: involves two roles: formulating a shared vision and articulating it.
- (3) Devising means to achieve the vision: involves two roles: taking personal risks and acting unconventionally.

Findings

Data analysis revealed a set of recurring behavioural roles, which were compared between the two cases. Two of the model's behavioural roles at the last stage were merged to suit the context of HE: unconventional behaviour, and taking personal risks. Three new behavioural roles were found to be effective and added to the last stage of the model, totalling nine effective behavioural roles. The findings suggest that the NCM is a highly relevant construct for understanding effective leadership in HE. Moreover, the NCM places an emphasis on an ethical dimension that influenced how leaders took decisions and reacted to the context and therefore were attributed charisma. Finally, leaders were able to influence the context when behaving with the characteristics depicted by the NCM.

Key words

Charismatic, effective, leadership, Higher Education, strategic-decisions.

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0023

Student midwives' experiences of mentoring in practice during the three-year midwifery programme

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Poster

Author's preference: Poster

Sheena Simpson

University of West London, Brentford, Middlesex, UK

Few studies have reported on student midwives mentoring experiences during their hospital and community placements. The purpose of this study was to examine student midwives' impressions of their mentoring experience during their practice placements to establish the effectiveness of the current mentoring system in developing competent, qualified midwives. The need for this is paramount, driven by the requirement to safeguard the public from students who are not ready to qualify as midwives (NMC 2009).

Rationale: a contention for the majority of student midwives was relating to inadequate mentor support, clinical supervision, feedback on their performance and getting their practice assessment book completed during their hospital and community placement. These issues are highlighted in studies on students' experiences in practice (Yearly, 1999; Begley Begley 2001; Kroll et al. 2009) that showed some students experience minimal support, clinical supervision and feedback on clinical performance due to time constraints, staff shortages and mentors increasing workloads (DoH 2010). Hence, this study sets out to examine the reality of students' mentoring experience during their practice placements as a teaching and learning strategy for producing competent midwives.

I will be reporting on my completed research study.

Methodology: a phenomenological approach guided this qualitative study. Students recruited to this study were from five different practice placements but they undertook midwifery training at the same London University. Nine female student midwives participated in open-ended audiotaped- recorded interview describing their subjected experience of mentoring. The descriptions were analysed using Interpretive and Narrative Phenomenological Analysis (Langdrige 2007; Haase 1987; van Manen 1990). Significant statements were extracted, meanings formulated, and themes identified.

Findings: eight distinctive categories identified from the data were: (1) understanding of mentoring, (2) preliminary arrangements, (3) shattered expectations and the heroic notion of mentoring, (4) professional relationship, (5) horror stories, (6) community versus hospital experience, (7) teaching and learning strategies and (8) professional ethics. These categories are reflected through three main themes: (a) the conceptions of mentoring, (b) experiences of mentoring and (c) learning in the real world.

Conclusion: this study found high quality mentoring is a fundamental requirement for midwifery education. This finding is compatible with other research in demonstrating the need for mentors to have dedicated time with students to promote effective learning.

Key words: student midwives, midwifery education, mentorship, mentoring experiences.

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0024

Creating International Experience in Transnational Higher Education: case studies of UK TNE in China

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Xiao Xu

Bangor University, Bangor, UK

Purpose

What is higher education for in the 21st century? One significant aspect is to prepare the students for a globalising world, being ready to survive and thrive in an international working environment. Such mission has long been recognised in transnational higher education (TNE), a generic term referring to higher education provision outside the home country of the university. However, there is little empirical research investigating how TNE creates the international experience and even less from the students' perspectives. This paper attempts to address this issue based on an empirical investigation of two UK TNE campuses in China. It will address the following questions:

- What are the educational ideas and strategies adopted by the two TNE cases for creating international learning environment?
- How do they translate their ideas into actions?
- What are the students' feedbacks of their learning experience?

Methodology and Nature of the Research

The research uses mainly qualitative data collected from the relevant documents and the interviews with the students and staff.

- Samples: two UK TNE cases in China

Both TNE cases have physically established campuses in China and provide undergraduate degree programmes.

o Case A: an independent University (University A) cooperatively established by UK-A University and PRC-A University

o Case B: a cooperatively established college (College B) affiliated to a Chinese university (PRC-B University)

- Campus Visits:

o Campus & Class Observation

o Student Interviews

o Staff Interviews

Key Arguments

1. TNE is different from overseas studies. While receiving a foreign education, TNE students are still studying in their own cultural environment. Therefore, TNE has to make further efforts to create a unique campus and learning experience.
2. Both TNE cases are active in creating international campus, recruiting mainly international teaching staff, getting more non-Chinese students, and using English widely on campus.
3. To make a sustainable development and keep a competitive edge in an overseas market, UK TNE needs to localise well into the hosting culture. A direct transplant of UK programmes will not result in the best educational outcomes.

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Key words:

Transnational Higher Education (TNE); Student Experience; International Campus;

0025

If an academic does a course on teaching, will it make any difference to the educational practices of their departments?

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Jenny Pizzica^{1,2}, Robert Heard¹, Rose Leontini¹, Jill Thistlethwaite³, Mary Jane Mahony¹
¹University of Sydney, Sydney, NSW, Australia, ²University of Technology, Sydney, NSW, Australia,
³University of Queensland, Herston, QLD, Australia

This paper explores how we may better understand whether academic staff who complete formal professional development in university teaching and learning change their organisation's education practices. We look at the experiences of university academic staff in one discipline who completed a formal qualification through a Master of Medical Education in health and medicine. Although this paper presents a discipline specific exploration of academic development, the research implications can be relevant to university teachers and academic developers who aim to develop initiatives that will enhance the practices of the university, as well as the practices of individual academics.

With the increasing regulation of teaching quality in higher education, governments search for evidence of how university academic development programs 'work' (ALTC 2010). Studies that are focused on the impact evaluation of these programs show changes in teacher's knowledge and conceptions, and improvements in the satisfaction ratings of their students (Knight 2006). The focus has remained on what these teachers transfer from the development program to their own teaching rather, than on examining how the program is intended to affect the organisations in which academics work (Trowler and Bamber 2005).

Data in this study were collected through in-depth interviews with nine program participants who are now working in various organisations including universities and teaching hospitals. Interviews were conducted 1-3 years after they had completed the program with a view to examining the changes and developments in practices over time, and since graduation.

An interpretative framework using practice theory (Schatzki 2006) was used to better understand the links between individual actions and organisational practices over time. This involved shifting the analysis from a focus on the individual academic to an examination of how the activities of an individual academic are inherently connected to the practices of their colleagues, their departments, their specialty and profession. Rather than seeing the activities of an individual as being constrained or enabled by organisational factors, the practice lens has helped us to see an organisation (a department, a faculty, a university) as a space in which the activities of individuals come together to form the practices of the organisation. The impact of the education program is seen through its role in influencing some organisational practices to persist, dissolve or change.

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0026

The discourse of the analyst: adopting a Lacanian psychoanalytic researcher stance in a higher education research project.

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Zoe Charalambous

Institute of Education, London, UK

My research explores the question: 'what do we learn when we write?' 'What does the practice of writing teach us?' To look at this more closely, I designed an experiment course made up of six classes. At each class, a different creative writing exercise-game was presented and the participants (volunteer undergraduate Creative Writing students) were asked to write for 20 to 30 minutes. After that the participants had the option to read what they wrote and comment on each other's work. I facilitated the discussion without any contribution of opinion with regards what they said. One on one interviews before and after the course were also conducted, where I remained silent and used the interviewees' phrases or free association in order to allow the participants to speak as 'openly' as possible.

Drawing from Lacan's psychoanalytic theory, using 'the discourse' or 'the stance of the analyst' I attempted to develop a 'distinct' psychoanalytic stance as a researcher, interviewer and facilitator towards my participants. To describe briefly, Lacan says that the psychoanalyst must not represent something to the analysand (Fink, 2004, 32) so that the analysand will not speak what she thinks is 'wanted'/demanded/expected by the analyst. Analysis is about the desire of the analysand (the person in analysis), not the desire of the analyst.

This paper discusses how the metaphor of the concept 'discourse of the analyst' has been translated into my adopted stance in this research project. I explore the ways in which adopting 'the discourse of the analyst' might help produce new spaces of meaning or non-meaning in the data generation and analysis by using examples from recorded class-discussion, the participants' writing and notes made before and after class. The epistemological implications of applying psychoanalytic concepts in research methodology, that relate to the 'objectivity' of the data generated and consequently the 'subjectivity' of interpretations drawn from the data, provide new approaches to current research methodologies employed in research in Higher Education and trigger new understandings of the purpose of Higher Education.

Fink, B. (2004). *Lacan to the Letter: Reading Ecrits Closely*. University of Minnesota Press : Minneapolis, London.

0027

First year undergraduate transitional experiences: what can they tell us about the current shape of higher education?

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Deborah Le Play

De Montfort University, Leicester, UK

Aim

Whilst there is a wealth of literature and research on student transition to higher education (Leese, 2010; Briggs et al., 2012) which seeks to explain the transition phenomenon, this paper will argue that understanding the nature and, in particular, the nuances of first year undergraduate transitional experiences is helpful in the context of current debates about the shape and purpose of higher education.

Small-scale empirical study

It presents the findings of a small-scale empirical study undertaken in a post-1992 higher education institution in the Midlands as part of a recently submitted doctoral (EdD) thesis. The study involves data gathered through student and academic tutor individual interviews and a Student Experience Café between 2009-11.

Conceptual framework

Drawing on the notion of 'interpretative repertoire' (Wetherell and Potter, 1988) the empirical data are organized into 'linguistic markers' of transitional experiences which are: engagement; relationships and community; autonomy and transition; and individual investment. Further analysis of the data leads to the proposition of a deficit model which is explored and explained using Bourdieu's thinking tools: habitus, capital and field (Bourdieu, 1980; 1984; 1989). A conceptualization of first year student transitional experiences is proposed as part of the wider debate about the purpose of higher education in 21st century.

Key arguments

The paper argues that students' '(un)successful' transition to higher education is premised on (mis)alignment with mainstream higher education practices and that despite current government and institutional policies which suggest that higher education is desirable, accessible, empowering and possible for all, in practice this applies to only those students whose cultural and social capital 'fit' mainstream higher education practice. Debates about higher education futures must therefore include a 'troubling' (Gale, 2011) of current policy and practice and a re-thinking of the academic field.

Key words: transition to higher education, Bourdieu

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Trends in Researcher Mobility: A comparative study between Japan and United Kingdom

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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¹*Brunel University, London, UK*, ²*Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, Ishikawa, Japan*

Here-in, we present our preliminary findings on the trends in the mobility of research-active academic staff in United Kingdom and Japan. Through analysis of publicly available curriculum vitae of academics in STEM, we aim to address the impact of mobility on factors that contribute to and characterise career progression of academics.

Revealing the characteristics of academic career progression, especially mobility-related progression is of rising concern especially in relation to the concept of internationalisation. There is an increased realisation that both students and academic staff have must develop the ability to work out-with their 'natural' environments, and adapt to working in a flattened world[1]. Programs such as ERASMUS, ERASMUS Mundus and UMAP aim to improve mobility of early stage researchers[2]. Early career academics, who aspire to become renowned academics in their chosen field, aim to achieve sufficient publications, collaborations and impact among other merits in order to become Heads of Research Groups. Existing research informs us that mobility is one factor that is pertinent to their progress.

Curriculum vitae of current Heads of research groups (HoRGs) in the STEM subject areas will be studied to establish mobility patterns from their first postgraduate qualification to their current academic position. The study is limited to HoRGs who have been in their current role over a period of 2 years to 20 years. Their mobility will be given a score that describes their movement geographically. Heads of research groups based in UK and in Japan will be studied separately to understand the similarities and differences in the two culturally, politically and geographically different countries. In the initial phase of this research, we aim to interpret the trends in conjunction with the intrinsic cultural differences of the two countries and their responses to internationalisation. In the later stages of this research, parameters that characterise and quantify the achievements and academic status of the individuals will be compared with the mobility score the individual attained as a result of their geographic mobility.

Initial findings in data from UK and Japan show a range of mobility scores within comparable academic fields, with higher scores attained towards the early phases of the career graph. Mobility between academia and industry is predominant in the Japanese data. Due to the retrospective nature of this study and the focus being over a wide window of each academic's career graph, this study has the potential to reveal numerous quantitative and qualitative findings.

[1] Freidman, T.L. *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, NY, 2005.

[2] Gnanam, A. *A Regional Perspective from the Asia-Pacific Region*, 2002.

0029

The university as axis mundi– a narrative analysis of policy and organisational change in UK higher education

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Jeannie Holstein

University of Nottingham, Nottingham, UK

This paper presents findings from a pilot study, of a wider research project, into strategic responses of universities to and in dealing with the policy framework in the UK. The paper asks how the narrative of 'the university' is used to legitimate organizational change.

The policy of higher education in the UK is apparently long settled. New Public Management, by which the market is championed, is pre-eminent; at paradoxical (Hood and Peters, 2004) and even existential cost (Barnett, 2011) in universities. Considered at a strategic level within the university, the literature has loosely coalesced more broadly around 'what' organizational form the university has taken or is destined to take; forms widely distrusted and even considered illegitimate (Collini, 2012; Holmwood, 2011). Consequently, at a strategic level in the university, a monolithic consensus to policy is imagined, rather than empirically tested. The paper addresses this gap. It is located within wider debates on organisational change as a socially constructed reality, as negotiated meanings and as an inter-textual phenomenon, and addresses a wider gap in the understanding of policy as a narrative process (Brown et al. 2009).

Data is being collected and interpreted in a multiple case study of four research-intensive universities through – interview, document review, and observation. To date the pilot study has completed interviews with senior managers in two universities (12); a narrative analysis of policy documents (1997 to 2012; 1017 pages) and corporate documents (250 pages per case study); and 12 hours of observation.

Initial findings show that within policy there is a narrative of the university as axis mundi of the 'private' 'public' and 'social', which is used to legitimate organisational change. There is strategic alignment by the organisation with the 'private' for external legitimacy, but in a way which is consciously ephemeral, due to its temporality. Alignment with the 'public' and 'social', is considered as a more historically-contingent narrative, and is also made, but in particular in post-hoc legitimisation of organisational change. This holds that the narrative is rhetorically deployed, both externally and internally.

Next steps: Investigation into consistency within policy post-2010; and further data collection and analysis.

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Key words: policy; narrative; organisational change; universities

0030

Exploring perspectives to inform best practice in the delivery of an internships/work placements scheme within HE: a pilot study

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Anna Tristram, Hilarie Bateman
University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK

Purpose: In this presentation, I report on the findings of a pilot study for an internships/work placements scheme in a UK HE institution. Within the pilot we aimed to respond to current policy recommendations, draw on documented good practice, refer to relevant academic literature, and apply this in a way which would clarify the benefits sought by employer organisations and participating students and support their realisation. Policy documents and literature referred to in this context include the Wilson Review of Business-University Collaboration; reports and publications from key stakeholders (e.g. the Association of Graduate Recruiters; Higher Education Careers Services Unit; other professional and industry bodies); as well as discussions of the generalizability of qualitative research (e.g. Schofield 1993).

Nature of research, Sample & Methodology: The pilot study reported here was conducted in Spring/Summer 2012 in a college of the University of Cambridge. Its objectives included: to gauge the level and nature of interest from employers and students; to understand the steps involved and how best to facilitate the process; to consider the level of resourcing required for the scheme. The process, outcomes and any issues arising were systematically recorded, and detailed qualitative feedback was obtained from students and employers.

Key argument/findings: 50 students applied for the opportunities on offer within 9 organisations in various sectors, resulting in about 20 internships/placements. Through the data collected we are able to clarify the scope for an internship scheme of this nature and the likely benefits and issues for the different stakeholders involved. By acknowledging the different perspectives, we are able to suggest how similar schemes can be implemented to provide mutual benefit. The key argument of the presentation is that a sustainable scheme will need to earn the commitment of all stakeholders (employers, students, universities) and this can only be achieved through a clear-sighted and grounded exploration of responsibilities and benefits for the different participant groups.

Keywords: internships, employability, mutual benefits/responsibilities

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Wilson, Tim. 2012. A Review of Business-University Collaboration

0031

What and who is Higher Education for?: Researching the selection of student nurses and midwives

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Ruth Taylor, Colin Macduff, Tracy Humphrey, Brian Webster
Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, UK

Recent UK press debate about health care standards has focused on the nursing profession and ensuring selection of the right people (e.g. Patterson, 2012). Since 2008 the Scottish Government has been supporting research on evidence-based approaches to recruitment, selection and retention of student nurses and midwives. The other UK countries are also engaged with similar challenges. This presentation will give an overview of the context, methods, findings and implications of NHS Education for Scotland (NES)-funded research examining selection practices in Scottish Higher Education.

Given the lack of an evidence-base for selection methods (Rogers and Stenhouse, 2010), yet a concurrent professional requirement for face-to-face engagement (NMC, 2010), HEIs invest in a variety of approaches including group or individual interviews. Thus the national research project evaluates face-to-face interviewing and related selection processes as reliable and valid selection tools. In addition, we draw on findings from a structured evaluation of the selection processes used within our own School.

Nature of the research

Both projects are empirical and will be complete by the time of the presentation.

Methodology, approach and sample

Seven out of the ten Scottish HEIs offering nursing and/or midwifery education participated in the national research. The research team developed an analytic model informed by an ongoing literature review.

1. Exploratory questionnaire – (Admissions Tutors) to:
 - a. Scope the selection processes
 - b. Uncover perceptions on strengths and weaknesses.
2. Questionnaire – (key stakeholders - academic and clinical interviewers, and students) to:
 - a. Determine views on selection processes and to inform the focus groups.
3. Focus groups – (key stakeholders) to:
 - a. Develop the analytic model
 - b. Draw inferences on the validity and reliability of the tools used for selection.
4. Modified Delphi approach – (expert group) to:
 - a. Achieve consensus on the validity and reliability of the analytic model for decision-making in the use of selection processes.

Implications

The local project demonstrated that the School's processes have some strengths in terms of reliability and face validity but lack predictive validity. The national project will develop the evidence-base for selection influencing policy at local and national levels. This informs wider conference debate on whether higher education is for professional preparation, personal development, or both. Nursing is not the only discipline in HE facing such questions.

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Rogers, S. and Stenhouse, R. (2010). Good Practice in the Recruitment, Selection and Retention of Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery Students. [Online] Available at:
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Key words

Selection, student experience, nursing and midwifery

0032

Alternative perspectives, new directions: The contribution of strong structuration theory in addressing the challenges of Higher Education.

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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The aim of this paper is to outline the contribution that strong structuration theory may play in addressing the multitude of challenges currently facing Higher Education (HE).

Although many of these challenges (which include social injustice, class and gender inequality, student experience, and the marketisation of qualifications) continue to be addressed, they are often conceptualised within distinctive objectivist and subjectivist binaries. While it is acknowledged that research within these binaries has contributed to our understanding of educational change, they are, at times, incapable of addressing the complexity and interrelatedness between the experiences (embodied and physical) of agents and the wider socio-cultural and political climate in which they are situated. One approach that has sought to address conceptual binaries is the theory of structuration (Giddens, 1984). Drawing upon a range of reflexive sociological perspectives, the central focus of structuration, conceptualised the relation between the subjective powers of human agents and the objective powers of the structures they produce, as one of duality. Critically, traditional structural approaches have been often situated at the abstract-philosophical level of ontology and do not provide guidance in informing empirical analysis of specific processes between structure and agents within particular contexts. However, if refined, the principles that inform structural approaches may provide alternative forms of understanding.

Accordingly, the paper outlines the continued development of a strong structuration framework (Stones, 2005) that seeks to provide a more refined ontology in-situ to address the challenges facing HE. Within this, structure-agent relations are understood within a quadripartite cycle of; External Structures, Internal Structures, Active Agency and Outcomes. Drawing upon principles outlined within the work of other reflexive structurationists such as Bourdieu (1990) and Mouzelis (1991), identifying the interaction of these elements at an in-situ level of ontology provides a 'way of elaborating and clarifying the variety and nature of the elements involved with the duality of structure' (Stones, 2005: 9). This allows for interconnections between the sanctioned practices of education, practices of an agent and the power relations that arise from this interconnection to be explored further.

In conclusion, we draw attention to how strong structuration theory may provide the catalyst for sets of trans-disciplinary and diverse perspectives, which step outside the frames of specific disciplines; providing new directions in addressing how social injustices are perpetuated and maintained in relation to class, ability and age within HE.

Keywords: reflexive sociology, structuration, quadripartite cycle, ontology in-situ, experience.

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0033

Poster presentation – Professional education in an ageing society

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Poster

Author's preference: Poster

Chris Ring

Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham, UK

PURPOSE The poster aims to engage viewers in reflection and discussion about the principles of professional training in working with older people. Using social work as an exemplar, the poster will use research in progress on what professional attributes are required to address some of the key challenges of ageing, and examine their development and assessment in student social workers.

RESEARCH INVOLVED The poster will compare and contrast two perspectives: the priorities of stakeholders in professional education, based on a small study in Nottingham and published research, and the demands and concerns of HEI practice, focusing on the assessment of professional practice in working with older people. Recently completed research at Nottingham Trent University (NTU) will be presented on assessment of a range of relevant learning outcomes.

ARGUMENT Viewers will be encouraged to consider and discuss an emergent tension between two educational issues. The research findings suggest that it is relatively straightforward to teach students the declarative knowledge and basic skills required to deliver social care to older people when this simply involves the use of prescribed procedures. However, teaching and assessing the professional knowledge, skills and values which stakeholders value most highly, appears to be much more demanding. Relevant student attributes include the ability to assess complex situations, address ethical and practical dilemmas, and adhere to professional principles and values: teaching and assessing these is much more difficult.

So professional training which serves its social purposes appears to demand teaching our students “wicked” competencies – “social practices that are highly context dependent” (Page and Knight, 2007, p11). These authors consider such competencies present particular difficulties in assessment – hence the challenge to higher education.

Viewers will be invited to submit their thoughts on the best educational foundation at undergraduate level, to enable students to develop such “wicked” competences in a range of professions. If an alternative (electronic) format to a conventional poster presentation is available, this would enhance the impact of the material presented and allow for greater interaction by the viewers.

KEYWORDS Assessment; Professional Education; Competencies; Ageing

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0034

Variations from established views of laboratory research: exploring a range of experiences and contexts

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Gregory Hum

Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

This paper explores a varied range of experiences in science laboratory work/learning, challenging current established depictions of these environments. These variations will be described and discussed, along with their implications for research, practice, and policy. This empirical research paper is part of a larger ongoing research project on the biological and computing sciences, and reports on a single year of experiences of 10 doctoral students, 8 post-doctoral researchers, and 6 new lecturers at 2 Canadian universities. Data were 5-7 experience logs for individual weeks, and 1 interview, per participant. Cases were analyzed through a workplace learning perspective (Billett, 2006).

Present research often depicts scientific work/learning as highly collaborative and focused on shared research projects. Further, the lab community “socializes” new members through apprenticeships, and, a hierarchical top-down relationship between lab mates, a process supported by frequent formal and informal contact (e.g. Delamont & Atkinson, 2001). This lab structure is seen as highly positive and desirable, producing better student satisfaction and learning outcomes than more independent research modes (e.g. social sciences) (e.g. Chiang, 2003). While some have challenged this depiction as being derived from laboratory science, and thus, inaccurate to other scientific contexts such as field research (e.g. Cumming, 2009), the present research shows that there are also common and important variations within laboratory work/learning environments that bear consideration by researchers in order to best inform theory, practice, and policy.

Examined individually rather than in the aggregate, most cases did not fit the “traditional” predominant mold in one or several important respects, suggesting a need for researchers to adopt a wider, more nuanced view of laboratory work/learning. For instance: many lab members worked largely independently, with limited contact with lab-mates or supervisors, and some worked primarily with non-lab members; lab hierarchies and responsibilities were often based upon individual knowledge/expertise rather than seniority; more senior members and supervisors commonly did not possess the knowledge/expertise needed by junior members; junior members sometimes had unique and important contributions; and many engaged in much self-teaching. These variations sometimes indicated problematic environments (e.g. absentee supervisor). Other times, however, they were intentional and/or positive. For instance, some preferred independent projects to gain greater intellectual freedom and independence, and an uninvolved supervisor could engender greater camaraderie and cooperation amongst lab-mates.

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0036

What is Higher Education For? The Perspectives of Students in England and Germany.

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Richard Budd

University of Bristol, Bristol, UK

This paper relates to an ongoing doctoral research project into contemporary undergraduate students' understanding of the higher education. Current academic literature on the sector presents a picture of universities swept up in a global trend of commodification (e.g. Robertson, 2009) where they are encouraged to become both more competitive and financially self-sufficient. While higher education has long been connected with employment and industry, a more pronounced emphasis on knowledge for sale is resulting in a crisis of identity for the sector (Shore, 2010). One aspect much discussed but little researched is that of the 'student as customer': the imposition of student fees is justified through a framing of university study as a predominantly personal, private investment rather than as a public benefit, and it has been theorized this may damage the university-student relationship and promote greater passivity in students (Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005). This study adopts March and Olsen's socio-historical neo-institutionalism as a theoretical framework for understanding higher education as a social system in tension.

It is important to acknowledge that what is observed across the global level requires critical examination and may manifest itself differently at national and local levels. Germany and England have interconnected but somewhat different university traditions and structures, including quite different responses to student fees. In England, tuition fees were introduced at an annual rate of £1000 per annum, and increased to £9000. In Germany, fees were recently introduced in most Bundesländer, but have since been rejected in all but two. Might students in Germany and England consider higher education differently?

The project is a comparative case study of undergraduate students at two purposively selected universities in England and Germany, both founded in the 1970s as part of the major expansion of HE at that time. In-depth, semi-structured qualitative interviews were conducted with 13 undergraduates from a range of subjects. It was supposed that students might differ in their views according to a range of factors including nationality, time spent at university, and discipline/subject of study. The initial findings of the project relating to the role of higher education for both the students themselves and society more generally will be presented and discussed.

R. Naidoo and I. Jamieson, "Empowering participants or corroding learning? Towards a research agenda on the impact of student consumerism in higher education," *Journal of Educational Policy*, vol. 20, no. 3, pp. 267-281, 2005.

S. L. Robertson, "Education, Knowledge and Innovation in the Global Economy: Challenges and Future Directions'," in Keynote Address to Launch of Research Centres, VIA University College, Aarhus, Denmark, 6th March, 2009, 2009.

C. Shore, "Beyond the multiversity: neoliberalism and the rise of the schizophrenic university," *Social Anthropology*, vol. 1, pp. 15-29, 2010.

0037

Appointing University Pro Vice Chancellors in Pre-1992 Universities: Different Process, Same Results?

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Sue Shepherd

University of Kent, Canterbury, UK

This paper will report on preliminary findings from an ongoing empirical doctoral study examining the implications of recent change to the way Pro Vice Chancellors (PVCs) are appointed. As key members of the university top team, PVCs perform a distinctive and vital role as facilitators of the Vice Chancellor's vision and as catalysts for action (Smith, Adams & Mount 2007). Attracting the best people to these jobs is fundamental to an institution's effectiveness. Nevertheless, the recruitment and selection of top team members remains a relatively under-researched and under-theorised area of enquiry (Kennie & Woodfield 2008) that warrants further investigation, not least because of an enduring public perception of "leadership deficit" in HE (Watson 2008).

Earlier research by the author has established that many pre-1992 universities are moving away from the traditional internal, fixed-term secondment model of PVC appointment to one of external advertisement, often utilising the services of recruitment consultants. This paper presents findings from a census of PVCs in pre-1992 universities designed to examine the impact of this changed practice on the profile of current post holders. Are they now a more diverse group than hitherto in terms of gender, ethnicity and professional background?

Emanating from a practitioner perspective, this study reflects my belief that the role of HE researchers is to undertake work that has 'real world,' as well as theoretical, significance. Accordingly, the paper will discuss the practical and policy implications of these findings for the career progression and ambitions of aspiring PVCs and, more broadly, for leadership capacity building in the sector. At a theoretical level, it will consider whether recent developments in PVC appointments can be seen as evidence of managerialism, taken to mean a set of beliefs as well as management practice (Pollitt 1990). Participant feedback will be invited on the significance of findings to date and their role in shaping the future direction of the research.

Kennie, T. and Woodfield, S. (2008). *The Composition, Challenges and Changes in the Top Team Structures of UK Higher Education Institutions*. London: Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.

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Watson, D. (2008). *Hunting the Headhunters*. Engage, 10-11.

Keywords: PVCs, managerialism, leadership capacity building, recruitment and selection

0039

Virtual Teams and Communities of Practice: A Transformation Model for eLearning

Status: Rejected

Author's preference: Individual paper

Angela Martin

University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand

The purpose of this paper is to present a model that eLearning practitioners can use to take advantage of research that has been conducted in the areas of virtual teams and communities of practice so as to promote an improved learning experience for eLearning students.

The literature on virtual teams is reviewed with the aim of identifying the key enablers of virtual teams and how they have applicability to an eLearning context. A prior study that explored how the concepts of communities of practice could be applied into an eLearning context is then reviewed.

Two building block models of how the literature relating to virtual teams can inform eLearning are constructed. These models are then integrated with the communities of practice study to develop a proposed model for eLearning based on virtual teams and communities of practice.

The proposed model can be used as a basis for further study into how eLearning practitioners perceive and apply the concepts of virtual teams and communities of practice in their own practice.

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0040

Cutting 'rough diamonds': first generation students in Higher Education

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Key Words

Social capital, higher education, first generation in higher education, widening participation, habitus
Higher education (HE) participation has become an important focus for policy debate as well as scholarly research. This is in part the result of on-going attempts to expand the HE system in line with wider policies promoting a 'knowledge economy' and resulting from policy concerns with equity and inclusion. The term 'rough diamond' is the title for this paper, as it is redolent with metaphor that encapsulates many of the discourses that position the students within the study.

The term 'rough diamond' illustrates the 'regime of truth' (Foucault, 1980) informing social policy in the UK, that has never fundamentally altered, despite more recent rhetoric to the contrary. That there are only a few amongst the 'rough' working classes that are of value and that many are viewed as simply chaff. (or Chav) (Jones, 2011). 'Rough' is a pejorative metaphor for working class and holds within its opposite, the 'smooth' superiority educated and 'finished' established middle class. The term 'diamond' has connotations of commercial value, a resource that can be cultivated and turned into capital, or in the case of first generation' young undergraduate students in higher education, educated to benefit the economy. The metaphor also individualises these 'rough diamonds' that, due to their own particular innate wit and talent, can be excavated and polished.

Policy makers and researchers tend to focus on access and entry to HE, with less attention to the lived experience of students. Theorised by Garner (2007), white working class identities have been pathologies in specific and spatial contexts, with labels from academia ('underclass') and popular consciousness ('chav').

The paper explores the preliminary findings derived from semi-structured interviews undertaken as part of a doctoral study of a case study campus. The paper explores and critiques widening participation policy in relation to the experience of young 'first generation' year one undergraduate students. It provides insights into their experience of higher education at this period of policy transition. The paper explains the methodological framework underpinning the research and the significance of the research questions. Finally, a summary of the initial findings of the study are provided and discussed. This study will be significant to the field of education and policy and the findings are relevant on both a theoretical and policy level.

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0041

Living to Learn- Learning to Live: Active engagement, emotional impact and changes in practice

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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This paper reports the findings of a qualitative research project designed to evaluate the student-experience of a residential field trip (RFT) to Swedish early years settings. Comparative research promotes understanding of the role of education in encouraging universal well-being (Little, 2010). Through education, the promotion of sustainable human, social and environmental capital can be achieved. Physiological explanations of the human condition can be utilized to promote more effective educational opportunities. Students who fully engage in their learning environment achieve higher conceptual understanding, greater retention of information and increased creativity. Higher Education programmes need to ensure that those working with children are equipped with transferable knowledge and skills to lead the early years sector (Nutbrown 2011; Tickell 2011).

Three dimensions of the RFT learning experience were examined: physical and emotional value afforded by the students to the active learning context; how this was interpreted and reflected in their knowledge, understanding and personal practice once they had left university; and the influence of brute factors on students' practice.

Fifty final year undergraduate student-practitioners (aged 20-40) years were invited to be interviewed on their RFT experience. Forty initially responded: purposive sampling was then employed to conduct fifteen semi-structured follow-up telephone interviews.

Qualitative, narrative data sets derived from semi-structured questionnaires, interviews, observational field notes and written essays were obtained. Procedural data reduction techniques were adopted in the initial analysis and a constant comparative method was used to identify themes and frequency patterns of discursive action. Language selection and personal significance awarded to recalled incidents was scrutinized to identify individual and collective function, construction and variation of events. To assess potential perspective change, the texts were interrogated deductively using Mezirow's framework of Transformational Learning.

The RFT was found to be a compact social learning vehicle that promoted transformational empowerment, (Rose et al. 2011) and informed personal and professional transformations. The physicality of the learning experience and the influence of emotion and brute factors stimulated cognitive engagement and ownership of knowledge. It also mediated in the construction and construal of the learning experience. How this translated into practice was, in part, controlled by cultural expectations; however, student acquisition of transformational empowerment should not be undervalued.

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0042

Ireland's National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030: insights into its research recommendations, influence on government research policy and potential impact on higher education research.

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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As a researcher focused on higher education policy, it is necessary to examine the continuously shifting relationship with government and the market (Clark's 'triangle of forces,' 1983). The focus for this paper is the Irish government-commissioned National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (2011) particularly the recommendations on research. Situating it within the current IMF-rescued Ireland, this paper will consider research in higher education in terms of possible challenges and opportunities in a time of global competition and transformation.

A critical analysis of the research recommendations will be provided on what the focus of research should be, and how it is conducted and why they merit debate as part of the long-standing discourse on what higher education is for. The recommendations concerning wider collaboration between higher education (HE), industry and the public sector are democratic, as are the development of clearer career paths for researchers and postgraduate research training opportunities in Irish HE. However, some funding and prioritisation recommendations, are perhaps, more elitist. This may impact more on 'soft disciplines' of arts and humanities, than the 'hard' sciences, technology and engineering. Certain types of HEIs may also be more privileged. This creates tensions as well as opportunities for those working in the HE sector in terms of purpose and contribution to relevant knowledge production.

The conceptual framework of Schimank and Winnes' (2000) will be utilised which places contemporary university systems on the basis of congruence with or a lack of alignment to Humboldt's research conception of them, as opposed to Newman's focus on teaching and contribution to society. Three models of the teaching/research connection are outlined: Humboldtian (Germany; Italy); post-Humboldtian (UK; Sweden) and pre-Humboldtian (Ireland; Spain).

It will be argued that existing teaching and research practice in HEIs may not match government policy on research in higher education which is often focused on cross-disciplinary research to solve problems (Gibbons' et al., 1994 'Mode 2'), as opposed to single-disciplinary ways of working 'Mode 1' – here is where there are contested ambitions. Deem's 2006 research study of another small country's HE system, Scotland, will be reflected upon (upon others) for useful comparative purposes. This study found academics themselves are mostly likely to favour the Humboldtian model, based on the close integration of teaching and research. However, policy-makers wanting to cut public expenditure on universities may want to facilitate the post-Humboldtian approach, where the link between research and teaching is not universal. Ireland, in the pre-Humboldtian phase of HE development, is evidently at an interesting comparative crossroads.

0043

Who are we to our students, and why does it matter? Reflections on teaching, learning and Freud's Oedipus

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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In this presentation, I will describe the theatre of teaching and learning in Higher Education as it appears through a psychoanalytic lens. Donald Winnicott's conceptual work on maturity and relational space (1971) makes a good entry point to this sophisticated paradigm, allowing us to build a 'small-print' account of the situation in which students and lecturers encounter each other, and just as importantly—their discipline. With even a quickly sketched map of the Oedipal landscape to hand (Ivey, 2006), are we in a stronger position to help our students realize their independent creativity, and better equipped to make sense of the typical problems we encounter together along the way? The paper will refer to specific scenes from my teaching practice to render the narrative accessible and help delegates wonder in parallel whether similar dynamics are in play in their own professional endeavours too.

Psychoanalysis has informed the study of art, culture and politics for over a hundred years and has arguably had more impact in the discursive realm than the clinical context that gave rise to it (Casement, 2004), but it appears little known as an investigative and explanatory paradigm in mainstream pedagogy. I am mindful that something as fundamental to psychodynamic theory as a Freudian reading of the Oedipus myth may seem extraneous. However, just as Bent Flyvberg has argued that an over-valuing of positivist ontology has led contemporary social science away from its idiomatic strengths (2001), so dependence on cognitive learning theory has left education research largely quiet on the intensely interpersonal nature of its subject and practice. I contend that psychoanalytic theory is usefully placed to help bring this dimension into focus.

This enquiry is framed as an empirical study, rooted in personal observation and reflection. There is no possibility of 'proving' the relevance of psychoanalytic theory to teaching in Higher Education, and so no such effort will be made. My curiosity about the phenomena under scrutiny arose after starting to lecture in a university department of psychology, having previously been a tutor in performance at a music conservatoire. Students of otherwise similar accomplishments positioned themselves so very differently relative to me as a teacher and to the subject under study that I was led to wonder what underpinned these situations. Beyond developing a good description of these experiences, can I identify teaching strategies that will help my students progress towards confident scholarship?

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0044

Internationalisation of public universities in Ghana: strategies, opportunities and challenges

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Two major goals of public universities in Ghana are to reposition themselves in the international arena of higher education as well as provide relevant knowledge and skills to enhance the socio-economic development of the Ghanaian society. The paper discusses the discourse of internationalisation in relation to policy and practice in Ghana's public universities. It is based on a qualitative study conducted to explore first, the tensions generated by the Ghanaian universities' quest to satisfy national needs and at the same time the need to conform to international regulatory systems that have become so important for national governments across the world; second, to consider how these tensions impact on curriculum development in the universities in Ghana; and third, to identify the challenges confronting each university. The research was a multiple case study of three public universities in Ghana and the methods employed for the study were interviews and documentary analyses. Three departments were selected from each university and the target population were made up of Administrators, Deans, Heads of Department and students.

Initial findings of the study indicate that in the context of extensive pressure to address local needs, the universities in the research perceive 'internationalisation' as an important concept and various strategies have been embarked upon by each of the universities to position themselves internationally. There are, however, contentions among academics as to the benefits of internationalisation to the universities and societal development. Again, in spite of the efforts, the universities in the study are confronted by challenges which tend to limit the benefits desired by the institution.

The study considered some of the key literature around internationalisation of higher education, most of which are western centred (Nicoline, and Viega, 2005, Knight and Altbach 2007, Frolich, Tefera and Knight, 2008). My contribution is to consider the specific case study of Ghana and explore some of the issues around the theme of internationalisation. The findings, I believe, will address some of the gaps on internationalisation and also add to the growing literature on higher education in Africa.

Keywords: Internationalisation, international regulatory systems colonisation, global citizen

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0045

An Empirical Investigation into the Research Culture of a Pakistani Public University

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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An Empirical Investigation into the Research Culture of a Pakistani Public University

This paper reports an on-going inquiry of research culture prevailing in a Pakistani public sector university. The landscape of higher education in Pakistan has been predominantly covered by teaching-intensive public universities. This situation without any significant improvement persisted until 2002 when unprecedented steps, backed by adequate resources and effective regulatory mechanisms, were introduced to enhance universities' research capacity. Consequently, the universities started to engage in the reconstruction of their infrastructure, reorientation of the prevailing traditions and development of their academics for research. Thus, this study aims to document and develop an understanding of the process of transformation for the cultivation of research culture in a public university by examining its structural, cultural conditions and their interplay with academics' research practices.

For this purpose, a case study was designed and empirical data was collected from the academics and managers of two faculties of social sciences - one is relatively research active more than the other that belong to the oldest and top ranked Pakistani public university. The experiences and opinions of 4 managers and 16 academics, having different ranks and research profiles, were collected through semi-structured face-to-face interviews. A structured questionnaire survey was also administered on 70 academics to get an overview of existing research environment in the university. In addition, a review of available policy documents provided an insight into the formal research plans of the university.

The discourse analysis methods and descriptive statistic were applied to analyse qualitative and quantitative data respectively. Further, Evans's (2011) taxonomy of researcher development along with Archer's social realist morphogenetic model (1995) provided the theoretical foundations upon which the concept of research culture was redefined and an approach to identify the constituent components of structural and cultural conditions of the university was developed which explains their causal influences on academics' research activities. The preliminary analysis of the data collected from one faculty indicate that the contradictions within the order of discourses about intellectual and attitudinal domains are present which entail constraining cultural conditions for academics' research practices. However, the complementary discourses on perceptual sub-domain indicate enabling aspects of these conditions. The data also revealed that the existing administrative processes, procedures and the provisions of staff development within the university predominately reflect constraining structural conditions for research while the incentivisation of academics' research productivity acted as an enabling factor. This study suggests a critical realist interpretation of research culture along with an approach for empirical investigation of the phenomenon which can be used in other contexts.

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0046

Government-led national policy in higher education reform: a case study of 'quality project policy' in China

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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The state acts as a powerful center of society dynamics on higher education. Under uncertainties in the globalization, the state starts adjusting its role in state-university relations by using public policy tools to respond to the futures of higher education. Refer to this issue, the research here focused on the government-led national policy in the higher education reform in China through a public policy theory perspective.

This empirical research began with the concern over implementation problems of 'quality project policy' on undergraduate learning and teaching in China. The research on this policy had then been justified as a case study characterized Chinese higher education policy in the recent five years. A normative perspective of public policy theory had been used to interpret the mechanism of national higher education policy influence (Yanow, 1999; Fischer 2003). The research concentrated on how the political elements had been reflected in the policy issues through three dimensions (Dye, 1987; Dale, 1999): the political institution (e.g. whether the university is voluntary to participate the policy game); the political process (e.g. the scope and the dimension of the policy power); and the political behavior (e.g. the sources allocated by the policy). The initial pilot study of this research would be presented in this paper, which started from discourse analysis on the written policy documents; then participation-observation in the targeted universities; then in-depth interviews with some policy-relevant actors.

It is argued that in contemporary China, the higher education policy revealed localized higher education developments with unique political conditions and state-university relations, as well as indicated gradually closed connections with other nation-states on policy elements, such as similar descriptions on policy ideas. This argument was supported by the findings that there were 'Chinese imbalance' between power and accountability in the normal university's autonomy issues; that so-called policy core was implicit under intertwined Chinese policy programmes; that not only with regular economic dependence, the Chinese university had serious symbolic dependence on the state. This research implied the significance of analyzing public policy in the changing state-university relations, especially when discussing the world-wide government-led national policy issues with important policy commonality but with great diversity in policy details.

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Key Words:

Government-led policy, state-university relations, public policy theory, mechanism of policy influence, Chinese conditions

0047

Personal Profiling in Early Professional Development

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Profiling is a dynamic learning process designed to enable individuals to identify their strengths, needs and aspirations in order to set specific strategic and behavioural goals for personal and professional development. At its simplest profiling helps individuals become lifelong learners (Hull et al 2005) prepared to embrace change. This presentation will focus on the outcomes of a single-site case study which explored occupational therapy students' attitudes and experiences of profiling in the context of their early professional development.

With ongoing NHS reforms, healthcare practitioners must be adaptable, have 'capabilities and skills to provide new models of personalised care' (DH 2010:13). Students entering practice therefore need to be intellectually and emotionally prepared to work flexibly and face challenges and opportunities of change positively.

The profiling system explored aims to support students in becoming lifelong learners through the process of integrating University-based studies and practice-based learning. Reflection and reflective writing underpins profiling as it lies at the interface between theory and practice and advancement of knowledge. It may be seen as a 'melting pot' or 'cognitive housekeeping' to imply a sorting out, clarifying process (Moon 2004:189) fundamental to personal professional development.

A cross-sectional cohort approach was adopted which employed a survey design of quantitative and qualitative data-gathering questionnaires with a sample of students from each year for inclusivity. Attitudes and experiences of students were further explored through semi-structured interviews.

Findings suggest students generally appear to have a positive attitude to personal profiling. The value is experienced at varying psychological levels, depending on students' willingness, motivation to engage with the process and psychological preparedness. A model of levels of engagement in profiling is proposed with students' experiences indicating that the process of profiling is challenging, psychologically messy and an uncertain process yet worthwhile in the overall pursuit of professional development.

The conclusion drawn from the study is that students have the intellectual capability and potential to benefit from personal profiling. Students appear to self-consciously recognise, articulate and acknowledge the value of personal profiling in facilitating early professional development.

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Key words: Profiling, professional, development, engagement, case study

0048

Transnational higher education Networks of Learning and Teaching (TNLTs) in Geography

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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This presentation offers new perspectives on the motivations to engage with, experiences of participation in and the outcomes of participation in Transnational higher education Networks of Learning and Teaching (TNLTs) in Geography. How knowledge about learning and teaching practices is exchanged amongst participants within these networks is considered alongside how technologies are used to facilitate this exchange.

Nature of research

TNLTs are online networks of academic geographers that share a common interest in exchanging knowledge about higher education learning and teaching. Despite a growing interest in geographies of higher education there is little known about higher education networking practices (Larson et al, 2006), movement of academics over long distances in a work context has been neglected and non-student centred learning and teaching has been overlooked. Within the context of human geography research, interdisciplinary debates surrounding TNLTs (Hay 2008), higher education research on a global scale (Knight, 2004) Communities of Practice (CoP) (Ardichvili, 2008) and the Network Society (Castells, 1998) comprise four bodies of literature that have not been considered together before. There has been a lack of focus on the academic within learning and teaching and as such there is a fundamental gap within the literature and no comparable study.

Methodology

This presentation reports on empirical data collection that was conducted within completed PhD research. Grounded Theorising was used alongside a mixed-methods approach in the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data. Research was conducted both face-to-face and online, in the form of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Within the analysis, NVivo and SPSS software facilitated Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS). The sample used in this study consisted of geography academics that subscribe to an email listserv or attend face-to-face meetings and agreed to participate. The participants that volunteered to participate within this research are academics that are employed at any higher education institution in the world, any age, any gender, at any career point and work within any sub-discipline of geography.

Conclusions

Participation within learning and teaching networks arguably provides benefits of networking and knowledge exchange but are compromised through barriers. The findings show that motivations, experiences and outcomes of participation are influenced by factors such as geographical location and gender. The increasing availability and access to digital technologies has facilitated networking of those academics with an interest in learning and teaching. However, a global digital divide and more recently global digital inequality problematises access to technology and subsequently access to TNLTs.

Key words

Networks, Learning, Teaching, Technology, Geography

0050

'A working class hero is something to be' Interrogating the political rhetoric of Widening Participation in Higher Education

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Political justification for Widening Participation (WP) in the UK has become strongly predicated upon both the public and private good of Higher Education (HE). At a societal level, WP is advocated as a mechanism for achieving economic competitiveness and social equitability. At an individual level, WP is 'sold' on the premise that HE participation enhances job prospects, earnings, social position, health and happiness; or the chances of 'a better life' as Willets (2010) prefers to summarise. Embedded within this rhetoric are the notions that HE participation is the outcome of meritocratic, individualistic and rational choice-making processes.

Yet existing research in the field of WP has challenged such notions by providing evidence of the continued structural constraints on HE participation; for example, the under-representation of working class students in the least prestigious HE institutions (Harris, 2010) and the subsequent unequal access to the professions for these groups (Milburn, 2009). Such differential experiences and returns suggest that HE remains a 'sorting device' (Watson, 2006: 3) for serving to reproduce social stratification rather than diminish it. These inequalities are masked in the policy discourse by the myth of the 'working class hero' who supposedly achieves their elevated social position in society based on their meritocratic and rational engagement with HE.

But whilst WP policy goes to great lengths to engineer middle class 'wannabes' through its arguments of the benefits of HE participation, little is known about the experiences of those who do achieve the social mobility dreams of WP. Indeed my doctoral research is addressing this gap by exploring the lived experiences of graduates from working class origins that have studied at elite HE institutions and subsequently achieved middle class status. In this way my work is starting to unpick the complex relationship between structure and agency in the context of post-HE class transitions and provide understanding of whether a 'working class hero' is really 'something to be'.

In this paper I draw on my reviews of the literature and initial case study data (collected through a pilot study) to begin to expose the misalignment between policy and the lived experience of the 'beneficiaries' of the WP in HE agenda.

Keywords: WP; policy; working class; graduates.

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0051

Intercultural Communication in a VLE: experiences and challenges

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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The purpose of this research is to develop a better understanding of intercultural issues that arise in online learning. E-learning plays an important role in the context of global education and represents the global nature of today's society. Each year virtual learning environments (VLEs) attract more and more students from around the world, providing an opportunity for cross-cultural working and learning. In the UK alone over 2,600 HE level online and distance learning courses are offered by, or on behalf of, UK HE and FE institutions (White et al., 2010). User-friendly interfaces and navigation, real-time and time-delayed collaboration modes, new generation Web-tools and applications form engaging and highly interactive learning environments. Their learner-centered constructivist foundation entrusts online educators with responsibilities to facilitate and foster students' collaboration, cognitive presence, and interaction (Palloff & Pratt, 2005; Dunn et al., 2011). However, students' interaction in VLEs is constituted through their uses of synchronous and asynchronous computer-mediated communication (CMC). CMC has been argued to cause communication issues, and therefore, effective communication relies on the participants' ability to communicate clearly and to be culturally responsive. Research and practice suggest a range of tactics and strategies for educators focused on how to encourage and foster communication in a VLE (e.g. Salmon, 2000, 2011). However, Salmon's frameworks for the effective development of online communication and collaboration between students are not sufficient enough to address inter-cultural issues, which cannot be evaded. Research data is used to develop an argument that both native and non-native English speaking students can use CMC successfully, nevertheless, both groups still experience challenges attributed to culture and written communication. While having a diverse cultural and educational background participants in this research share a professional interest in education. They attended a 10-weeks online course, which explores new approaches to learning in VLEs. Data collected from in-depth interviews and discourse analysis of textual datasets represents students' experiences and perceptions of intercultural communication, and its relation to students' overall participation and engagement. Findings will explore issues around online communication, culture, and language.

Keywords: E-learning, Intercultural online communication, Online communication skills.

0052

'We need support too': Otago University's postgraduate peer mentoring initiative

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Research has highlighted the many difficulties students experience along their postgraduate research journeys (Conrad, 2006). Many students struggle to integrate with their peers to find the support that they need above and beyond that offered by their supervisor/s. There is also increasing pressure on postgraduate students to complete their studies in a timely manner, and this often induces high levels of stress.

At the undergraduate level, peer mentoring, whereby an experienced student gives direction and support to a more inexperienced student has received a significant amount of attention, as a way to improve students' educational experiences and retention rates (e.g. Terrion, Phillion, & Leonard, 2007). Peer mentoring initiatives for postgraduate research students have not received anywhere near as much consideration. That said, there is an increasing recognition that research students benefit greatly from developmental discussions between peers (Wisker, Robinson, Trafford, Warnes, & Creighton, 2003). The positive effects of peer interaction, particularly in relation to improving research skills, has also been highlighted (Cooper & Juniper, 2002). This paper recounts the story of the development of a postgraduate peer support initiative at the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand.

We commence by sketching the birth of the ideas that lead to the initiative. We then focus in on the experiences of one particular peer group, and consider personal reflective accounts from eight of the participants. We are particularly interested in the value participants placed on the peer mentoring initiative having left the university setting. Consequently, in addition to research data obtained during the project, we also interviewed participants two years after they had left the scheme, and asked them to reflect back on their university experiences of peer mentoring. We conclude by reflecting on some the critical factors for an initiative such as this to be successful and offer some advice for those considering running similar schemes.

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0053

The Development of the Quality Assurance System of Higher Education in Taiwan: Transforming and Practice

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Similar to the way in which the higher education system in Western countries was transformed from elite to a mass education system, Taiwan's higher education expanded rapidly during the 1980s. The growth in the number of universities, diversification, and cuts in the funding of higher education led to renewed concern about the quality of the higher education provided, and the government attempted to make the universities more internationally competitive, as well as capable of responding to the national needs. It was feared that such a rapid expansion with in a relatively short time could lead to the lowering of academic standards, and this raised concerns about quality assurance (Mok, 2003; Young, 1995). All these needs boosted the establishment of a new quality assurance system by the government in Taiwan.

This article discusses how the QA system developed and was influenced by social-economic factors in Taiwan. In this article the development of the current the QA system in Taiwan was traced, and its key features were identified. First, this paper used documentary analysis, focusing on official publications and related articles, to discuss historical development of higher education evaluation. The historical and policy analysis were used to examine the genesis and developmental stages of the new evaluation system between 1975 and 2011. Then the issues that have arisen since the implementation of the QA system were analysed based on official documents and related criticism. The investigation identified four key stages of the development of higher education evaluation, namely, direct control by the government from 1975 to 1990, deregulation and public participation from 1991 to 1994, the development of self-evaluation from 1995 to 2004, and the establishment of an independent national agency from 2005 to the present day (Yang, 2010). The concept and structure of Taiwan's QA system were mainly drawn from accreditation systems in the U.S., and the UK's quality assessment. The process of policy-borrowing can be seen in the developmental stages of evaluation, and this also points to a convergent trend in the global higher education system. Moreover, the role of the government was seen to shift at each stage, from regulator to supervisor, and higher educational policies changed according to national economic strategies so that higher educational sectors have transformed in response to the changing socio-economic context in Taiwan.

Keywords: quality assurance system, higher education, Taiwan, higher education evaluation

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0054

Competing imperatives: agency and higher education research practices

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Linda Kotta

University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia

The purpose of the paper is to reflect on my research practices thus far in my career to address the question of the nature of the influences that have informed my choices of frameworks and research questions. The questions of interest are: As a new researcher what should I be thinking about when I decide to embark on a research project in higher education? What contextual imperatives inform the decision? This paper takes the form of a reflexive analysis. At the time of the conference I will be reporting on completed research.

Methodology

In this research I present an account of my research practices thus far in my short research career. I then attempt to interpret these practices in order to understand the meaning attached to them. Beyond that however, I position the findings within a broader context of higher education to answer the question of whether I think I am contributing to the higher education research agenda, whether this matters given the nature of higher education institutions, what the implications are for me personally for the future in this area. As such the research is a self-ethnography of sorts. The analytical framework is based on Archer's (2003) idea of reflexive deliberation. This is the idea that agents are confronted with structural and cultural factors which may or may not impinge on their goals and that agents then need to craft actions in order to realise their goals in the context of potential structural and cultural constraints and enablements.

Key argument and implications

I intend to argue that as a higher education researcher, I operate in an environment which presents me with competing ideological imperatives which force me to make some hard choices regarding my research regardless of the global context in which I function. In turn this influences the grants I am able to compete for, the research partnerships I form indeed, the research future I craft. On the surface the challenge appears to be about mediating between my own personal career goals and the purposes of research in higher education. In reality however, the notion of academic freedom seems to suggest that I have room to manoeuvre. That remains to be seen.

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Keywords

Reflexive deliberation, agency, research, higher education, cultural system

0055

The skill of leading your peers: Research Leadership in a new era of Governance

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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One of the three core missions of universities is the development of scientific knowledge. For long, the roads towards the end product have been left to the researchers themselves and the normative regulations in their respective scientific communities. The article to be presented claims that the event of research leadership programs (RLP) marks a shift in the process of doing science in universities.

Stakeholders such as OECD, EU, national states and the university organizations themselves have long been concerned with scientific knowledge as a driving resource in the knowledge economy. Today, these multiple stakeholders participate in the legitimation of RLP in university settings and the establishment of research leadership as a discrete skill, the development of which requires formal training and organized reflection. This is best illustrated (although not exclusively so) in training schemes focused on research groups as the primary unit of knowledge production and the attention paid to primary investigators' experience in leading peers.

This paper focuses on the increasingly popular phenomenon of RLP in university life. The argument takes its point of departure in the fact that while RLPs are standard; the level of commitment in time and financing varies across organizations. The paper focuses on the case of the University of Oslo (UiO) RLP, which is distinguished by the amount of organizational resources devoted. The study draws upon neo-institutional theories of organization to make sense of the case.

The article builds on observation of the ten day course given in a period of 3+2+2+3 days in 2012. The main focus of the presentation will be the issue of the UiO RLP, and how it creates a multi-disciplinary learning environment underpinning research leadership as a skill detached from disciplinary tradition.

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0060

Undergraduate Students' Conceptions of Research in the Social Sciences

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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This paper serves as an initial discussion point for providing insight into how social sciences undergraduate students perceive the importance of research in higher education. The study undertaken was an investigation into how undergraduate students in a blended learning and face-to-face environment conceptualise research and whether these conceptions changed over a year. Research methods pedagogy is an emerging field (Wagner, Garner and Kawulich, 2011) with little research on research conceptions except for academics (Brew, 2001) and postgraduate students (e.g. Meyer, Shananan and Laugksch, 2005). However, there have been no studies as far as we know on undergraduate students' conceptions.

This paper presents work on the initial data analysis of an empirical longitudinal study. The study used a phenomenographic survey of second year undergraduate Education Studies, Childhood Studies and Disability Studies students. The students were asked to provide open-ended written responses to questions such as "what do you understand by the term research" and "what do you think is the purpose of research". The students were asked their opinions at the start of the course and at the end of the course. There were around 300 students in the face-to-face course and 60 students in the blended learning course. The blended learning students belong to University Centres and were widening participation students. Students' open-ended responses were inputted into NVivo and a content analysis approach was used to determine emerging themes on the conceptions of research.

Thus far initial findings suggest that students at the beginning of the study view research and its purpose as mainly an information gathering exercise which is similar to what is found by Meyer et al. (2005). The presentation would also seek to determine whether these conceptions change over the year and whether the students' conceptions in the blended learning course were different to the face-to-face students. This will feed into the discussions into whether different group of students have different experiences of research and whether there is merit in encouraging undergraduate students to study research methods in Higher Education.

Keywords: Research, Pedagogy, Conceptualisation, Undergraduate

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0061

Productivity Enhancing, Signalling or Credentialism? Students' Perceptions of Investment in their Human Capital

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Although there are various reasons for entering higher education, students' strongest motive for pursuing a degree seems to be to improve their labour market prospects (Callender, 1997). Indeed, the relationship between higher education and labour market outcomes is well-established empirically (Bills, 2003).

Human capital theory assumes that individuals participate in higher education in order to acquire skills and knowledge that enhance their productivity. Increased productivity is valued by employers in the form of higher salaries. Screening theory views higher education as a "sorting device" for employers in which graduates use their qualifications to show their productivity potential. According to this view, education does not improve a person's productivity since individuals who undertake higher education are inherently more productive. Credentialist theory assumes no direct link between education and an individual's productivity. Rather, graduates of certain, elite universities are preferred by some employers. Therefore attendance at such universities is a way that students may credentialise themselves.

This study investigates how final year university students perceive the link between higher education and the labour market. Only two studies have been carried out previously to explore the views of students on this relationship. Both Killeen et al. (1999) and Sanquirgo et al. (2004) found the signalling role of education to be the most important for students.

We designed a questionnaire to assess students' perceptions of various aspects of the human capital, screening and credentialism theories. Data was collected in "business schools" of two English universities and four Czech universities. Public universities in the Czech Republic do not charge fees, whereas English ones do so. The preliminary results suggest that, in contrast to the earlier studies, students in our sample believe that higher education raises individuals' productivity. The signalling role of education is also found to be important; however, the credentialist view is not supported. In order to gain some additional insights, focus groups with students are planned to take place during the next academic year.

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0062

Black women's experiences of teaching and learning in Higher Education -South Africa

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Key words

Agency, culture, emergence, intersectionality, reflexivity

Introduction: The presentation will be conceptual and I will explain how the research findings fit within the social realist framework. In the context of transformation in HE in South Africa, it is important to explore how structural and cultural institutional practices may be transformed to accommodate staff who were previously marginalised. In addition in the HE context, teaching is often a marginalised area of the academic's work. While HE institutions in South Africa may recently have been notionally transformed the challenge of having these changes fully realized within the culture of HE remains. It is anticipated that this study will open up the scope for the professional development of academics and to recognize areas where changes in institutional culture are required..

The literature: Bhaskar's (2002) view of the world as ontological and stratified shows how changes in one of the layers affect the other, that the world we live in is 'causally efficacious'. According to Bhaskar knowledge of our society and the functioning of the self within it has an emancipatory power. Archer (2007: 19) argues that background alone does not determine which individuals may find structural or cultural influences enabling or constraining. This leads to change or stasis (morphogenesis or morphostasis) of the culture, structure and agency. One has to examine the "form that their reflexive deliberations have taken during the course of their biographies" (Archer 2007:15). There exists a micro-interaction at the nexus of the agent (individual academic) and her work environment (workgroup, department, institution) (Knight and Trowler 2001) (Trowler 2008) which is affected by past and present of both.

Given the Apartheid and patriarchal history of South Africa, Yuval-Davis (2011), de la Rey (1999), Mabokela (2003) argue that where the two characteristics, being black and female intersect, the challenges are not merely doubled but multiplied. Black women have been least empowered to forge academic careers.

Methodology

Responding to the research questions and to investigate the structural powers and discourse relevant to this study critical realism metatheories will be employed. There are two logics governing this research namely, Bhaskar's ontological approach and Archer's (1995) morphogenetic/morphostatic paradigm. I will be reporting on two moments (using drawings as catalysts and subsequent interviews) shared with the focus group of 16 academics.

Research Questions

i. How is this interrelationship (and what are the impacts) between structure, culture and agency manifested in their present work environment enablers and constraints?

Sub-question

I. What role, if any, does race and gender play in the interrelationship of culture and agency?

0065

Higher education as a tool for regional development: emerging multi-university campuses in Sweden, Finland and England.

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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The premise that knowledge is a key condition for socio-economic development and that universities play a central role as direct institutional partners in the local, regional and national economy has motivated governments throughout the world to stimulate knowledge-based development through the commitment of public funds, targeted policies and other measures (cf. Arbo & Benneworth, 2007; Etzkowitz, 2002; Goddard, 2005).

That development policies increasingly include the regional level is a relatively recent phenomenon (Paasi, 2003) and policies and strategies in a wide range of areas often have a regional dimension, frequently including HE as a driver for regional development. In this context, a significant challenge occurs where a regional university infrastructure is absent. A situation of a region without 'its own' university often occurs in rural areas and in this paper a comparative analysis is presented of three such regions in Sweden (Västerbotten), Finland (Southern Ostrobothnia) and England (Cornwall). In these regions, public authorities did not establish a new university, nor invited an existing university to set up a branch campus, but complete campus facilities were built which two or more universities were invited to share.

The paper looks into why these multi-university campuses were set up; how they function; and how regional development policies articulate with the missions of the universities involved. It analyses the overall objectives underlying investments in HE for regional development, and places this in the context of broader trends in HE in which universities are becoming less bound by national boundaries and operate on a global level.

The data for this paper is largely derived from the EU-funded UNICREDS project in which the case-study regions participated and which is linked to the author's ongoing PhD research (commenced in 2010).

Despite the evident diversity that different regions in different countries present, there are some generally detectable patterns this paper will present. The paper will broadly set out the challenge to connect the development needs of a region with the interests of universities: Where regions want to focus university education on regional needs and promote locally relevant research, universities tend to concentrate on their own missions, a national and international education market and a global scope for their research.

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Keywords:
Multi-University Campus, Regional Development

0066

Politics in the Classroom: Building Bridges Between Secondary and Higher Education

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to present a selection of the initial findings from an on-going experiment in innovative teaching and learning practice developed by the School of Politics and International Relations at the University of Kent: the stage 2/3, 15 credit module, 'Politics in the Classroom', first offered during the academic year 2011/12.

Nature of the Research

Based on the presentation of a single case, this research is aimed at the generation of questions and theoretical frameworks that can further develop both the analysis of this innovative practice and the practice itself, in complementary ways.

The Case and Approach

'Politics in the Classroom' is unique in the UK to the extent that it enables undergraduate students of politics to work with secondary teachers in local schools to deliver aspects of the Citizenship and A-Level Politics curriculum, as part of their degree studies in politics. In the spirit of co-learning that orients the module, this paper will present reflective analyses from two perspectives: that of a University student who took the module and the module convenor. (Further research will focus on the reflections of other stakeholders – the school pupils and teachers, for example).

Initial Findings

Initial findings suggest that a) there is no necessary conflict between the development of student skills/employability and the acquisition of academic knowledge in the discipline of political studies and b) that the outreach and community aspects of university mission statements can be properly integrated into academic teaching and learning practices to mutual benefit.

Argument

We will argue that the experience of this module offers evidence that current government policy in the UK, oriented as it is towards a top-down model of the role that Universities should play in the secondary sector, is misplaced in that it distorts the relationship between skills development and academic knowledge and that it presents a one-sided view of the role of universities vis-à-vis the local secondary education community.

Literature

This is an indicative list of literature that guided the shape of this experiment and continues to inform reflection upon it.

Bentley, T. (1998) *Learning beyond the classroom: Education for a changing world*, London: Routledge.

Cropley, A. J. (2001) *Creativity in education and learning: A guide for teachers and educators*, London: Kogan Page.

Hargreaves, D. H. (2003) *Education Epidemic: Transforming secondary schools through innovation networks*, London: Demos.

Robinson, K. (2001) *Out of Our Minds: Learning to be Creative*, Oxford: Capstone.

Keywords: politics, learning, skills, outreach, secondary schools

0067

Intercultural competence in the learning of Chinese as a foreign language in UK HE – an exploratory study

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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My paper reports early findings of my doctoral research into intercultural competence in learning Chinese as a foreign language in UK HE.

By 2010, the number of learners who study Chinese as their second language worldwide was forecast to be about 100 million (The People's Daily, 2006). Many UK universities now offer Chinese language courses. Compared with European languages, the understanding of teaching Chinese as a foreign language is inadequate (Zhang and Li, 2010).

Intercultural competence has been identified as a key aspect to consider in foreign language education. The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (2007) identified intercultural awareness, understanding and competence as one key element of the knowledge and understanding of language programmes, and the skill that language graduates need to acquire. The theoretical, methodological, and pedagogic resources available for developing and interpreting intercultural competence need further exploration and development to meet the reality of Chinese as a foreign language in HE.

My study aims to identify the key areas of intercultural competence in learning Chinese as a foreign language and seeks to explore the current approaches to the teaching and learning of Chinese as a foreign language in UK HE with particular reference to culture.

The main research question is: How is intercultural competence conceptualised in teaching and learning Chinese as a foreign language in UK HE?

The study consists of a pilot phase with university teachers and researchers, and a main study with HE students. Data are collected using questionnaires, interviews and observation in addition to desk research.

The paper will report findings from the pilot phase based on semi-structured interviews carried out with 10 university teachers/researchers. Data were analysed using a thematic analysis approach (at a semantic and latent level).

The findings have implications for the curriculum development of Chinese as a foreign language (including teaching materials and teachers' training) in UK HE. The findings indicated that most interviewees were unaware of the relevance of intercultural competence, however, the construction of culture and elements of intercultural competence are embedded in intercultural dialogue in classrooms. The concept of intercultural competence in relation to learning Chinese as a foreign language needs to be developed to reflect cultural features of Chinese. The main study will be conducted to identify what these competencies are emerging from the characteristics of Chinese as a foreign language. Students' intercultural experience/encounters will be explored.

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Zhang, G.X. and Li, L.M. (2010) Chinese language teaching in the UK: present and future. *Language Learning Journal*, 38(1), 87-97.

0068

To What extent does the marketization of HEIs give rise to processes of convergence or divergence in the sector? A case study: England.

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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This paper sets out to critically assess and review the existing literature concerning the impact of marketization on the HE sector in England in terms of patterns of institutional diversification and convergence.

A conceptual/reflexive analysis of the current institutional restructuring will be ideally matched and completed, by the time of this presentation (December 2012), by empirical qualitative data gathered via semi-structured interviews to be held in a number of HEIs equally divided into top, globally oriented research-intensive institutions, locally oriented teaching-intensive institutions and "middle-ground" nationally competitive ones, in order to provide a more accurate overview of the English HE institutional spectrum under scrutiny.

Key words: massification, marketization, differentiation, convergence, marketing

The English HE sector has been and is currently being structurally and ideologically reformed along strong neoliberal, market-oriented lines: the impact of marketization/privatization of the English HE provision will be critically assessed both in terms of its financial/structural underpinnings and, most importantly, with regards to its consequences as far as the future of the university as a public (?) institution and as a social good is concerned.

While the literature on marketization generally points to an increasing diversification/stratification in the subject/institutional offer as a result of the progressive marketization of the system, counter differentiating tendencies are equally detected sub specie "mission creep" and horizontal vocational drifts. Whether interpreted as signs of "cultural resistance" to or byproducts of the market, academic and vocational drifts produce homogenizing tendencies paradoxically at odds with the core principles of the market (diversification, freedom of choice).

Will the marketized British higher education be an inclusive, internally differentiated, efficient sector or will it reproduce existing socio-economic stratification producing unintended side effects such as internal convergence?

Looking concomitantly at structural political/economic constraints and at the semiotic turn inherently connected with the shift to the entrepreneurial university this study will shed light on the role of market forces in conjunction with the powerful instrument of (HE) marketing. Increasing tendencies to homogenization across the sector will be anticipated as likely result of both academic/vocational drifts and of the exacerbated competition brought about by the very logic of the market.

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Bleiklie, I. (2004). Organizing higher education in knowledge society. UNESCO Forum Occasional Paper Series. Paper N. 6. In: Diversification of Higher Education and the Changing Role of Knowledge and Research. (ED-2006/WS/44)

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Jessop, B. (2008). A Cultural Political Economy of Competitiveness and its Implications for Higher Education. In Jessop B., Fairclough N., Wodak R. (Eds.) *Education and the Knowledge-Based Economy in Europe. Educational Futures: Rethinking Theory and Practice*. Vol. 24

0069

The Narrated Identities of Young Irish Male Undergraduates

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Content of the Presentation

This presentation is a summary of the narrative data analysis of the life histories of four young Irish male undergraduates, who narrated their life stories to the researcher, a PhD student who was living in undergraduate halls with them during the data collection.

Background

Masculinities is a relatively new field of study, grounded in anthropology, sociology and psychoanalysis. The most cited author in the field, Raewyn Connell, has developed a widely-used sociological theory of masculinities, based around the concepts of hegemony, complicity, subordination, authorisation and marginalisation in her seminal work *Masculinities* (2005, Cambridge: Polity). This PhD study aims to augment the work of Connell and her peers by examining masculinities through the works of two thinkers: Charles Taylor and Michel Foucault. Taylor is the leading living proponent of a normative, essentialist notion of self, a tradition carried on from Kant and Hegel. He believes that identity is a moral claim, and that to say who we are is to say where we stand in the world (*Sources of the Self*, 1989 Cambridge University Press). Foucault was at the forefront of twentieth century linguistic and structuralist thought, and believed that identity is an imposition of powers operating through society, institutions, culture and language. The objective of this study is to discover what can be said by examining masculinities (and Connell's theory of masculinities in particular) under the subjective and objective perspectives provided by Taylor and Foucault respectively.

Method

These questions will be answered through an auto/biographical study of the lives of four young Irish male undergraduates. Life histories have already been compiled by means of a series of interviews, the use of social media excerpts and written pieces. Negotiated narratives of these lives form the data for analysis. The data will then be analysed, initially as narratives and then through the socio-cultural questions provided by Taylor and Foucault. Undergraduate years are often seen as a key time of change in young people's lives, a time when they "grow up". These young men are living outside of home for the first time and are being treated as "adults" by the law and by institutions, but not necessarily by their families and social networks. It is an interesting time of change and development. Proponents of the "liberal university" claim that the education received at a liberal university, aids in the formation of the individual, their criticality, conscience and character. According to Trinity College, Dublin's own Mission Statement, it is such an institution, "a liberal environment...[where] students are nurtured as individuals and encouraged to achieve their full potential". (TCD, 2008, p. 1) This time of change and new experiences provides fertile ground for the life historian to document.

0070

What is HE for? What am I for? Shared Perspectives and Methods

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Purpose:

This paper considers “what is higher education for” from the perspectives of part-time lecturers, those joining the landscape from professional practice, at the point where they are becoming conscious of academic identity.

Nature of the research:

This ongoing work combines empirical research findings with a developing methodology.

Methodology:

Phase two develops findings introducing a method of Mapping Academic Identity, a technique inspired by Grayson Perry’s “Map of an Englishman”, for testing.

Findings:

Being able to articulate one’s academic identity is important however findings reveal that not everyone is aware of this Wilson (2009). The question “what is higher education for” might be contested with “what am I for” as early-career teachers begin to find their fit. Not everyone travels along the same pathway or from the same background. This coming together of researchers, teachers and professional practitioners fuses what is understood as a diverse community of practice.

The presentation shares perspectives of new teachers and the mapping method adopted. It shows how Grayson Perry’s model is turned around and applied to “Map Academic Identity” for a 21st Century understanding. Perceptions/illustrations offer insights into how newcomers perceive “What higher education is for” and how they situate themselves within HE. It enables early-career academics to consider their reputation for teaching and research as well as ways of organising their professional lives to achieve all that is expected. Questions surface - can “one island” achieve everything that they are engaged for? How can academic developers become enablers ensuring newcomers, both researcher and teacher, are best directed in the formation of “what am I for?”

Boud (2001:31) highlighted contentions about what a university is in the context of work-based learning and the potential impact that this has on academic identity. Those studying a PgCert might be viewed as engaging in work-based learning and the technique of Mapping Academic Islands proves a useful methodology. One that supports the development of a metaphorical academic island and, over time, should reveal how mapping plays out, the picture it paints and the story it tells.

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0071

Making Philosophers Employable: Reflections on Philosophy & Employability

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

Ruth Oswald

The University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK

Key Words: philosophy, employability, inquiry, skills, curriculum

In recent years, the employability agenda has become one of the most prevalent in framing discussions about the efficacy of universities, both inside and outside of the academy. Traditionally, many academics have been loath to accept this shift towards what they regard as crude instrumentalism which implies that the function of a university is to produce work-ready individuals who will “meet the needs of business.”(Department for Business Innovation and Skills, 2012).

However, it seems unlikely that even the most staunch opponents of this agenda will be able to resist engaging with it on some level in the near future, given that ‘employment and salary’ are due to form part of the Key Information Set (KIS) to be provided to prospective students by every UK university from September 2012.

This paper explores how HEIs might go about embedding good employability practice in areas of the curriculum where there is no obvious link between a discipline and the job market. Through the critical analysis of philosophical work – particularly in the area of philosophy with children (Lipman, 2003), (Fisher, 2008), (Trickey & Topping, 2004) – as well as reflections on an on-going practical research project involving an attempt to implant employability into the philosophy curriculum at a UK HE institution, both theory and practice will be examined.

In *The Republic*, Plato asserts that “Unless communities have philosophers as kings... or the people who are currently called kings and rulers practice philosophy with enough integrity... there can be no end to political troubles.” (*The Republic*, 5.473d). For Plato, the philosopher has a central role to play in public life, and yet, despite numerous links between the taught content of philosophy modules and broad notions of employability, many students of the discipline find it difficult to articulate just what makes them employable with anything other than superficial references to ‘transferable skills’ and ‘critical thinking’.

I argue that, first and foremost, good employability practice ought to arise out of in-depth critical engagement with the most significant features of each discipline; that it should help students to answer the question “what makes you employable?” with direct reference to the unique attributes of their subject. For philosophers, the process through which such features are identified may entail problematising the employability agenda itself, but, through doing this, both the traditional misgivings of academics and the needs of students may be addressed properly.

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Lipman, M. (2003) *Thinking in Education* (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press).

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0072

An old idea in tertiary education for emerging economies: The work-college

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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The research on the use of innovation in higher education includes the need for entrepreneurial colleges that promote work related skills for today's students in prosperous and developing countries to assure access to education among at-risk-youth, women, and economically challenged families. The presentation will describe the need and provide resources to explore a college type that requires the use of the mind, the hands, and the heart to develop workforce and leadership skills of graduates. In preparation for this research using data from sub-Saharan Africa, there were articles about ideas that worked and others that never came to fruition, some with mandates and others without (Bray, 2001); but what is important is that there is still hope (Meinert, 2009), people are still searching for answers on how best deal with change in education. Through historical analysis and the application of data from current international databases; a model for a college that is founded on seven essential pillars is presented that could be used where there is a need to reach students who have rejected traditional education, to partner with local industry, and to promote a commitment to the community at large. While the larger project (recently defended dissertation) serves to find conditions favorable to the founding of three different types of colleges; this presentation focuses exclusively on a model where work-related skills are assessed and reported as other learning outcomes are reported—through grades and transcripts.

Woodworking, brick making, agriculture, and book making served as the industries that were developed at the 19th century mission schools in Uganda (Hattersley 1908). The work-college model is not as much about what entrepreneurial activity is involved, but that the activity helps reduce the cost of education and teaches the dignity of all work by teaching a strong work ethic (Mullinax, Stephenson, Denman, Davis & Canon, 1989). Work-colleges are suitable alternatives because they can be scalable, responsive to local needs, and promote economic growth. Work-colleges offer the potential to allow available funding to be focused on pedagogically targeted activities, promote access for rural populations, employ and engage students, attract philanthropic and developmental funding sympathetic to the basic tenets and benefits of the work-college, and offer sustainability that other funded models of tertiary education may not.

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0073

Enhancing student learning: Is reflective journaling fit for all?

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Key words: reflection, limiting factors, enabling factors, study approach

Abstract:

The purpose of the presentation is to discuss what could be factors limiting or enabling the quality of student reflection based on an ongoing research study.

Following lifelong learning policy in higher education in Thailand, self-study tasks, project-based or portfolios are common activities in most syllabi found at the university, the research site of this study. In addition to these activities students in English courses are more often than not required to write learning journals to reflect on their experiences regularly throughout the courses. Normally, students are provided with structured questions as their guidance on writing English journals. However, through occasional conversations with teachers and students who have involved with learning journals in their courses, the researcher found that they both perceived learning journals as a burden or a waste of time. While teachers expressed their disappointments with the quality of the journals submitted by their student, students, themselves all non-native speakers of English perceived journal writing as a burden with no clear reasons why they had to write them.

While literature in the field has provided promising results of journal writing in enhancing student learning (Conner-Greene, 2000) and encouraging students to become more critical and more reflective (Jarvis, 2001), language barrier could be one of several limiting factors that limits quality of reflection in student journal. Hence, this empirical study has been set out with two main purposes: 1) to explore limiting or enabling factors in producing quality learning journals in a Thai context, and 2) to provide suggestions for an action plan to promote student reflective skills

This case study was divided into 2 main stages. Firstly, a semi-structured interview was conducted on 5 students: 2 males and 3 females enrolled in Academic English 2. This focus group interview was designed to explore what could be enabling or limiting factors, and whether students with different approaches to study prefer different mechanisms other than journal writing to develop their reflective skills. Then, the same students were to complete the Approaches and Study Skills Inventory developed by Tait, Entwistle, and McCune (1998). This was to identify each student's study approach. The collected data are now being thoroughly analysed.

Conner-Greene, P.A. (2000). Making connections: Evaluating the effectiveness of journal writing in enhancing student learning. *Teaching of Psychology*, 27 (1), 44-46.

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0074

In-class interaction and experience of Chinese students and English-native-speaking staff in higher education in China

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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In the era of globalisation, Chinese university students of different disciplines are now required to take English language classes as compulsory courses. In recent years, there is a widespread trend in China that an increasing number of English-native-speaking staff are recruited into the universities to teach the English courses. Thus, it is necessary and interesting to study the learning experience of Chinese university students and the teaching experience of foreign staff, and to understand their in-class interaction. However, previous studies and surveys focusing on the English classes taught by English-native-speaking staff in higher education in China are insufficient.

This ongoing doctoral research aims to take an empirical approach to investigate the classroom experience of both the students and teachers. The main research question is: how do Chinese students and foreign staff interact and negotiate in the language learning/teaching process, and how does the class influence the identities of students? The research will study the perspectives of both the students and the staff on what variety of English (eg. Standard English, China English, or English as a lingua franca) and whose culture/cultures should be taught and learned in the class. It will also examine how the students and the staff, with different perspectives and ideologies, negotiate with each other. More importantly, the power relations between the Chinese students and the foreign staff will be explored, and the influence of the class on the identity formation of the Chinese students will be discussed. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with the English-native-speaking staff. Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews are used to gather information from the students. Class observation is also employed to study the negotiation process between the Chinese students and the foreign teachers. Besides, government policies on university English education are also analyzed, in order to examine whether the result of employing English-native-speaking staff is compatible with the expectation of the government.

Pilot study is conducted at this stage. According to the preliminary findings, the Chinese students prefer to learn "Standard English", while the foreign staff tend to teach "English as a lingua franca". However, in their in-class negotiation, foreign teachers have more power in deciding the teaching content and methods. The academic identity of the Chinese students decrease in the class, but their national identities increase. For the conference, this report will present the research framework of this doctoral study, and the detailed data and preliminary findings of the pilot study.

Key words: Chinese university students, English-native-speaking staff, learning/teaching experience, student identity, power relations

0075

Delimiting the Public Service Mission: Localism and Globalism at a Post War American University

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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This presentation problematizes the university's public service mission. It encourages discussion of the university's purpose in a manner more precise and better grounded in the historical, political and social contingencies that impact its possibilities. The university's mission is usually framed in terms of commitments to teaching, research and broader community service. Among US public universities, there is general consensus that the nature of their "public-ness" demands a special obligation to the people of their states, a constituency that can be described as a locally delimited public. Yet, at the same time, the university is not a locally discrete institution, divorced from its broader national and global context.

Extending the reach of its service mission raises questions about the composition of the university's public and how it is served. This presentation explicates such questions by examining the University of Illinois immediately following World War II. At that time, President George Stoddard envisioned his university's state obligation in terms of globalized public service. Stoddard's formulation proceeded from his liberal belief in education's role in creating rational understanding for worldwide progress and peace. In response to the rise of technology, he promoted liberal education as a mechanism for democracy: locally, nationally and around the world. Stoddard's vision of public service was at odds with those who understood it in more locally circumscribed terms. Opponents de-emphasized the global university, instead focusing on its local responsibility for the education of skilled workers. The research employs archival materials (George D. Stoddard Papers, 1915-2001), secondary historical literature, and works examining the intersection of education, the public and liberal ideals (e.g. Dewey, 1954; Habermas, 1996; Calhoun, 2006). It uses archival materials to exemplify the difficult and contingent nature of the public as it relates to the university, and more theoretical works to relate this example to debates about the relationship between the university, the public and democracy. By the time of presentation, all archival work will have been completed and theoretical analysis will be at least significantly developed.

This presentation shows the extent to which our discussion of the universities public service mission needs to proceed from an explication of the very idea of "public." It demonstrates how serving a localized public, often with immediately practical concerns, may be at odds with broader goals of public service, goals that to many are essential to the university's very purpose.

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Habermas, J. (1996). *The structural transformation of the public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

0076

Personal and Relational Factors Affecting the L2 Motivation of Pakistani Students in the Public Universities of Central Punjab

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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This paper presents an ongoing study of Pakistani undergraduate students' motivation to learn English, using Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System as the main theoretical framework, while including some context-specific factors. The purpose of the study is both to analyse the usefulness of Dörnyei's model for describing L2 motivation of a sample of Pakistani students and to investigate other contextual and relational motivational factors which may be salient in this under-researched context. For this purpose, this study applied mixed method approach. A structured questionnaire survey was designed and administered to over 1000 undergraduates in seven public sector universities of Central Punjab, Pakistan. Both correlation and regression analyses were used to analyse questionnaire data in detail. In addition, twenty semi-structured interviews of a sub-sample were also conducted and qualitative data was analysed with the help of thematic analysis.

The analysis provides considerable support for the relevance and effectiveness of the major components of L2 Motivational Self System - ideal and ought-to L2 selves and attitudes to learning experience - in the Pakistani context. Participants' L2 learning attitudes and ideal L2 selves emerged as the strongest contributors to Pakistani learners' L2 motivation. The role of teachers and family members also appeared very important in shaping their future careers and desire to learn English. Moreover, a proposed new construct – National Interest – was also found useful in capturing in-depth view of the contemporary L2 motivation of the participants. The data revealed that these Pakistani learners' image of themselves as future English-users is associated with a desire for the socio-economic development, internal harmony and the international reputation of their country. They view their own and peers' developing competence in English as a positive step towards restoring the health and reputation of their country in a challenging global context. Overall, the study presents a strong combination of personal and 'relational motives' (Gore et al., 2009: 77) strongly affecting participants' desire to learn English. For future L2 motivation studies, the study highlights the need to understand the association of English with the national identities and relational interests of learners in the collectivist societies similar to Pakistan.

Key Words: L2 Motivational Self System; Attitudes to Learning English; Ideal L2 self; Ought-to L2 self; National Interest.

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Gore, J., Cross, S., & Kanagawa, C. (2009). Acting in our interests: Relational self-construal and goal motivation across cultures. *Motivation and Emotion*, 33(1), 75-87.

0077

Something to Say: the role of research academics in policy making on counter-trafficking

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to discuss the policy relevance of higher education research and academics within the context of human rights and taking the specific example of human trafficking. The paper builds on the author's own experiences and the experiences of colleagues who have sought to bridge the gap between the academy and policy making through work as consultants, within NGOs or within Governmental institutions. It also builds on research currently underway by the author which aims to conduct an assessment of academic engagement with 'policy' in the field of human trafficking. The key research question is How are academics participating in the policy making space in the field of counter-trafficking? . The project adopts a mixed approach combining quantitative and qualitative research methods. It works primarily through fully structured questionnaires – mainly close ended questions with some space for elaboration. The target is to reach 100 academics at various stages of their career and circa 40 policy makers at various entities (IGOs, INGOs, NGOS, Governments, Authorities). The stage in the career is determined through the questionnaire in order to outline potential trends. A number of qualitative in depth semi-structured interviews will also be conducted. Recruitment for both elements of the research is done through contacts of the author and a subsequent snowballing effect which aims to target a wide variety of researchers. Existing networks and mailing lists will also be used in this regard.

In view of the topic of the specific conference, this paper will focus on the 'researcher' role of the academic, looking at how research can and has been used in policy making most notably within a context where evidence based policy making is becoming increasingly 'appealing'. The paper argues that academics have sought to engage within a crowded policy making space. As such they have a lot to gain and a lot to give to this space, and in particular through collaboration with other entities that can both support access to information and benefit from the specific skill set that academic researchers can bring to the field.

Keywords: policy, evidence-based, trafficking, engagement

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0079

Does Forum theatre contribute positively to the students learning experience: Using a forum theatre approach to learning and teaching to enhance communication in nurse education?

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Poster

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Communication has always been the cornerstone of nursing care. The subject of nursing's ability to communicate with care and compassion is ever present in the media. Poor communication in healthcare is sadly often the focus. Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsmen (2011) This has led to calls for the emergence of communication skills to be taught as a core component of undergraduate nursing courses (Nursing & Midwifery Council 2010), which has led to a new emphasis on communication skills in nursing education. The highlighted gaps highlighted in communication training include:

- Provision shortages and variability of provision.
- Shortages of communication skills training for dealing with certain groups of patients or clinical areas
- Shortages in the training of certain skills
- Bias towards mechanistic rather than relational communication
- Poor evaluation of course outcomes
- Failure to adapt teaching to the learning styles or academic ability of students
- The gap between education and practice
- Values system controlled by health education (technical know-how valued over interpersonal skills)

'Forum theatre' is a highly interactive method of teaching with a drama and theatrical basis. (Boal 1993)

This method has been employed in the classroom and early evaluations have found student nurses readily engage as it allows them to gain exposure to challenging situations and experiment with different communication strategies.

Forum theatre is new to nurse education and the researcher is keen to grow the literature base and explore whether this method a beneficial, credible and legitimate method to employ in the teaching of communication skills with student nurses in the classroom.

The learning theory from these theorists will be considered when measuring student learning:

Friere – Pedagogy of the oppressed

Mezirow – Transformative learning

Carper – ways of knowing

This work at present is a literature review discussion.

Methodology, approach and sample.

Sample = Year 3 undergraduate student nurses. Student interview following exposure to a forum theatre session. Method = Thematic analysis

Key argument:

The student experience of navigating the complexities of communication within a classroom setting is inadequately serviced by traditional methods of teaching. By exploring the use of forum theatre allows students to analyse themselves and others along with deconstructing difficult scenarios from practice, at their pace and in a safe classroom away from the practice setting.

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Keywords

Communication, nurse education, forum theatre, learning

0080

Strategies for avoiding superficial responses and marks inflation in assignments in Engineering Management degree programmes

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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This presentation provides insight into the threat posed to academic standards from setting superficial assignments for final year cohorts in Engineering Management honours degree courses. The tendency to i) guide students to a particular outcome (albeit subconsciously), ii) to uncritically accept information garnered from web-pages offering shallow and inaccurate information and iii) to then be over-generous in assessment, is evaluated. A critique of practices adopted when setting and marking final year engineering management programmes is made by reference to case studies that shed light on the variability in standards across modules in a final year programme. This work is presented as both an initial pilot study and as a means of developing a methodology to improve the standard of assignment and report writing amongst graduates in the discipline. It is offered in the light that an inevitable diminution of academic standards resulting from 'dumbing down' individual projects in degree courses is unfair to previous cohorts, threatens the credibility of the provider and is ultimately a disservice to industry and commerce.

It is convenient in all walks of life to revert to Wikipedia, or some similar site, to gain immediate insight into a topic. All too often, students write assignments that, from a cursory assessment, appear to have addressed a central research question or provided an in depth analysis. However, it is common for such assignments to be exposed as trivial on closer scrutiny. Students have learned how to structure reports and to reference the work of others, but frequently presentation masks the dearth of ideas and depth in projects and assignments. Plagiarism checks might attest that a report is properly referenced and the student has undertaken a level of investigation and self-guided study, but no insight is given into the quality of the submission. Specific modules are discussed (e.g. Procurement and Inventory Management, Global logistics), deficiencies in the guidance given to students are considered along with an evaluation of the rigour in assessment and the awarding of marks. As a result of the investigation, strategies will be proposed for improving the relevance and quality of assignments and projects set in final year engineering honours modules.

0081

An exploration of concerns around categorisation when researching the Black and Minority Ethnic student experience within higher education

Status: Accepted Presentation type: Oral

Author's preference: Individual paper

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Drawing on research completed in 2011 (Davies & Garrett, 2012), this paper explores concerns around categorisation and definition when researching the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) student experience. As the researcher is commencing follow-up study into undergraduate BME law students' perceptions of employability, it is vital that a reflexive attitude is adopted and feedback is sought in developing the core conceptual framework for future work.

Work to date recognises that there are definitional and categorisation issues (e.g. Givens & Bennett, 2004; Cousin, 2002). The use of broad overarching terms such as 'BME' and 'minority ethnic' without further sub-categorisation can be criticized for not recognizing ethnic heterogeneity (Singh, 2011). In the researcher's 2011 work, BME students studying at the research institution across all campuses were deliberately targeted (Trochim, 2006). Sub-categorisation beyond self-certification of BME status was neither required nor imposed.

Several considerations led to the adoption of broad self-categorisation. As Cousin (2002) has recognised, ethnic categorisation has often been considered a dangerous and divisive tool in segregating minority groups. Similarly, any attempt at ethnic categorisation faces the danger of constructing 'white' as an unproblematic majority category (Bird, 1996). Others express concern that strict adherence to ethnic categorisation can lead to institutions using the standard recognised categories to massage minority ethnic participation rates (Cousin, 2002).

Arguably, participants in the 2011 study should have had the opportunity to define their ethnicity more specifically. This may have provided an additional dimension to the research, and the lack of specific categorisation of those participating may well have enhanced the problem of perceiving BME students as a homogenous group. Equally, there may have been discrepancy between the categorisation of the research sample necessitated by self-certification, and the declarations provided by such students to the research institution in relation to their ethnic categorisation. It is these and related concerns around categorisation that this paper seeks to address.

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