Students as Co-researchers and Co-constructors of Practice Knowledge

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Introducing Danielle
Overview

- An example of student’s work: Danielle
- The importance of students in knowledge-making
- Communities of practice (where things are tried out and shared)
- Collaborative model of fieldwork education based on the above
- Using Appreciative inquiry to explore the practice outcome of the collaborative model
- Danielle’s achievement
Practice Example: Danielle

- 2nd year undergraduate Plymouth social work student
- Fieldwork setting - NGO for homeless people
- Distressed by way agency forms represented service users
- Generated new assessment form in collaboration with service users
Collaborative placements

- Current research into student and supervisor experience
- Origins, definitions and characteristics of collaborative placements
- Culture conducive to affective and interactional knowledge-making (Ruch, 2007)
Appreciative inquiry

- Origins, orientation
- Features of the research method
  - Scrutinises best practice
  - Examines conditions in which that practice occurs
  - Builds capacity
Research Strategy

- **Aim:** To use an Appreciative inquiry approach to establish the extent to which students can be regarded as co-creators of knowledge for practice.

- **Objectives:**
  - To investigate and affirm examples of exceptional practice undertaken by students
  - To establish the conditions in which such practice can flourish
  - To gather multiple perspectives on the process of knowledge-making
Danielle (student) as co-creator of knowledge

- Respect for people’s individuality and resilience
- Rejected deficit model of homelessness
- Constructing a new space in which homeless people’s voices can be heard
- Put existing knowledges together differently (values teaching and service user accounts; knowing the people with whom she works)
Admiration

Danielle admires homeless people because they:

- persevere in spite of events and obstacles
- lack self-pity
- self-medicate with substances to enable them to keep going
- are strong, happy and adaptable to change
- appreciate being able to have a shower/feel clean
- have dignity and self respect, coming for a daily meal to keep themselves alive instead of stealing.
‘Evidence is a quality of the surface. Your science is the triumph of evidence, a proliferation of the surface. It makes you master of the external, but at the same time it exiles you there, more and more’.

Cheikh Hamidou Kane
References


