

RWL 13

Researching Work & Learning

in times of change

Book of Abstracts

RWL13

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Digitalisation



Paper 1

Professionals' learning for a digitized world of work

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Abstract

In recent times, and more notably following the pandemic, digitization has imposed unprecedented changes to work, learning and lifestyles. For most professionals, new technologies continue to transform the systems and processes for their practices. They are required to learn quickly for a swift transition to using digital technologies as a way of minimizing any disruptions to flows in their services. Much of this emergent learning is informal and takes place at work, in the course of their everyday work - not necessarily at educational institutions or outside work sites. How do professionals engage and achieve their learning outcomes? This question was investigated in an Australian study to understand professionals' continuous learning in response to digital evolutions impacting their practice. The study used a mixed-method design to investigate how Australian education and health professionals learn as they work in evolving work contexts. Professionals from the education and health sectors were recruited through 21 professional associations. Data was collected in three phases: i) A short online survey to identify what professionals do to continually learn as they work; ii) In-depth case studies on how they learn; and iii) An elaborate online survey to identify professionals' learning practices. The findings from Phase 1 of the study are reported in this paper.

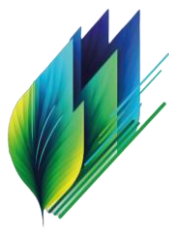
In Phase 1 of the project the respondents reported that digitalisation has reduced many of the manual tasks but generated new forms of work using technologies. That is, while technologies have automated tasks for greater efficiency and effectiveness, it has also expanded expectations of accessibility, thereby increased the scope of their work. Respondents explained that there is now an expectation for them to be available to respond to e-communications even outside their normal working hours. For example, Education professionals noted an increase in the number of online meetings, online teaching, and the number of emails to respond to. Health professionals experienced greater accessibility to information, though they need time to access these; and a need to work in new ways such as online



telehealth consultations to extend greater flexibility for patients. Professionals use technologies to search for information from company sources, professional databases or the internet, share information with colleagues, collate online information relevant to their work, or communicating and collaborating with colleagues and others they serve or engage with. Most of the respondents (over 70%) said they were encouraged to develop themselves though not all (21%) were provided release time to continuing professional learning. As such, the responsibility to invest in professional learning lies in the professionals themselves.

The findings show that professionals from both sectors learn mostly at work and typically from their colleagues through listening, observing, questioning and discussing. They engage in learning by working together to develop new ideas and ways to solve problems; asking for advice; learning by teaching others and engaging with professional associations. The findings suggest that professionals routinely use work situations as learning situations. To support their continuous professional learning, it obliges workplaces to create work situations to also be a learning situation. This can be challenging because of competing priorities.

The findings show that professionals learn from a range of available sources (within and outside the work spaces, online etc.) all the time. This phenomenon relates to the notion of apprenance, introduced by Carr (2005). Apprenance is dispositional in nature and pertains to an attitude of cognitive, affective, and conative openness to learning (Frimousse & Peretti, 2020) that favours continuing professional learning. It implies that individuals may need their own personal professional curriculum that incorporates informal and formal learning. However, the prominence of apprenance presents a challenge to educators in designing processes that recognise learning from multiple sources.



Paper 2

Sustainable use of digital technology for informal workplace learning

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Abstract

The digitalization brings many changes to work and workplaces (Billet 2021). The workplaces need to be environments that support the employees in coping with these changes through workplace learning (Harteis, Goller and Caruso 2020). Digital technology can provide resources, environments and new work practices that support workplace learning (Littlejohn and Pammer-Schindler 2022). In addition to the positive opportunities, the use of digital technology in work can have negative effects, such as information overload (Vuori, Helander, and Okkonen, 2019) or technostress, which can, however, be managed through actions of the user and the work organization (Pirkkalainen et al. 2019). Therefore, it is essential that we understand better the use of digital technology in everyday work and learning. This study focuses on finding sustainable ways for the workplace and employees to use digital technology, ensuring it supports informal learning, without causing excessive burden or stress.

Informal learning is integrated with everyday work activities, such as work tasks, interaction and experimentation (Eraut 2011). It is a complex phenomenon involving not only the learner, but also multiple agents, tools, and resources which are embedded in a dynamic and multidimensional workplace system (Marsick et al. 2017). Today, digital technology is an inseparable part of everyday work activities, and thus also of informal workplace learning. We use digital ethnography (Pink et al. 2016) to investigate the use of digital technology in authentic work settings in knowledge work. The data (observations, interviews, and participant diaries) were collected from a public sector workplace during the years 2020–2022. The data is analysed using qualitative ethnographic content analysis (Coffey 2018), focusing on the aspects of sustainability of learning (Lemmetty and Collin 2020). We examine how digital technology can be used for informal workplace learning in a sustainable way, considering the well-being of individuals and workplace, ethical issues, as well as transferability and usability of learning and knowledge. Our findings illuminate both positive and negative effects of digital technology for learning. Regarding the negative effects, we are interested in identifying ways in which the individuals and the workplace managed and reduced these negative aspects. The results of this study can be used to develop sustainable practices for using digital technology for workplace learning.



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Paper 3

The Impact of Digital Technologies on Jobs and Skills: Evidence from Singapore

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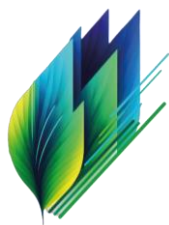
Abstract

The impact of digital technologies on jobs and skills is an important area of investigation in understanding the future of work and learning. Accordingly, there is a large body of work devoted to investigating the automation potential of technologies and its labour-substituting effect on different types of jobs and tasks across the occupational structure (Frey and Osborne, 2017). The earlier works (Katz & Murphy, 1992; Machin & van Reenen, 1998) mostly discuss the effect of technologies on low-skilled routine tasks, in how it frees up workers' capacity to perform more complex work thus increasing the demand for high-skilled workers. Much more recently, alongside major technological advances in machine learning and generative artificial intelligence technologies that have expanded the capabilities of machines to also carry out non-routine, cognitive tasks such as those requiring reading, writing, and reasoning, the attention has shifted towards the impact on high-skilled work (Holm & Lorenz, 2022), including possible risks of deskilling and overall reduction in demand among high-skilled, knowledge workers (Brown, 2021; Lassebie & Quintini, 2022).

But more than just the labour-substituting effect of technologies, the recent literature has also devoted more focus in investigating the augmenting capabilities of technologies, which is important to understand if and how labour remains a comparative advantage (Gmyrek et al., 2023; Holm & Lorenz, 2022; Lassebie & Quintini, 2022). A complementary line of investigation looks at susceptibility of different types of work to offshoring and patterns of redistribution globally (Frey and Osborne, 2017), a concern that has become much more acute with the growth in digital labour platforms.

In contributing fresh perspectives and new evidence to the global debate, we investigate the impact of digital technologies – including artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies – on jobs and skills in Singapore using job holder data from the third iteration of the Singapore Skills and Learning Survey. This iteration of the survey, conducted between 2021 and 2022, includes detailed questions asking respondents about digital tasks demand at work, exposure to technological changes at work¹, and the resulting effect of the technological changes on job quantity and job quality. It also includes questions about remote working and global team working requirements. The dataset covers a nationally

¹ In the survey, exposure to technological changes at work is defined as having significant change in the working environment in the last 3 years due to computerised or automated equipment, artificial intelligence and machine learning, or data analytics technologies.



representative sample of Singapore's resident population. For this investigation, the data of 4,218 resident job holders aged 25 to 65 years old is extracted and analysed.

We find that the impact of digital technologies across different types of jobs and workers is uneven. While technological changes primarily benefits complex, managerial roles², they pose risks to complex, professional roles³ and have minimal impact on the job quality of other workers performing non-complex roles. In particular, we find that:

- The extent of exposure to technological changes is significantly higher among those working in managerial (50%) and professional roles (44%), as compared to other workers performing non-complex roles (23%).
- All types of job roles are equally likely to report job loss due to technological changes, suggesting that complex managerial and professional roles are not more protected than less-skilled job roles from potential labour-substituting effect of technologies. In terms of job gains, however, as compared to managerial roles, those working in professional roles are 0.7 times as likely to report an increase in the number of people doing their type of work, while other workers in non-complex roles are only 0.5 times as likely to report a similar increase.
- As compared to managerial roles, those working in professional roles are equally likely to report an increase in task complexity due to technological change but are only 0.6 times as likely to report an increase in task discretion due to technological change. This finding might hint at early evidence of risk of professional roles being subject to algorithmic management where work processes are standardised and controlled by digital technologies (Gmyrek et al., 2023). Meanwhile, other workers in non-complex roles are only 0.5 times and 0.5 times as likely to report an increase in task complexity and task discretion respectively, as compared to managerial roles.
- As compared to managerial roles, those working in professional roles are 1.4 times more likely to report being able to perform their work remotely and 1.3 times more likely to report global team working as job requirement. This finding highlights the lack of 'location stickiness' and increased risk of professional roles in Singapore being redistributed across labour markets globally. Incidentally, comparing against the job security of those in managerial roles, respondents working in professional roles are half as likely to report that they are 'not likely at all' or 'likely' to lose their jobs in the next 12 months⁴.

The findings shed light on the risks that more recent advancements in digital technologies place on the job quantity and job quality of complex, professional jobs roles –which forms a substantial share of good quality, middle-class jobs in

² In this analysis, we define complex, managerial job roles as those that require the performance of complex tasks such as complex problem solving and involve managerial functions and supervisory duties.

³ Similarly, we define complex, professional job roles as those that require the performance of complex tasks, but do not involve managerial functions and supervisory duties.

⁴ Further analysis of the data is required to establish the direction of causality between technological changes and job security across and within job roles.



Singapore and globally. More importantly, in attempting to understand how digital technologies can be harnessed responsibly and inclusively for shared prosperity, the findings also raise important questions about the type of business production models and institutional structures to support the development of human-centric use of technologies in workplaces, as well as the type of education and learning that will support the development of human generative capability. Some of these issues will be explored with more depth in the paper presentation.

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Paper 4

Digital learning and using behavior of students in higher education in Germany - Results of a diary study

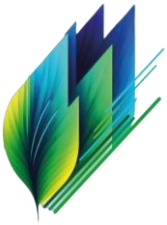
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Abstract

A fundamental characteristic of the university environment is the interconnectedness of various learning contexts. In a continuum from structured pedagogical settings like seminars to informal learning environments, there emerge diverse (digital) learning opportunities. As a result of the "culture of digitality" (Stalder, 2018) constantly introduces new (digital) spaces of potentiality, expanding and constraining individuals' digital capabilities simultaneously. Within these created spaces of potentiality, individuals seek direction and must assume responsibility for selecting and transmitting references independently (referentiality). In this regard, novel forms of social interaction (communality) are essential, with individuals increasingly defining them-selves through personal social networks that possess a delicate yet stable quality. Similarly, machine and automated processes already contribute to a preselection of information that guides the cultural practices of the subjects (algorithmicity) (Stalder, 2021, pp. 144-166).

Current research results show that students have different levels of digital competence (Biehl & Besa, 2021; Zinn et al., 2022), use a limited number of digital technologies and these primarily for entertainment (Bond et al., 2018, p. 1ff.). Furthermore, students' digital skills are mainly acquired during their studies when self-study tasks be completed (van Dijk & van Deusen, 2014, p. 114). The access and use possibilities of digital media are increasingly being discussed with reference to the multidimensional construct of the digital divide. In scientific and public dis-course, the keyword "digital divide" (Norris, 2001) subsumes differentiated socio-demographic and economic factors that influence the use of digital media and reproduce social inequalities. For this background, van Dijk (2020) identifies four factors that guide the acquisition of digital competences. The first factor is an individual's attitude toward operating a digital device, which is considered a fundamental prerequisite for using digital media. The second factor is physical access, which includes material access (e. g. software) and conditional access (e. g. accounts) as well (van Dijk, 2020, pp. 34-49). The third factor consists of medium- and content-related digital skills that "focus on what users can actually do with and within digital media" (van Dijk, 2020, p. 66). The last factor is the actual usage of digital media, considering that digital competence is developed through regular use for different tasks in a variety of contexts (van Dijk, 2020, pp. 34-81). However, to date, a research desideratum has emerged regarding students' informal (digital) learning (Bond et al., 2018), although empirical findings show that students digital skills are mostly acquired informally (Biehl & Besa, 2021).

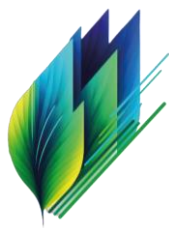


Therefore, the focus in the following contribution will be on the digital learning and using behavior (Factor 4) of students in Germany. As part of the multi-method project (DigiTaKS), 80 students from three student cohorts (2021, 2022, and 2023) at a university in Germany were asked in a 10-day learning and usage diary study to document learning situations. On the one hand, the online-supported quantitative survey serves to identify study-, leisure-, and media-related activities of students to gain insight into their digital learning and usage behavior. On the other hand, the study serves to identify the characteristics of challenging learning situations in everyday life, which can be considered impulses for the development of digital competences.

The descriptive and multivariate results indicate that challenging situations in dealing with the digital occur especially during the completion of study-related self-study. Considering this, students seek interaction with others, use a keyword search, or try out different modes of operation. The findings suggest that digital competence development processes are triggered primarily when students complete individual tasks at home. The responsibility for selecting and interpreting the information needed to solve the challenge lies with the students themselves. Based on the findings of the study, recommendations for action for a learning-friendly design of the working and learning contexts in the university are discussed to support digital competence development processes of students.

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Paper 5

The voices we amplify: a multi-site nested case study design on learning at work

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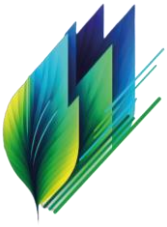
Abstract

Workplace safety training delivered via e-learning (safety e-learning) has many documented organisational benefits including time and cost savings, and importantly, demonstrating that organisations meet their ethical and legal obligations for training their workforce in safety. Additionally, e-learning offers worker benefits, particularly for workers who use computers and online environments as part of their usual work role. However, safety e-learning fails to consider workers whose work roles require minimum, repetitive, and experientially learned digital skills (herein referred to as low technology roles) and whose digital literacy may not support agency in e-learning. For these workers low digital literacy impacts comprehension of safety training content and results in increased risk of workplace accident and/or injury. It can also be experienced as a stressful experience by these workers who are often marginalised within organisations. For many workers, building and maintaining digital literacy within low technology roles to enable comprehension of safety e-learning is not attainable and this manifests in hesitancy and avoidance of safety e-learning, increasing workplace risk of accident and/or injury.

As a workplace educator in a public hospital in regional Australia, I support workers in catering, linen and environmental (cleaning and orderly) services which are classified as low technology roles. In my professional practice, I identified a discrepancy between the digital literacy low technology workers require to undertake their day-to-day work role compared to the digital literacy required to successfully complete safety e-learning. The research reported in this paper was developed in response to this problem in practice.

The voice of low technology workers is rarely considered in the design, development and delivery of the training that purportedly keeps them safe at work. This paper presents preliminary findings from a low technology worker centred, multi-site, nested case study that uses workplace ethnography to investigate the learning and digital literacy understanding and habits of low technology workers in two public health services in regional Victoria, Australia—one which is my own workplace and the second, a public hospital in the same region. Drawing on survey, participant observation and interview data, I consider how low technology workers experience learning in their everyday work roles and in periodical compliance safety e-learning. I further explore their digital technology use at work and home and finally, whether and how low technology workers see improvement to safety e-learning, and whether they demonstrate agency in digital literacy improvement at work and/or home.

Influenced by Vygotsky (1978) notion of the cultural mediation of activity and transformative change, this research is framed by 2nd generation Cultural



Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) (Sannino and Engeström 2018) and acknowledges the agentic self as key to transformative change. Further, this research considers the collective nature of agency when individuals are situated within a community of practice and examines whether understanding the learning and digital habits of low technology workers from the workers perspective can support transformative change in safety e-learning.

This research contributes to understanding worker learning, particularly with respect to digital habits and skills, and agency for digital literacy improvement individually and collectively. It aims to inform improvements in workplace safety training by focusing on workers' perspectives and experiences. Methodologically, I discuss the challenges experienced designing research that carefully considers *voice* from my position as a workplace educator and the importance of *voice* when researching with low technology workers, who are unused to sharing knowledge outside of their work role. The words of others are a mainstay of qualitative inquiry, particularly in research aiming to examine the perspectives of marginalised groups. Post-qualitative inquiry scholars provide robust critiques of this endeavour, identifying problematics in the voices we listen to and those we don't hear. In this study, challenges to hearing worker voice include a power differential between workers and the researcher, marginalisation of workers' everyday digital literacy learning, low worker literacy and numeracy, negative learner biography and a low understanding of the role research can play in sharing knowledge to amplify voice in solving problems directly related to themselves, their community of practice and workplace safety. This research has implications for practice and policy beyond these two sites, contributing insights for consideration when developing safety e-learning in organisation with low technology roles, both within the healthcare industry and in other industries employing low technology workers.

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Paper 6

Supporting preschool teachers' digital literacy: Exploring four cases

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Abstract

The advancement of digitalization has had a significant impact on education (Buckingham 2015; UNESCO 2022), and there is a growing concern about the need to prepare teachers to effectively use digital technology in pedagogy, particularly in preschool organizations (Nikolopoulou & Gialamas 2015; Mertala 2017). Concurrently, there have been ongoing debates on the effects and use of digital technology in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) (Plowman & McPake 2013; Veresov & Veraksa 2022), and in Sweden, the release of the new proposal for the Swedish National Digitalization strategy for school education (2023-2027) in December 2022 garnered significant attention and controversy due to the political climate and rejection from the Minister of Schools.

Despite efforts to develop Digital Literacy (DL), the use of digital technology is rather low, inconsistent, and used more for administrative and pedagogical preparation than educationally with young children (Romero-Tena, López-Lozano & Puig Gutiérrez 2020; Yang & Hong 2022; Fotakopoulou, et al. 2023). DL is defined as the capability to engage technically, meaningfully, and critically with digital technology (Ilomäki et al. 2016). Thus, there is a need for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to develop preschool teachers' ability to use ICT in their teaching practices (e.g., Aubrey & Dahl 2014; Thorpe et al. 2015; Petrovic, Pavlovic & Soler-Adillon 2016; Otterborn, Schönborn & Hultén 2019).

In this study, CPD is defined as in-service training or activities intended to develop the teachers' knowledge and skills to stimulate the improvement of their work and teaching (Sheridan et al. 2009). The structure and delivery of CPD play a crucial role in effectively introducing new knowledge and skills (cf. Parette et al. 2013; Colmer 2017; Elek & Page 2019; Brunsek et al. 2020). One way to accelerate DL is to provide support for and enhance ongoing, day-to-day learning at the workplace (Lave & Wenger 1991; Fuller & Unwin 2004, 2011). This approach can be further facilitated by the appointment of specialized ICT educators to guide teachers (SALAR 2019) or by involving other pedagogical leaders, but some studies show that Swedish preschool teachers predominantly engage in non-formal professional development (Marklund 2015, 2020).

While quantitative studies show that CPD on ICT improves preschool teachers' digital skills and teaching with digital technology (Kerckaert, Vanderlinde & van Braak 2015; Blackwell, Lauricella & Wartella 2016; Dong 2018), there is a lack of more in-depth research on CPD in Swedish preschools (cf. Schachter 2015; Skolverket 2019, 2021). Especially, research on how the workplace support and guidance of preschool teachers' DL is organized.



Research questions/aim

The aim of this study is to explore how support for preschool teachers' learning on digital technology manifests itself across different municipalities. The research questions are:

- What characterizes the support in the organizations?
- Which similarities and differences in patterns and key components can be identified in the support?
- How do various stakeholders perceive their roles and responsibilities in facilitating support for preschool teachers' DL?

Theoretical framing

In this study, we apply the theoretical framework of workplace learning by Billet (2011). Through this theory, the focus is on the relational aspects such as individual agency and workplace affordances for learning highlighting the interdependency of both to understand and study workplace learning (Hager 2011, p. 26).

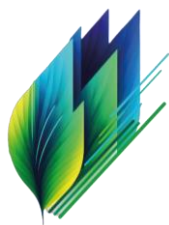
Methods

This study includes 12 semi-structured interviews with participants from four Swedish municipalities involved in organizing support for preschool teachers' digital learning in communal preschools, both on a managerial and staff level. The municipalities are situated within the East region of Sweden. Two of the municipalities are metropolitan areas, the others are medium-sized. The data was collected from November 2022 until February 2023.

Results

- A key component of the organizing to foster DL among preschool teachers was *regular group meetings with ICT educators*. These meetings concerned information sharing and practical workshops regarding digital tools with *coaching as the method*.
- All actors were organized into *dedicated groups/networks*, a central component as this was how planning happened and ideas were exchanged. To reach *collegial cooperation, communication and psychological safety* were expressed as necessary.
- The ICT educators had high agency; they designed workshops. Mandate and expertise were gained through self-learning and interest. Another key component is therefore *autodidactic professionals*.
- The principals acted as a facilitator.
- The differences in the organizing were mainly *how the management team exercised control* and depended on *vision/goals/policies* and *funding/prioritization*.
- *Time resources* affected the organization. Capacity differed between ICT educators.

The findings contribute to increased knowledge of how CPD of ICT in preschools is organized and has the potential to support decision-makers, principals, ICT educators, and preschool teachers to develop and improve current practices. Also highlighting the importance of recognizing workplace learning to increase preschool teachers' use of ICT to foster children's DL.



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Paper 7

Understanding the complexities of learning through the lifecourse in the digital era

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Abstract

In the evolving digital era, the landscape of adult learning has undergone transformations, which demands an in-depth understanding of the complexities involved in individual lifelong learning journey (Goh, 2022). That is, this digital age has reshaped the way adults engage with information, acquire new skills, and construct their identities to adapt and remain agile to the changing life circumstances. In parallel, lifelong learning is currently at the centre of many policies and initiatives, nationally and internationally. Whilst the idea of lifelong learning initially revolved around personal development and growth, it has been increasingly and inextricably linked to digitalisation which is marked by a shift in policy emphasis towards its economic relevance. Hence, this policy emphasis could influence ideas about what counts as valuable lifelong learning. To get a broader perspective on what counts as valuable lifelong learning, this study seeks to understand the meaning, impact and significance of learning in the lives of adults in the digital era. Hence, it starts with how individuals view learning in their lives including work and the impacts of this learning in navigating through this digital era. Subsequently, to gain a broad and in-depth perspective of these impacts, this study examines different forms of learning such as formal, informal, and incidental learning that occur not only at formal institutions but also at places such as workplaces, community learning spaces and learning that occurs in the context of everyday life. Additionally, within the lifelong learning literature, studies have explored the multifaceted dimensions of lifelong learning, diverse learning trajectories throughout one's life, transitions and learning through the lifecourse and the broader advantages of adult learning (Biesta, et al., 2011, Field, et al., 2009). However, there is still limited research which focuses on workplace learning as part of the lifelong learning agenda within the rapidly evolving digital landscape, considering that these digital transformations have increasingly changed the way we live, work, learn and how we communicate.

Much existing research on lifelong learning primarily examines learning within formal educational settings i.e. formal learning which aligns with educational policies and practices. This formal learning is normally highly structured. However, we must also recognise that non-formal and informal learning also play significant roles in individual lives. To include all forms of learning, this study adopts a more personalised approach placing the focus on individual adults and their unique learning journeys, biographies and trajectories. This approach seeks to understand the interplay between learning, identity and agency in individual lives navigating through this digital era. We acknowledge that individuals' identities are not static but are continually shaped and reshaped through their learning experiences. This research subsequently examines the intersection of identity and learning, understanding how one's sense of self influences their

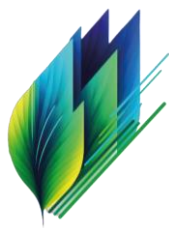


learning choices, motivation, and perseverance. Furthermore, agency is another critical facet of adult learning. It also studies how agency intersects with identity in individuals' lifelong learning journey.

The research study uses a combined life-history approach (Goodson and Sikes, 2001) and longitudinal interpretative lifecourse approach to understand how adults engage with an leverage learning opportunities in this digital age. The study is designed to interview as many individuals between the ages of 30 to 85 over the course of 18 months living in different countries. The finding of the study is expected to provide longitudinal evidence of how individuals leverage formal and informal learning at different learning spaces (e.g. community learning spaces, libraries) to navigate through this digital era, and what kind of learning is of value and meaningful to them. These findings can then be used to suggest strategies for improving adult learning. In this presentation, the preliminary analysis of the interview data will be discussed.

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Paper 8

Supporting digital intelligence workers engaged in professionalizing self-directed learning practices.

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Abstract

This paper draws from PhD research in progress which explores self-directed learning (SDL) practices in the field of digital intelligence (DI) in the province of Quebec (Canada), where approximately 45,000 professionals work in AI, data science, and related specialties. These workers continuously need to develop their skills due to rapid technological advancements. SDL is vital for their employability, as initial academic training is insufficient to maintain competency throughout their career. This situation prompts the necessity for internal organizational initiatives to support employee learning, respond to new competency needs, and maintain work performance. As the demand for DI experts rises, and as formal training programs can be time-consuming to develop and follow, organizations struggle with finding the right balance between autonomy and support for SDL. This project aims to analyze the capacitating dynamics within organizations that support DI workers engaged in professionalizing SDL activities. Taking an ecological approach to learning (Hage & Reynaud, 2014), this study investigates the contextual elements and relationships in workplace SDL situations (Billett, 2001; Carré, 2016; Lemmetty, 2020). It applies Sen's capability approach (Sen, 2000) to analyze "capacitating" dynamics that optimizes learning opportunities in the workplace (Fernagu, 2022).

Methodology

To find answers to the research problem, the project takes the form of an exploratory multiple case study (Yin, 2018) that analyzes SDL dynamics in three organizations, with data collected from a purposive sample of 22 people in total. Within each organization, semi-structured interviews are conducted with 2 or 3 individuals responsible for learning and development in DI, to gain insights into the mobilizable resources for SDL from the organizational perspective. Simultaneously, two separate rounds of individual semi-structured interviews are conducted with 4 or 5 DI workers of the same organization. The initial interview establishes a comprehensive mapping of their SDL activities for characterization purposes and to identify which resources are mobilized in their learning process. A follow-up individual interview takes place several weeks later, to validate the activity mapping and explore in-depth the conversion and choice factors influencing the completion of these activities. To complete the analysis, relevant documents from participants are collected, including training plans, company policies, and learning resources.

Emerging Results

Preliminary analyses of workers' SDL activity maps and emerging themes from interviews reveal, among other findings: a strong precedence of on-the-job,



informal SDL activities based on exchanges with colleagues and resources found in online DI communities; the key role of team managers in facilitating opportunities and conditions for SDL; a mitigated use of formal training resources provided by the organization; a spectrum of SDL processes and social time spaces, that depend on individuals and their environment, and evolve as DI professionals gain experience in their organization and in the field.

Relevance to research field of work and learning

Through empirical evidence, this study aims at understanding the ecological process of developing new DI knowledge and competencies to maintain work performance, and to investigate available resources and conditions for employee SDL, advocating co-responsibility in workplace learning. It characterizes the social time-spaces (Paquelin and Tendeng, 2020) in which SDL activities take place. It also explores the interplay between self-directed learners and their environment, and applies the capability approach to understand how, and most importantly why individuals engage in SDL for and at work, a perspective that has the potential to support individual and collective agency, and offer valuable insights in learning and development.

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Paper 9

Well-being in post-pandemic hybrid expert work: The impact of remote working, basic psychological needs satisfaction, and informal workplace learning

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Abstract

This study is part of a research project which aims to increase the knowledge of the challenges and opportunities of expert remote work in post-pandemic context.

Remote working has become a norm in many fields of expert work but previous research on remote working before COVID19-pandemic is not fully transferable to the current workplaces. Thus, research on the impact of remote working on the well-being and learning of experts is needed. Furthermore, relationships between various well-being and learning factors identified in previous research should be re-established in the new normal.

In this study, we are interested in whether employees who worked fewer or more days remotely differed in terms of work-related well-being (basic psychological need satisfaction [BPNS], work engagement [WE], job satisfaction [JS]), turnover intention (TI), and informal workplace learning (IWL). Additionally, we used structural equation modelling (SEM) to examine the direct effects (and indirect effects via WE) that BPNS and IWL have on JS and TI.

Remote working is considered in this study by the frequency of workdays done remotely in a week. Well-being is conceptualized through outcomes (JS, TI) and more process or interpretation-oriented factors (BPNS, WE) (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Cerasoli et al., 2018; Puhakka et al., 2021; Tynjälä, 2013). JS and TI are commonly researched job attitudes that refer to general well- and ill-being at work (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012). BPNS includes the satisfaction of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2017), which is associated with various outcomes in work context (see Van den Broeck et al., 2016). WE, according to the Job Demands-Resources model, can be described as a relatively stable, positive, and fulfilling work-related state of mind including vigor, dedication, and absorption (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). IWL is conceptualized using the octagon model of informal workplace learning (Decius et al., 2019) which includes four components: experience/action, feedback, reflection, and intention to learn.

Method

The survey data (n=260) used in this study were collected from the personnel of a Finnish IT consulting company in October–November 2022. The online survey



included five validated questionnaires for the study variables (BPNS; Schultz et al., 2015, WE; Schaufeli et al., 2019, JS; Bowling & Hammond, 2008, TI; Bothma & Roodt, 2013, IWL; Decius et al., 2023). Additionally, questions about current and preferred remote working frequency were included in the survey. The data were analyzed using correlations and SEM. Based on the JD-R model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), the mediating role of WE was investigated with the “lavaan” package (Rosseel, 2012) in the R environment (R Core Team, 2020).

Results / Conclusions

Correlation results showed that the number of employees’ remote days per week was negatively related to the satisfaction of basic psychological need of relatedness. The number of preferred remote days had similar association with relatedness satisfaction. Interestingly, current remote days and preferred remote days per week were not associated with any other study variables.

For the SEM model, autonomy satisfaction and IWL had positive direct effects on WE, while autonomy satisfaction and relatedness satisfaction both had positive direct effects on JS and negative on TI. WE had positive effect on JS and negative on TI as expected. Interestingly competence satisfaction and IWL had no direct effects on JS or TI. Additionally, autonomy satisfaction and IWL had indirect effects mediated by WE on JS and TI.

The results were mostly expected aligning with previous research. However, competence satisfaction had no associations with WE, JS, or TI, which differs from previous studies (e.g., Puhakka et al., 2021). Still, there are indications of the higher impact of autonomy and relatedness satisfaction compared to competence satisfaction especially in cases of TI and WE (see Van den Broeck et al., 2016). The results show that BPNS had a higher impact on job attitudes compared to IWL, in particular autonomy satisfaction. Also, the results indicate that informal learning in workplaces can require WE to have influence on JS and TI.

Relevance to research field of work and learning

Results highlight the impact of remote work on the satisfaction of relatedness. This encourages the companies and organizations to invest in relatedness and community culture, particularly of those who work (and prefer to work) frequently remotely. We found that IWL can enhance JS and lower TI but only through WE. Providing autonomy and encouraging IWL (e.g., improving feedback culture) alongside with relatedness increasing policies and activities can improve experts’ well-being. This study considers only expert work in IT sector, thus further investigations in different jobs and work cultures are needed to obtain a more comprehensive picture of current expert work.

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Paper 10

Online Teaching Practices in the Second Language Subject in Municipal Adult Education

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Abstract

Research Framing

Since the 1990s there has been a steady increase in online teaching in municipal adult education (MAE). This trend also applies to second language (L2) education provided for migrant learners. While research on L2 teaching and learning in physical L2-classrooms is well-established in the Swedish context (Nordlund Shaswar & Wedin, 2020; Edwardsson, Godhe & Magnusson, 2019), this research project seeks to generate more knowledge about teaching the L2 subjects online in MAE.

The research project focuses on the pedagogical and didactical practices employed in online teaching within the domain of Swedish as a Second Language at MAE. The research circles around how the online classroom can be understood and what role the material aspects play for teacher practices. The aim of the project is to investigate how closeness and relationships are established and maintained between teachers and students in online L2-settings.

The key research questions guiding the project are as follows:

How is the sense of closeness and relationships established by teachers in digital educational environments within the context of MAE?

In what ways does technology influence the formation of closeness and relationships within the online classroom?

The theoretical framework for this research draws upon Actor-Network Theory (ANT). ANT examines the interactions between human and material actors within networks (Ireland, 2019). With roots in ethnographic research traditions, ANT can generate analyses in various fields, such as education (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010). Within this research project, ANT is employed to illuminate what is already embedded in practice and the consequences arising from the actions that actors do in online practices.

Methods

The empirical material for the study is collected from 30 observations and about 30 hours of semi-structured interviews with ten teachers of the L2 subjects in MAE, each interviewed and observed three times. The data collection occurred across five MAE institutions situated in four Swedish cities.

Results

The findings suggest that the organization of education within municipalities influenced the nature of closeness and relationships between teachers and



students. For instance, in a particular municipality, a student receives 45 minutes of one-to-one teaching per week, which results in a feeling of closeness. Additionally, it also results in a great effort for the teacher, to focus on a single student in every lesson. Further, the teachers talk about how they experience that students often appear to feel comfortable sharing their difficulties in online settings, where the screen provides a sense of protection and encourages personal and honest communication.

Further, the online mode enables teachers to exercise greater control over students' activities in their courses, allowing for reminders on various occasions, and making the teacher more involved in the student's language development and learning.

Also, within a digital classroom, all students have a front-row seat, allowing them to closely observe the teacher's actions and doings.

Relevance to research field of work and learning

The project primarily focuses on the digitalization of adult education and, looking ahead, aims to enhance the inclusion of immigrants. Consequently, this project holds the potential to offer valuable insights into the field of work and learning. Specifically, it explores the implications of digitalization on both teaching and learning a second language for adults.

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Paper 11

The Use of Artificial Intelligence in Singapore's Training and Adult Education Landscape

Bao Zhen Tan

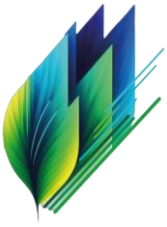
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Abstract

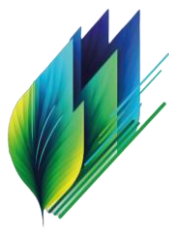
The training and adult education (TAE) landscape in Singapore is constantly developing, and the role of learning technologies in the context of continuing education and lifelong learning accelerated by COVID-19 is not yet well understood. Artificial intelligence (AI), particularly the recent boom of generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT) has also been used in innovative ways to personalize learning experiences for learners. The global market size of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been increasing since 2021 and is forecasted to increase exponentially from nearly 100 billion U.S. dollars in 2021 to an estimation of nearly two trillion U.S. dollars in 2030 (Thormundsson, 2023). The adoption rate of AI is expected to rise rapidly, as recent advances in generative AI since the launch of ChatGPT in November 2022 has garnered unprecedented attention among educators and learners, among other professionals. However, there has also been a heated debate regarding the use of AI in education. Critics argued that AI can never fully replace the human element of teaching, and maintain the view that educators are essential for developing skills such as critical thinking and creativity, as well as empathy in the learners (e.g., Eynon, 2020). Others have raised concerns about data security and privacy. For example, the Facebook and Cambridge Analytica data scandal had raised concerns about privacy breach through the collection and analysis of data via AI systems (Chan, 2019). This paper investigates the use of AI in TAE as well as the perceptions of the use of AI in TAE among adult educators in Singapore. An online survey (n=1,000) will be conducted from October to November 2023 among educators working in higher education or continuing adult education and training in Singapore – this includes all Institutes of Higher Learning, public and private educational institutions, as well as in-house training units. The survey consists of a series of Likert-scaled items that ask respondents to share their perspectives on the use of AI in TAE, their level confidence in the use AI in their TAE-related work, their perceived impact of the use of AI in TAE on their job and their learners, as well as their participation in professional development pertaining to the use of AI in TAE. To investigate the perceptions of AI among the adult educators, the survey adapted questions from an oft-researched theoretical model of user acceptance and usage of technology, called the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1989). Based in part on the Theory of Reasoned Action by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), TAM in its original form suggests that an individual's motivation to use a technology is influenced by their perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and most significantly, the individual's attitude toward using the technology in question. The model posits that perceived ease of use directly influences both perceived usefulness and an individual's attitude towards the use



of a technology. It is expected that the current usage of AI among the adult educators in Singapore will be low and limited to the use of generative AI to develop course content. A list of common AI tools currently used by the adult educators in Singapore will be looked at and categorized based on their functions and usage. Using TAM and analyzing through Structural Equation Modelling, the determinants of an adult educator's intention to use AI in TAE will also be investigated. Findings from our analyses will have implications on the design of an AI tool. Other findings have general implications on the continuing professional development of the adult educators in Singapore pertaining to the use of AI in TAE, such as the preferred or ideal duration for relevant training courses.

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Paper 12

Robotic disinformation and emotional management of unreality in dementia care

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Abstract

Research Framing

The use of social robots has been discussed as promising tools for people living with dementia (Abbott et al. 2019). Social robots are often designed to look and behave like living animals—such as cats and dogs—with life-like fur, sound, and movements. They are usually equipped with sonic or tactile sensors built to be able to respond to users' talk or touch and are used both to calm and activate patients. As such, there is a built-in element of disinformation in the robotic object that evokes questions about its nature and capabilities.

The question whether the robot is a living or inanimate object is particularly relevant in dementia care, where patients may face difficulties navigating reality (Hydén & Örvulv 2006). Common illness' symptoms are misperceptions and misidentifications, hallucinations, delusions, and time-shifting. By using robot animals in dementia care, the patients' ability to make sense of reality is being challenged by the disinformative character of the object.

In previous studies, the existential ambiguity of robot animals has been discussed as an ethical dilemma, related to questions such as deception and integrity (Vandemeulebroucke et al. 2018). The question of robotic disinformation is, however, not only an ethical matter but also emotional. People react emotionally in situations when the world does not correspond to their perceived reality and when their understanding of reality becomes questioned (Frezza et al. 2022).

In best case scenario, the robotic disinformation may bring forth curiosity and joy (Robinson et al. 2016). But it may also call up feelings of anxiety and fear of the unknown (Moyle et al. 2018). The emotional responses of the user, i.e., the person with dementia, must be taken seriously and met in a professional manner by the care workers. It is the care workers responsibility to handle emotional problems that arise, by offering support and helping the residents to make sense of the existential ambiguity of the robot. Thus, users' emotional reactions to the robotic disinformation must be treated as an interactional problem, situated in the triadic relation between residents, robots, and caregivers.

Drawing on the sociology of emotions (Hochschild 1983) we take a novel approach and explore the emotional management of unreality in the residents' and care workers' encounters with robotic disinformation.



Methodology

Based on qualitative field work – ethnographic observations and interviews in situ – and video recorded interactions in dementia care homes, the paper investigates how residents express and manage emotions as they interact with care workers, making sense of the nature of the robot. The analysis process has followed a theory-oriented inductive coding process (Braun & Clarke 2006).

Results

We categorize the residents' emotional expressions according to four distinct forms of emotions in response to robotic disinformation: joy, contentment, anxiety, and disgust. The first two are expressed in situations where the residents align with the robotic disinformation – i.e., defines it as a living animal – while the latter two are expressed in situations where the residents dis-align with the robotic disinformation, i.e., do not define it as a living animal. The presentation of the findings will also show how these emotions are subject to negotiation in the interaction between residents and care workers, in which the latter engage in emotional labor to help the residents navigate reality.

Relevance to research field of work and learning

By examining the emotional responses to robotic disinformation in dementia care, this paper contributes to a new understanding of the interpersonal managing of the existential sense-making problem posed by innovative technology.

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Symposium

Maintaining skills (not only) for the unexpected - ways to detect and overcome skill decay in highly automated working environments

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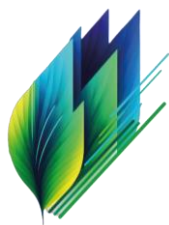
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Rationale

In the course of the ongoing digitization of workplaces, numerous studies have addressed the question which new competence requirements arise for skilled workers. Less attention has been paid to existing skills and the questions, which of them are still needed, especially in non-routine-situations and how they could be maintained.

In our session we would like to focus on this subject in:

1. describing which and why *old* skills are still needed even in highly digitized working environments and what problems arise in these surroundings (especially with regard to younger employees) in maintaining them,
2. investigating ways to detect skill decay in using new technologies,
3. showing the evaluation of one possible refresher intervention to support skill retention.



Presentations / Papers

The problem of skill decay at the workplaces of the chemical and pharmaceutical production

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Contribution to the Symposium: Maintaining skills (not only) for the unexpected - ways to detect and overcome skill decay in highly automated working environments

In routine situations, skilled workers often need significantly fewer competences than they have acquired through their training. The situation is quite different, however, in the so-called non-routine situations (malfunctions, new installations), which occur even in highly automated production systems (Bainbridge 1983). In these situations, the workers have to mobilize ad hoc a wealth of knowledge and skills. Due to automation, these knowledge and skills are rarely needed in routine situations and therefore in danger of being forgotten nor not being recalled quickly enough (Bjork and Bjork 2006). The problem has already been researched in high-risk industries with a high degree of automation, but there had been no empirical studies for processing industries so far. The research project CONDITION investigated if the problem of automation induced skill decay also exists at the workplaces of the chemical and pharmaceutical production and in which way it applies to the respective occupational activities (its distribution, affected competences, influencing factors).

We used a mixed method approach starting with 21 qualitative interviews with professionals and managers. Based on the data from the qualitative survey, an online survey (same target group) was conducted to investigate to what extent the results obtained in the interviews can also be transferred to a larger group of professionals and to dive deeper into problems mentioned in the interviews. The questionnaire was answered 210 times with 50 Professionals and 160 managers participating.

We found that automation induced skill decay also exists at the researched workplaces and we identified the most affected competences. We got a picture about influencing factors on skill decay, identifying personal characteristics like experience as the most important ones. As this experience is mainly gained in contact with the real plant, it is unclear how young employees, working mainly in digitized surroundings, will ever have the possibility to achieve it.

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Requirements for an AI-based tool for upskilling potential identification and skill maintenance planning for logistics workers

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Logistics companies face the challenge of a growing shortage of skilled workers. When employees with the required skills cannot be found in the labor market, the development of existing staff becomes even more important, but companies have limited training budgets. Moreover, when employees attend external training, work processes are disrupted. Informal learning opportunities do not have this limitation, but they also cannot be applied to all employees at all times. Therefore, a good match between employees and formal, informal, and self-regulated learning opportunities is essential to maintain prevent skill decay, and support the development of new skills.

However, especially in small and medium-sized companies in logistics, selection of who may take advantage of such learning opportunities is often unsystematic and sometimes even prejudiced. As in many work domains where artificial intelligence (AI) applications are already in use, an assistance system could objectify the selection process.

Our research therefore addresses the question of whether an AI-based tool can support corporate decision-makers in making further qualification decisions by suggesting appropriate training and learning opportunities for skill retention and potential identification based on personal parameters.

To answer the research question, we conduct guided focus group interviews and workshops in two logistics companies with employees, middle managers, foremen, and management. In addition, we intend to conduct document analyses (e.g., competency matrices, training plans, and staff schedules, if existing). The goal is to analyze the requirements for a successful development and implementation of an AI-based tool for upskilling potential identification and skill-maintenance planning by involving a broad range of stakeholders and materials.

Potential barriers to usability and acceptance of the tool by employees, managers and the organization as a whole will also be considered, as well as privacy issues, and how to collect and measure subjective and objective data and indicators for performance evaluations. As a result, we aim to provide a conceptual model of the requirements for the aforementioned AI-based tool to support work-related learning, which should also be transferable to companies outside the logistics industry. During the presentation, we will discuss practical implications and theoretical insights for work-related learning research.

What should I do now? Evaluation of a VR-based refresher training in the chemical and pharmaceutical industry

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Contribution to the Symposium: Maintaining skills (not only) for the unexpected - ways to detect and overcome skill decay in highly automated working environments expertise.



A key characteristic of High Reliability Organizations is that non-routine situations such as system failures can lead to significant risks for humans, the organization, and the environment (Klostermann et al., 2022). To prevent consequential damages, operators need to retrieve and execute relevant competencies in a very short period of time. Due to infrequent use of the competences, they are less likely to be recalled from memory and can lead to errors, especially in stressful situations. Whereas refresher trainings have been implemented in the aviation and maritime industry to prevent skill-decay for non-routine situations, there is no established standard in the chemical and pharmaceutical industry.

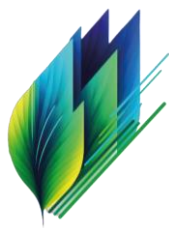
The aim of the present study was to evaluate a virtual reality refresher training for technical competencies among chemical operators. The sample consisted of N = 24 trainee chemical technicians of the company Merck. The applied "Operate your own Reactor" training was designed to train the production of the organometallic compound n-butyllithium and contains an emergency situation where participants are required to prevent the detonation of a reactor. The evaluation was conducted in a within-between experimental design involving three time points (T1-T3). First, all participants took part in the baseline training (T1). Then they were pseudo randomly assigned to the control (CG) and experimental (EG) groups. The EG received the refresher training four weeks later (T2). At T3, two more weeks later, the performance of both groups was examined. The dependent variables were performance and error rate during training, performance in the related knowledge test, and training transfer. The results show that the EG performs better in training, achieves fewer errors in the third stage, and takes significantly less time to resolve the emergency situation. Based on the results, it can be assumed that refresher trainings contribute positively to dealing with emergency situations. Even with a short exposure time of 30 minutes in the refresher training, the participants were able to recall the necessary technical expertise more quickly.

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2

*Migration, ethnicity
& intersectionality*



Drivers of post migration further education: The case of highly skilled female migrants to Australia

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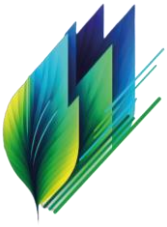
Abstract

Due to globalisation and human capital mobility, the topic of skilled migration has gained significant importance amongst researchers and governments. In developed countries, such as Australia, skilled migration has increasingly become a key policy strategy in addressing skills shortages and supporting economic and population growth. Since the arrival of the first British settlers in 1788 up until 1990s, Europeans were the major contributors to the Australian demographic growth. However, the past two decades observed a significant shift in the Australian migration, where the majority of immigrants come from Asia. Nevertheless, European migrants, especially those that are skilled and highly skilled, continue to play an important role in Australian government's permanent and temporary skilled migration programs that attract professional human capital from around the world. As a result of migration policy, Australia today is a multicultural society, where almost 30% of the population was born overseas (ABS, 2022a) and 57.2% Australians report their European heritage (ABS, 2022b).

The Australian governments' assumption is that skilled migrants who arrive with overseas' qualifications, work experience and English proficiency, should not encounter any difficulties in securing employment positions and integrating into Australian culture. However, various sources indicate that many skilled migrants are stripped down of the equal opportunities as they confront multiple barriers to employment and career advancements. These are for example discrimination in regards to gender, ethnicity or race (Faaliyat et al., 2021); preference of Australian employers to appoint domestic workforce over skilled migrants (Australia, 2021); downward career move (Ressia et al., 2017), skills underutilisation or atrophy (Dantas et al., 2017); issues associated with recognition of overseas education or experience (Cameron et al., 2019), which prevents skilled migrants from continuation of their overseas careers. Therefore, many overseas trained professionals chose a career change or continuation of their education and/or professional development at Australian institutions post arrival in pursuit of equal or better employment outcomes or career advancements in the new host country.

Aim

In the contemporary academic landscape, an increasing number of scholarly investigations have begun to emerge, delving into diverse facets of Australian skilled migrant experiences, nevertheless limited research has focussed specifically



on the employment outcomes of highly skilled female migrants, especially from European, non-English speaking countries. In addition, this paper reviews the literature on highly skilled migration, highlighting limitations of extant understandings as well as an analysis of the factors associated with decisions to undertake additional education and learning in the host country.

Therefore, using an intersectionality and Psychological Capital (PsyCap) conceptual lenses, this paper aims to examine this phenomenon and attempts to address the gap in the literature. Direct attention will be given to the intersection of migration, learning, and work, highlighting the ways in which overseas education and further educational pursuits in the host country contribute to highly skilled female migrants' successful integration into the host labor market and subsequent career advancements.

Methods / Methodology

This paper presents preliminary findings from the first phase of a mixed methods phenomenological research (MMPR) approach. The results shared in this paper are in relation to the education prior and post arrival to Australia and the employment outcomes of highly skilled female migrants from non-English speaking European countries. In the initial phase, 28 participants were recruited for the study that consisted of a pre-interview questionnaire and a semi-structured interview.

(Expected) Results / Conclusions and Relevance to research field of work and learning

The research reveals that for highly educated female migrants, the journey to secure employment that commensurate with their overseas qualifications and experience is not obvious or unequivocal. These women navigate multiple barriers to employment and to avoid skills atrophy, unemployment, or skills underutilisation, they decide to pursue further education to enhance their employment opportunities, career advancement or make a career change. Out of 28 participants, only half found employment that matched their overseas qualifications and experience. In contrast, 24 participants have indicated that their integration into the local labour market necessitated a multifaced approach, concerning the imperative of further education to secure appropriate and meaningful employment, career advancement or facilitate a transition in career paths. Nevertheless, the PsyCap, manifested by self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience played an important role throughout the process of job hunting and career transition, resulting in high levels of satisfaction amongst majority of participants. This research findings will contribute to the broader discussion on skilled migration transitions, skilled migrant employment and further education pursuits. It is anticipated the study's findings can also inform skilled migration policy, practitioners involved in migration management and support services, educational providers and organisations employing skilled migrants.

Keywords: skilled migration, highly skilled migrants, intersectionality, Australia, employment

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Paper 14

Leadership Pathways of Skilled Migrant Women in Australia: An Exploratory Study

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Catheryn Khoo

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Abstract

Introduction

Australian job markets have experienced consistent skilled worker shortages. However, skilled migrants encounter significant barriers to employment in their fields (Faaliyat, Townsend, Peetz, & Ressia, 2020) due to workplace discrimination, requirements for Australian work experience and lack of recognition of their overseas qualifications (Webb, 2015). While skilled migrant women (SMW) have made remarkable contributions to various Australian enterprises (Dantas, Strauss, Cameron, & Rogers, 2020), their employment outcomes, leadership representation and overall career progression remain unsatisfactory due to their diversified cultural, ethnic and geographical backgrounds (Nally, Taket, & Graham, 2019). The Women's Economic Security Statement 2020 identified barriers hindering their employment prospects which include, absence of social and professional networks, lack of local experience and Australian reference and limited comprehension of the Australian workplace culture (AustraliaCabinet, 2020). It is paramount to evaluate these hurdles since they directly impact SMW's ascent to leadership and managerial roles.

This study aims to explore the barriers and enablers to SMW's leadership pathways and develop strategies that can support SMW attain leadership roles in Australian organizations and business entities. It asks two main research questions:

- (1) What are the barriers and enablers to SMW's leadership pathways?; and
- (2) How could current human resource related diversity, equity and inclusion policies be more encompassing so as to specifically address SMW's leadership development?

Literature

To address the research questions, this study employs transnational feminism theory and intersectionality. Transnational feminism theory challenges western feminist perspectives and emphasizes the agency of marginalized groups across national boundaries (Calás & Smircich, 2006, p.317). It recognizes diverse gender hierarchies under dispersed transnational hegemonies (Grewal & Kaplan, 1994). Unlike Western feminism, it acknowledges variations in the experiences of different groups of women (Zerbe Enns, Díaz, & Bryant-Davis, 2021). This is a significant factor in the exploration of migrant women's career and leadership



pathways. Such that, the understanding of migrant women is shifted away from the view of the uneducated and unskilled 'Other' to that of skilled, educated and socially conscious migrant women (Pio & Essers, 2014). This research applies transnational feminism to examine how it shapes social inequalities and the impact of human resource practices and DEI policies on SMW's employment pursuits in Australia.

The intersectionality framework complements transnationalism by understanding the complexity of migrant women's cultural, racial and gender identities in leadership positions. Intersectionality asserts that social identities like race, gender, and class interact to create unique experiences.(Warner, 2008). Intersectionality is crucial for analysing the workplace experiences of SMW from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, who often face compounded challenges (Ressia, Strachan, & Bailey, 2017). Data from the ABS shows that culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) women have a significantly lower rate of workforce participation compared to CALD men at 47.3% and 69.5% respectively (Vamvakinou, 2013). As a result, migrant women are susceptible to gaining employment in lesser jobs with low income and low skill levels (Webb, 2015). Scholarly attention to SMW's leadership pathways in Australia has been limited.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative approach to examine the impediments to SMW's leadership progression. It involves a critical analysis of their lived experiences in their respective fields of expertise (Pike & Galinsky, 2021) using phenomenological analysis (Kafle, 2013). This method aims to provide a clear description of participants' post-migration experiences and interactions (Orbe, 2000). Fifteen semi-structured interviews have been conducted and are currently under analysis.

Preliminary Findings

The participant profiles of the interviewees are summarised as **Appendix A**.

The narratives of SMW in this research provide crucial empirical insights. Preliminary findings highlight significant barriers to their leadership progression, including gender and migrant status stereotyping, language barrier with regard to accent and dialect differences, non-recognition of pre-migration qualifications and systemic racism.. Nevertheless, participants in this study emphasize the need for organisations to develop culturally-sensitive leadership opportunities for professional migrant women such as training, mentorship and sponsorship programs and initiatives.

This study also established that tokenization of SMW in the name of diversity, equity and inclusion further deterred their leadership advancement prospects. The participants expressed the need for organizations to apply an intersectional approach in the creation of leadership advancement opportunities for SMW, considering the heterogeneity in their cultural and situational orientations.

Finally, it was the opinion of several participants for organizations and stakeholders to exercise a degree of inclusivity when planning networking forums and opportunities since majority of the migrant women can barely afford to participate in networking programs outside working hours or subscribe to other non-work-related activities at their personal cost.



The findings from this study can be used to devise measures to improve flexibility, social corporate responsibility, mentorship programs and empowerment for SMW within Australian enterprises.

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Appendix A

	Country of origin	Residency status	Visa stream upon entry to Australia	Age range	State of residency	Length of stay in Australia	Highest level of education	Length of employment pre migration	Current job role	Current responsibility level
Participant #1	Kenya	PR	Student	30-34	VIC	6 years	Bachelor	0-2 years	Registered Nurse	Professional with no management responsibility
Participant #2	Kenya	PR	Student	30-34	VIC	6 years	Bachelor	2-4 years	Social worker	Professional with no management responsibility
Participant #3	India	GRADUATE STREAM 485	Student	25-29	NSW	5 years	Bachelor	0-2 years	Registered nurse	Professional with no management responsibility
Participant #4	Zimbabwe	CITIZEN	Student	45-49	VIC	10 years	Master	8-10 years	Group Manager	Top level management
Participant #5	Ghana	CITIZEN	Partner	45-49	VIC	22 years	Master	6-8 years	Home Manager	Middle level management
Participant #6	Philippines	CITIZEN	Partner	50-54	VIC	24 years	Bachelor	8-10 years	Director	Business owner
Participant #7	Nigeria	CITIZEN	Partner	45-49	VIC	15 Years	Bachelor	6-8 years	Director	Business owner
Participant #8	Kenya	GRADUATE STREAM 485	Student			5 years	Master	0-2 years	Community worker	Professional with no management responsibility
Participant #9	Jordan	CITIZEN	Humanitarian/Refugee	60-65	WA	50+ years	Higher Diploma	0-2 years	Group Manager	Top level management
Participant #10	India	CITIZEN	Student	30-34	VIC	12 years	Bachelor	4-6 years	Social services Coordinator	Middle level management
Participant #11	Kenya	CITIZEN	Student	40-44	VIC	21 years	Master	4-6 years	Lecturer (department head)	Middle level management
Participant #12	Zimbabwe	PR	Partner	40-44	VIC	6 years	Bachelor	10-15 years	House supervisor	Lower level management (supervisory)
Participant #13	India	CITIZEN	Partner	55-60	VIC	23 years	Graduate diploma	6-8 years	Sales manager	Middle level management
Participant #14	Srilanka	CITIZEN	Student	40-44	VIC	10 years	Bachelor	2-4 years	Team leaders	Lower level management (supervisory)
Participant #15	Nigeria	PR	Student	40-44	QLD	7years	Master	8-10 years	Director	Business Owner



Paper 15

Pathways to Regulated Healthcare Professions: Tripartite Labour of Learning by Skilled Immigrant in Canada

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Abstract

To address the dire shortage of healthcare workers, Canada has created designated migration pathways for the express entry of immigrants trained in healthcare (CBC News, 2023; Government of Canada, 2023a). On the other hand, it has been a consistent challenge for immigrants to the healthcare sectors (Paul et al., 2017). Various barriers have been reported as obstructive of immigrants' access to the regulated professions, which include but are not limited to recognition of foreign credentials and qualifications, language proficiency, and deep-rooted racism and discrimination (Dhillon et al., 2019; Liu, 2019; Mickleborough & Martimianakis, 2021; Najeeb et al., 2019). Recognizing the challenge for immigrants to continue their professional careers, the Government of Canada (2023b) has announced a number of initiatives to help remove barriers to their career mobility. In this context, it is all the more important to understand how immigrants make entrance to their professional fields of training. This paper contributes to this area of knowledge with a focus on the experiences of immigrant healthcare workers navigating professional pathways.

Empirically, the paper draws on an on-going qualitative inquiry with immigrant health professionals in Vancouver and Toronto, two major destination cities in Canada. Narrative biographic research was adopted for the study. Narrative approach is suited for the study not because it offers an accurate account of life events, but because it offers a (re)construction of these events, with a point of view of the now, and with an eye for the future (Bamberg, 2012), which involves methodic re-organizing/imagining/telling and critical event analysis. In practice, the study involves interviewing practicing health professionals who 1) immigrated to Canada in their adult years from non-Western countries, and 2) received at least a degree in healthcare fields from a country other than Canada. So far, we have interviewed 20 health professionals working in diverse professions, including physician (1), occupational therapists (1), pharmacists (2), registered nurses (9) and RPNs (2), and health technicians (1 MRI technician, 1 sonographer, 1 cytologist, 1 pharmacy technician) and health-related social worker (1); at the time of the study, one participant has given up on the idea of becoming nurse again in Canada. The respondents came to Canada between 1993 and 2022, and their countries of origin include China (5), Hong Kong (8), Korea (3), Japan (1), India (1), Phillipine (1), and Jordan (1). Five came as family reunion, nine as economic immigrants, two as humanitarian ground, and four as international students.

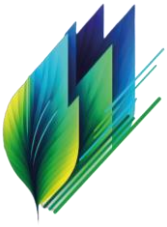


Sixteen of them identified as female, four male. Interviews were typically about 90 minutes either over Zoom or in person. Data analysis is conducted to capture not only their common struggles and strategies, but also small stories, i.e., the mundane, brief, unremarkable, and everyday occurrences (Bamberg, 2012) that nonetheless influence immigrants' career strategies.

In this paper, we share some initial findings from the study. Specifically, we focus on 1) the diverse pathways that people followed to gain their foothold in different fields in the health profession, and 2) the sources and sourcing of information as respondents (re)positioned themselves professionally in the health sectors in Canada. With regard to professional pathways, one respondent attended medical schools, five postgraduate programs, and two college diploma programs. Seven of the respondents chose to challenge licensure practices directly with three being requested to go through bridging programs. These bridging programs, primarily provided by academic institutions, are designed for internationally trained health professionals to renew and enhance their professional knowledge and skills and to eventually gain licensure (Cruz et al., 2022). The kind of pathways that the respondents embarked on had to do with the type of information they received and where and how they sourced their information about the healthcare profession in Canada. Importantly, the study unveils a range of actors mediating the information flows for immigrants, which include social media, immigration consultants, transnational trainers for professional exams, and official websites of professional associations, as well as pre-arrival services. We discuss in particular the institutional practices that are facilitative and/or inhibitive of immigrants' navigation of the health profession in Canada. In particular, the study suggests, perhaps oddly, that official websites are the least accessible or informative for immigrants. It also highlights what we call transnational community of migrant professionals in facilitating immigrants' navigation of professions. These communities comprise of migrant professionals who exchange information, and knowledge and learning to navigate issues of licensure and exams. Finally, as immigrants reflected on their experiences, they also identified mishaps and missteps on their journeys, which point to gaps and paradoxes in the institutional practices of recognition in North America, as well as the changing politics of recognition driven by a confluence of desire for autonomy and control by professional regulatory bodies, economic needs at particular time and place, and the geopolitical power differences rooted in the historical colonial relations among educational institutions and nation states.

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Paper 16

Transforming Cultural Spaces: The Role of Community Arts and Transformative Learning in Dissolving International Students Liminality in Canada

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Abstract

This research presentation aims to explore the ethnographic social and cultural norms by engaging in community arts activities geared towards learning through the art-making process, communicating meanings, and translating students' lived experiences. It delves into multi-layered arts-based methodologies and explores the liminalities of cultures within the context of migrant students in higher education and their rapidly evolving learning journey, by examining both theoretical and empirical applications, connects arts as a process for communication in a classroom setting. This community-based arts creative pedagogy approach purposefully practices social interactions between diverse students to build more socially, educationally, and culturally connected communities of learning. An important question to consider is how multiple creative arts methods help immigrants find their muted narrative voices within experiential learning as part of transformative practices that can contribute to reshaping collective consciousness and challenging the phenomenon of international and newcomer students entering Canadian institutions and facing struggles in understanding themselves, their liminalities, and their group dynamics. By embracing reflective practice and expressive forms of knowing, the approach aims to foster cultural resistance.

Over the past 50 years, from the 1970s to the present, global migrations of non-white individuals have significantly transformed Canada. The traditional notion of a "visible minority" no longer applies to non-whites. Toronto, known as the most diverse city by origin in North America (Henry Yu, 2023), reflects this change. Therefore, it is essential to promote the building of a more diverse community in higher education classrooms. As a lecturer, researcher, and community artist in the visual studies department at the University of Toronto, I have encountered challenges in finding a shared space between my teaching pedagogy and international students who face conflicts in liminal spaces or struggle to understand their role and purpose in a higher education institution. In response, I have started to shift my teaching methodologies to involve more hands-on community activities in the classroom setting, beginning with democratic discussions on practicing community guidelines and exchanging cultures. This is as essential as practicing a pattern of giving and taking to reshape multicultural individualistic students into a more transformative collective notion that builds community within a classroom and engages students with the same interests. In 1991, Wenger first used the term "communities of practice," defining it as "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" (Wenger, 1991). This term later evolved to



involve not only the term "practice" but also "learning," adding identity and meaning to what we pursue in life.

In order to understand practice, we need to activate the practice that manifests in art-based practices such as illustrations, poetry, collages, and painting, among others. The ideas under examination are related to people's subjective interactions and collective life (Guppy and Lyon, 2012). Meaning interpretations and constructions within cultural forms, such as art, literature, and media, depend on the unique cultural setting within immigrant students' liminal spaces. Before moving forward, understanding the complexities of culture will naturally dissolve when students practice mutual engagement in an experiential learning environment. From dissolving liminality to practicing communication and merging cultures, Raymond Williams emphasizes culture not as a static object but rather as a continuous and transforming process. Ordinary actions and everyday expressions are included in the ambit of creative expression, which goes beyond high art or exclusive forms. It is not an abstract or disconnected term, but rather an intrinsic component of daily life.

Art-based community learning approaches seek to actively engage migrant students in higher education, empowering them to participate effectively in the process and creation of meaningful experiences through multiple stages of imaginative and conceptual hands-on projects and activities. These community-based arts activities could be reflected in arts-autoethnography, digital humanities collaborative projects, conceptual art-making processes, and collages. The art stages could adopt Elspeth Brown's visual cultural analysis from visual ethnography. All methods promote critical, democratic, and participatory ways of knowing across the social sciences and humanities, leading to transforming immigrants' students' own liminal spaces by being present within their creative context process and within the group.

Arts-based engagement approaches help to cross cultural barriers and bridge gaps by deconstructing current cultural and social norms and reconstructing new values when diverse immigrant participants come together. They can learn to share and hear each other differently in praxis workshops. Furthermore, Asian, African, and Middle Eastern students studying in Canada often encounter mental health challenges that can impede their ability to think creatively (Henry Yu, 2023). These challenges are compounded by core cultural issues, such as unpracticed ways of expression resulting from historical oppression, lack of education, and marginalization. As mentioned above, the number of immigrants entering Canada increased to 56% in 2015, compared to 3% in 1960, which means they are no longer called "visible minorities". Consequently, instead of finding themselves confined to a liminal space, limiting their capacity for self-expression and personal growth, empowering these individuals is essential. The arts process, by interacting with forces, media analysis, ideas, and possibilities, helps in enhancing autonomy and humanity (McNiff, 2003, p.2). At times, with intentional teaching methods, the dynamics of formal education can be shifted toward a more democratic and radical perspective (Lynch & Lodge, 2002, Thompson, 2000).

Within the context of this study, I will utilize the narratives and experiences shared by participants to generate personal interpretations from visual culture and communication. The utilization of practicum making arts and transformative learning (Crabtree, Sapp, & Licona, 2009) in community arts settings presents a means through which shared values can be established, facilitating both individual and collective learning within specific cultural and communicative



frameworks. Learners can engage in media arts as an active educational approach, enhancing their understanding of cross-culturalism, self-discovery, personal interpretation, and literature analysis.

This approach aims to elevate the consciousness of immigrant learners, fostering personal and social transformation within a non-credit, community setting. By encouraging creativity and critical reflection, learners can resist cultural barriers and embrace emancipatory learning. In this presentation and paper, I will analyze existing literature on how immigrants comprehend community arts and education, establishing a theoretical framework to support critical practice for inclusive learning and social justice. Fostering inclusive communities through cultural exchange, diversity training, and social support networks can alleviate loneliness and promote a sense of belonging for new immigrants. By addressing these challenges, society can empower immigrant students to overcome barriers and thrive in their new homes to build a bright future.

Keywords: migrant students, community-based arts, transformative learning, liminal spaces

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Paper 17

Silence as Political Speech in Adult Education with Immigrant Students

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Abstract

The **aim** of this paper is to elaborate a discussion of *silence as political speech* in non-profit and community-based education with adult immigrant students. This is a focused response to extant scholarship in applied linguistics, literary theory, critical migration studies, philosophy, education, and related fields. This paper takes the starting perspective, to be elaborated below, that silence in education with adult immigrant students, can sometimes occur as an expression of complaint or commentary on practitioners' ethical and political decision-making in the classroom.

The **theoretical framing** of this paper draws upon women of colour feminist scholarship, critical epistemology, and critical applied linguistics. In a globalized world where speech equals visibility, silence often results from the way an individual, group, or perspective has been marginalized by oppressive political regimes, structural exclusion, majoritarian institutional practices, and white cis-heteropatriarchal and settler colonialist discourses. Silencing in such contexts constitutes a form of epistemic injustice (Fricker, 2007; Kristie Dotson, 2012; Medina, 2012), where speakers go unheard while testifying about their experiences or whose speech is not interpreted as meaningful. However, the decision by individuals to be silent to protect themselves from harm or resist being stereotyped or essentialized is less often discussed or theorized.

A 2018 qualitative study, conducted in a New York City nonprofit ESL organisation with adult immigrant students, employed a multiphase research design incorporating questionnaires and interactive focus groups as **data creation/construction methods**. The five participants, immigrants from Ukraine, Spain, Colombia, Algeria, and Haiti, were invited to share their experiences in adult education in the past and present; importantly, the participants were also told that non-participation, a choice they could make by selecting the "I prefer not to answer" response on the questionnaires or choosing non-response in the focus groups, was emphasized as legitimate and valuable. The researcher, an ESL teacher with over ten years of experience teaching in adult education contexts, engaged in dialogue with participants during the focus groups by drawing upon insights aggregated from the questionnaires and anonymized, an approach which created opportunities for the participants to share expertise on their experiences in learning and research in adult education.

The **results** of the study included insights into how these students strategically used silence in learning and research dominated by power asymmetries, pre-set social categories of race or ethnicity, and unquestioned best practices. A core **conclusion** that was drawn was the reconceptualization of the agentic language practices and subjectivities of multilingual adult immigrant students in



educational research and practice. The **relevance to the research field of work and learning** is evident when considering the implications for pedagogical practice with adult immigrant students, whose linguistic repertoires are not limited to lingual communicative force but indeed political forms of communication like silence, inviting a revision of well-established work on plurilingual and translanguaging pedagogical practice (España et al., 2019; Galante, 2020; Piccardo, E., North, B., & Goodier, T., 2019) as well as “inclusive” and/or “culturally responsive” pedagogies (see Entigar, 2022 for more discussion). Similar considerations are suggested for research with adult immigrants and other culturally and linguistically dynamic people, whose contributions to meaning-making should—and do—include the expressive and highly political communicative act of silence.

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Exploring Learning Experiences of Afghan Refugees in Canada

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Shibao Guo

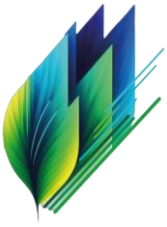
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Abstract

With the decade long security crises in Afghanistan, many Afghan refugees have arrived in Canada with a significant history of trauma due to war (Miller et al., 2019), with hopes to rebuild their lives by learning and adapting the norms of their host societies. Amidst the extended nature of their displacement, learning can be a source of healing and gaining social and economic mobilities. Despite their efforts, they experience multifaceted difficulties in their learning journeys, and their experiences and needs often go unnoticed (Vijayakumar, 2016). Capturing the rich experiences of refugees, particularly Afghans, have not received enough scholarly attention in the past. Previous studies on refugee learning experiences have focused on secondary and post-secondary education, and little attention is paid on the significance of other forms of experiences which help learners during their resettlement phases. To understand the complexity of living experiences of the subjects from the subjects themselves is a powerful tool. Therefore, by using a qualitative inquiry, this research aims to explore the learning experiences and barriers of Afghan refugees in Canada. Specifically, the purpose is to examine the factors that inform their learning experiences, barriers and challenges they face, and strategies and sources that aided their learning experiences. Canada as one of the host countries of Afghan refugees, it is imperative for researchers and practitioners to understand their learning experiences, particularly in the current and potential policy initiatives.

Theoretical Framework

Pierre Bourdieu's conceptualization of forms of capital (1986) offered a significant context to understand the experiences, opportunities, and progress in the lives of refugees. The concepts are extensively used in the context of migration and transnationalism, particularly how refugees disrupt, accumulate, and expand new forms of capitals throughout their resettlement phases. The three main form of capitals include economic, cultural, and social capital. Such forms go beyond mainstream economic theories and allow us to understand social and structural realities that refugees experience during resettlement. Learning does not occur in isolation, nor it is limited to schooling. Refugee individuals constantly learn, acquire new knowledges and norms, and deconstruct their old patterns to adapt to the new environment. Such transitions are a part of their learning processes. By utilizing the theoretical framework of forms of capital (Bourdieu 1986), this study examines how adult Afghan refugees describe their transformative learning experiences, particularly in terms disruption of their previous social and cultural



capitals and the establishment of the new forms of capital during their resettlement processes.

Methods

To explore the phenomena, this research utilizes a hermeneutic phenomenological approach. Instead of a heavy reliance on positivism, phenomenology is a study of subjective experiences from a first point of view, and hermeneutic phenomenology goes beyond mere description by focusing on historical and social contexts and meanings that surround that phenomenon (Creswell, 2007; Edie, 1987). Reflexivity and self-reflection remain important throughout this research, making it congruent with the philosophical assumptions of social constructivist framework. Data was gathered through individual interviews with research participants to dig deeper into their past experiences, current situations, future aspirations. Following the guidelines of phenomenological research, six individuals were interviewed with a specific inclusion criterion. Most participants arrived in Canada after the recent re-emergence of Taliban rule in Afghanistan. For data analysis, Braun and Clarke's (2006) guide on thematic analysis was used.

Results and Conclusions

Learning in the Context of Refugees

Several themes emerged during the analysis. Firstly, we unfolded new meanings of learnings in the context of refugees. The participants experienced a change in their perspectives during their resettlement, as well as learned new norms, values, and behaviours. Some examples include understanding the independent role of women, discussion on 2SLGBTQIA+ population, and ethical and professional values at work. This was attained through informal, non-formal, and incidental forms of learnings.

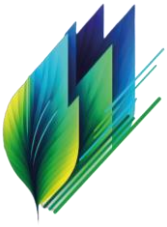
Pathways to Learning

The participants demonstrated the significant role of social connections and support systems, also called as social capital, in their learning experiences that lead to their economic mobility. Navigating the transit system, preparation for job applications, information on language courses, and learning about new norms and values of the society are some of the learnings that refugees gain through informal means through their social networks.

Volunteer work and working experience allowed them to gain new skills and build their professional networks, gain soft skills and knowledge about Canadian work culture, access the labour market, and gain Canadian experience necessary for their economic mobility. Learning communication and computer skills at workplace were also essential for their overall learnings. A key finding of my research was the role of informal learnings through observations and social interactions. The participants considered it more important than learning in classrooms. Learning English through informal methods appeared to be a consistent pattern. This finding adds to the paucity of literature on informal learnings.

Challenges and Barriers

Afghan refugees experience numerous challenges that negatively impact their learning experiences. This includes non-recognition and denigration of their past educational credentials and work experience, which leads to a loss of their professional and social status in the society. My participants also reported language barriers and mental health challenges as hinderance to their learnings.



Research Relevance and Significance

Amidst the current refugee crises, my study is important as it fills a pressing gap in research and policy literature to better understand refugee experience. It informs organizational and governmental bodies to design sustainable and inclusive support systems as Canada continues to resettle refugees from across the world. It also contributes to the wider understanding of the processes and experiences of learning in the context of refugee experience that goes beyond formal ways of learnings. This also indicates that non-governmental organizations, service providers and settlement organizations have even greater responsibilities in facilitating the learning experiences of refugees, that ultimately help them to integrate and grow in their host societies. More programs and learning opportunities should be planned and executed for refugees that help them upskill and overcome specific barriers that they encounter.

This study amplifies the voices of Afghan refugees, and their learning needs by highlighting some of the systematic problems that hinder their successful integration. Such issues require a fundamental change, which is not possible unless voices of the refugees become part of research and policy recommendations. Lastly, this research has methodological and theoretical implications. Phenomenological studies on the learning experiences of refugees are sparse, despite the methodological significance and richness it carries. Thus, my research fills the scholarly gap that exist in the wider research in refugee studies and adult learning.

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Intersectional inequalities in education-to-work transitions

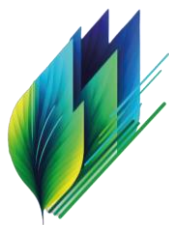
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Abstract

This paper examines intersectional inequalities and the resulting precarisation in the process of (trans)national transitions from education to work of those who are qualified for state-regulated education and social protection welfare professions. It focuses on generations, who were entering the Slovenian and wider EU labour market in the context of the global economic crisis, which destabilised the traditional entry routes into these professions. Research shows that education-to-work transitions around the world are becoming longer and more precarious, and are characterised by increasing age differences and related intersectional inequalities (Honwana, 2012; O'Reilly, Leschke, Ortlieb, Seeleib-Kaiser, & Villa, 2019). This is also true for education-to-work transitions in state-regulated welfare professions (Samaluk, 2021), which are the focus of this study. The deregulation and destandardization of education-to-work and other life course transitions is not only linked to changes in the labour market, but also to changes in the welfare state, which has historically been one of the main contributors to the standardised life course and social cohesion (Castel, 2003; Guillemard, 2005; Leisering, 2003). However, the rise of precarious employment, flexibility, and changes in the welfare state are leading to a 'crisis of integration through work' (Castel 2003: 419), which is also dissolving the 'regime of temporality' of industrial society, characterised by lifelong employment and continuous careers (Guillemard, 2005, p. 134), thus leading to destandardised biographical trajectories and new social risks that people face at different stages of life and throughout the life course (Ule, 2008). Although transitions from education to work are still normatively associated with youth, their key social spheres, and age-capped measures for managing risks, increasing precarity hinders integration into the labour market and social adulthood, causing precarious ageing and reversible transitions for older and/or migrant workers (Guillemard, 2005; Honwana, 2012; Samaluk, 2021; Samaluk & Greer, 2021). This new reality requires an intersectionally sensitive approach to the study of transitions between education and work. This paper draws on life-course theory (Elder, Johnson, & Crosnoe, 2003) to examine how different starting positions affect intersectional inequalities in education-to-work transitions and what intersectional inequalities emerge within transitional zones of vulnerability and disaffiliation and in reversible transitions.

The research was conducted between 2017 and 2020 and is based upon a longitudinal qualitative approach that included in-depth, follow-up, interviews at different stages of the transition from education to work. It focused on post-crisis generations, entering the Slovenian or wider EU professional labour market between 2010 and 2020. The sample included 66 people at various stages of education-to-work transitions and with diverse social and migration statuses, age, gender and other characteristics.



Findings show that education-to-work transitions begin early in youth and are characterised by class, gender, and/or disability lags that influence youths' educational choices, future prospects and strategies for coping with transitional risks, and ultimately their timing and chances of entering, keeping and progressing within professional jobs. This paper thus contributes by bringing into sharp focus the intersectional inequalities in youth's labour time, the learning and investments required for labour market integration and possibilities for future social and economic security. It also points to reversible transitions that set back already experienced older and returning migrant workers to entry levels, leading to significant age and/or migration lags that result in ageism, wage and promotion penalties. By drawing on a life-course theory the paper also offers an innovative intersectionally sensitive approach to the study of education-to-work transitions thus providing important new insights for the studies of intersectionality and precarious subjectivities in the nexus of education and work.

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Paper 20

Exploitative or facilitative? Comparing immigration-advising professions in Canada and Australia

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Abstract

The recent wave of globalization (Robertson, 2003) has brought migrants from various origin countries to a concentrated pool of destination countries (Czaika & de Haas, 2014). Notably, economically affluent nations like the United States, Germany, Australia, and Canada have strategically implemented skill-selective immigration policies (e.g., Deutschland.de., 2023; IRCC, 2023; Macaluso, 2022) to attract talent in alignment with their evolving economic needs. Navigating these intricate and ever-evolving immigration policies can become a challenge for migrants, prompting them to seek guidance from immigration consultants (Global Migration Group, 2013). Unethical or unqualified immigration consultants can also pose significant challenges for both the individuals and governments (e.g., Sanderson, 2022; IRCC, 2019).

While research on globalization and professional work has primarily focused on the migration of expert labor (Bourgeault et al., 2016), globalized professions (Haslam, 2016), and transnational professional projects (Faulconbridge & Muzio, 2011). Few studies have examined the profession that assists the migration of people, i.e., the Regulated Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (RCIC) in Canada, Registered Immigration Adviser in the UK, or Registered Migration Agents (RMA) in Australia. This paper aims to address this gap by comparing the professionalization of RCIC in Canada and RMA in Australia, in attempt to understand how social context and actors shaped the birth and evolution of the two professions.

Both Canada and Australia accept a large number of immigrants in the recent years (United Nations, 2020; OECD, 2023), aligning their immigration plans with economic needs (IRCC, 2022; Minister of Home Affairs, 2022). In the early 21st century, both countries began regulating the profession of immigration advising (Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2008; Government of Canada, 2003a). However, Canada regulates its consultant through the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (CICC), which is a self-regulatory organization (CICC, n.d.). In Australia, the Office of the Migration Agents Registration Authority (MARA) is a section within the government that registers and oversees migration agents (OMARA, 2022). Starting from the professionalization of two counterpart professions as the phenomenon for study, I use a comparative case study approach (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2016) in attempt to answer two questions: 1) what and how do the social context and actors influence the emergence and development of each profession? 2) How do the commonalities and differences in each location reflect the social political contract between the state and the profession?



This paper starts with a comprehensive literature review on professions and professionalization, drawing on four theoretical strands: functionalism incorporating Foucauldian thoughts, Marxism, neo-Weberianism, and the linked ecological approach (Abbott, 1988). Subsequently, a comparative case study (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2016) investigates the historical and socio-political contexts of immigration advising in Canada and Australia, focusing on the emergence and development of RCIC and RMA and highlighting their commonalities and differences. At the macro level, I draw insights from functionalism with Foucauldian thoughts, Marxism, and neo-Weberianism to analyze the social historical context of each country that shapes state-profession relationship and the emergence of the profession. The meso level analysis builds on Abbott's linked ecologies and focuses on the content of the work itself – immigration advising or representing clients in immigration legal proceedings – to uncover how interactions between inter-professional groups, such as lawyers, shape professional development.

The result of my research shows that from the neo-Weberian perspective, both professions enjoy the state-sanctioned exclusive status. However, Marxist and Wallerstein's world systems theory contend that state interests drive the need to regulate both professions. This regulation supports exploitative immigration policies, attracting human capital from peripheral regions for the state's economic development. Therefore, from functionalism and Foucauldian perspective, both professions function as part of the social engineering scheme in each country to facilitate the flow of human capital. The main source of professional revenue stems from individuals aspiring to migrate to affluent nations. Notably, delegating paid immigration services to regulated professions reflects the state's control over immigration as well as reinforces its neoliberal economic logic to leave immigration choices to the market and individuals. However, Canada's RCIC is self-regulated, contrasting with Australia's government-regulated RMA, showcasing unique governance models and interactions with inter-professional actors shaping professionalization in immigration.

Migration brings about changes and challenges for individuals and governments. This paper addresses a critical research gap by examining the profession directly assisting migrants.

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Challenges behind adaptability strategies of vocational education trainers with allophone migrant learners in Logistics

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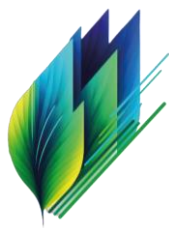
Abstract

Research Framing

The development of interaction skills in professional situations among allophone workers has been the subject of diligent research for these last fifteen years (Rivière, 2012 ; Pekarek Doehler, 2009 2017) and underlined its importance in integrating them into workplace learning. While, in the practice, language teachers tend to mainly work upstream on the linguistic and lexical component (Royer, 2022), we consider that vocational trainers help to develop to ability to deploy interactional resources in the professional context (Filliettaz, 2019). For allophone learners, this interactional competence has specific parameters, since it is not only an issue of intercultural understanding of a profession, but also enables them to understand the right moment to enter into interaction in order to synchronise their action with the other workers.

Areas in tension are mainly concerned by the vocational training of refugees workers because they represent a strong niche for recruitment (World migration report, 2022). In this scientific contribution, we propose to take a closer look at the job of order picker in logistics. Krifors (2021) defines logistics as “the art of constructing a seamless administration of circulation across space and the science of calculating profitable efficiency”, impacting the development of workers’ communication skills. In the same way, Cholez (2008) aptly explains the delivery’s work “can be understood by observing the skills he applies in the different places he frequents” and, more specifically, the understanding of different modes of articulation in a circulation space organised and regulated by a codified computer process, which implies not only specific multimodal literary skills but also the ability to navigate between different genres of discourse (Jonsson & Blåsjö, 2020). If vocational training is considered as a “key to unlock the potential of migrants” by the OECD and has a role to play in the integration of migrants workers (Jørgensen, Hautz & Li, 2021), it is rather different concerning the question of the training of the trainers and the question of adaptability to specific audiences is not always considered. Most of the time, trainers use the same pedagogical contents and develop informal oral methods to regulate comprehension with the allophone learners.

The research question of this proposal will focus on the fact that behind the informal capacity of vocational trainers to adjust to the specificity of allophone learners, workplace learning interactions with refugees provide a pretext to reveal implicit interactional practices.



Methods / Methodology

This contribution begins with a theoretical outline about interactional skills and the challenges of the vocational education trainers in logistics. In France, the European HOPE program allows around 1500 refugees to be trained for jobs each year since 2017 in the areas in tension. The multimodal corpus of this study of 18 videos was collected in vocational immersion training with an interactional and ethnomethodological approach (Filliettaz, Saint-Georges & Duc, 2010) and we intend to show some of the examples of the adaptability strategies used by the vocational trainers and what these interactions reveal about the internalised codes of the job. The last part of the research intend to discuss about the training of VET's trainers.

(Expected) Results / Conclusions

From a training perspective, we would like to demonstrate how this material be used by trainers to help refugees workers in developing interactional skills. We hope that this work will be able to document logistics training and provide perspectives for the training of logistics vocational trainers with refugees workers. This study led us to highlight that VET can play a role in the integration of refugees and migrants workers in raising awareness of trainers interaction skills.

Relevance to research field of work and learning

This research contributes to documenting the informal and invisible practices of the order picker trainers, often and the difficulties to adapt to refugee learners, and to highlight the benefits of training the teachers in interaction skills.

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Paper 22

Teachers' Agency: Advocating for Equitable Education Policy for Migrant Children in Alberta Schools

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Abstract

In the context of Canada's reliance on immigration for social and economic development, an effective language policy for migrant students is essential for educational systems, social mobility, and equal opportunities. In large, urban school boards such as Calgary, over 25% were identified as English as an Additional Language (EAL) students. Language policy research puts little emphasis on teacher agency in education policy decision-making for EAL students. This study therefore explores how teachers advocated for more equitable EAL policies in Alberta, Canada. This research is informed by three constructs: policy as text (policy documents), policy as discourse (beliefs and ideologies) (Ball, 1997; Foucault, 1972, 1991), and policy as social practice (Levinson & Sutton, 2001). Viewing policy as "a practice of power", Levinson et al. (2009) argue despite "policy typically serves to reproduce existing structures of domination and inequality", local actors can "engage with, or resist policy in different ways" (p. 769). This view emphasizes how individuals such as teachers exert agency to influence policy decisions and practices to specific contextual demands (Leo, 2023).

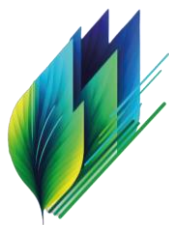
Advocacy is often absent in EAL teachers' professional learning (Fenner, 2014). One way that teachers build their advocacy is through informal learning. Informal learning refers to any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge, or skill outside the curricula of formal and non-formal educational institutions (Livingstone, 2001). Informal learning occurs through everyday activities, and can be intentional or unintentional, explicit or tacit. This study explores the informal learning experience of teachers in advocating on behalf of EAL students for equitable language policy.

Methodology

An invitation letter was sent to school principals who kindly distributed it via their email lists. These schools had 25 to 80 percent EAL students. Participants consisted of 18 EAL teachers and six school administrators in a Western city in Canada. Among them, 20 were female and four were male. They were between the ages of 30 to 60. The length of teaching ranged from seven to 35 years. Data for the study were collected through policy documentation analysis, individual interviews with 24 teachers, administrators, and two focus groups with teachers, parents and policymakers.

Results/conclusions

Findings show that from the teachers' perspectives, there were systemic inequities of the EAL policies that disadvantage EAL students, including inadequate funding, the lack of accountability (funding for EAL service can be redirected to other



expenses such as utilities), the lack of trained EAL teachers, the Eurocentric curriculum and assessments. These inequities resulted in high dropout rates of EAL students (Watt & Roessingh, 2001). Many teachers engaged in informal learning to develop knowledge of the EAL policy and advocacy strategies. Teachers undertook various collaborative as well as individualized strategies (Liddicoat & Taylor-Leech, 2021) to influence EAL policies. They questioned the institutionalized EAL funding system, organized protests, and collaborated with parents and community organizations to pressure groups to influence macro-level EAL policy decisions. Contrary to Thorson's (2020) statement that EAL teachers are less inclined to advocate because it can jeopardize their own careers, this study shows that teachers were active in learning advocacy knowledge and skills through informal learning and advocating on behalf of EAL students. In this sense, their learning was intentional and emancipatory (Cunningham, 2000; Freire, 1970; Livingstone, 2001). Challenging an often implicit assumption that people learn most of what they learn individually in informal learning as a form of lifelong learning (Livingstone, 2001), findings of this study show that teachers develop their collective agency in lobbying politicians and policymakers for more equitable EAL policy.

Relevance to research field work and learning

This paper is relevant to migration, work and learning. It underscores teacher agency in language policy decision-making for EAL students; the voices are needed for the development of equitable EAL policies. Results of this research will provide directions for EAL policies, programs, and services, as well as new insights into the effectiveness of advocacy and capacity building of EAL teachers.

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Paper 23

Combating Racism in Multicultural Canada: Theorizing a Form of New Social Movement Learning

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Abstract

Purpose of the Study

Canada prides itself on being a multicultural society, promising a commitment to multiculturalism premised on the cultural and racial diversity of this immigration country. However, such a liberal policy of multiculturalism evades critical issues of race and racism, suggesting ambivalence toward the social reality of racial hierarchy sustaining white supremacy. The tension between the persistence of systemic racism and the pressing need of racialized communities for racial justice becomes stark, particularly in times of social crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic. The many racist incidents catalyzed by or intensified during the pandemic urge us educators and researchers to reflect on how people mobilized social activist work to combat racism and how we can effectively support individual and collective learning through such work in social movements. Thus, this research aims to theorize a form of new social movement learning by exploring learning through social activism in three major ongoing anti-racism movements in Canada, namely anti-Asian racism, anti-Black racism, and anti-Indigenous racism.

Theoretical Framework

This research is informed by critical race theory (CRT) with race as the primary construct to understand and analyze disadvantage and injustice in society (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2023). CRT is committed to intersectionality and recognizes oppression and racism as experienced intersectionally (Crenshaw, 1991). It centralizes activism such as protests and underscores an anti-racist pedagogy in which narratives of lived experiences of racism are deployed strategically and analyzed in relation to the broader social and political structures to make sense of and challenge racial injustice. A CRT-informed approach of anti-racist education calls on educators to integrate multiple centres of knowledge and develop awareness of discursive racialization and power dynamics that restrict equal access to education, healthcare, safety, and resources for livelihood (Dei, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Method

Following CRT, this research adopts the sociomaterial approach of actor-network theory (ANT) (Fenwick et al., 2011; Passoth et al., 2012) to focus on the role of various actors, both human and nonhuman, in the process of coming together in building assemblages for learning in the anti-racism movements based on the



discursive texts produced in and surrounding the movements. Specifically, data include discourses for the Stop Asian Hate Movement, Black Lives Matter Movement, and the Idle No More Movement. Data sources include online media coverage and blogs, publicly available social media posts on Facebook and Twitter, YouTube videos, government and community organization reports and documents on their official websites in the last ten years. Data analysis examines the content of discursive materials to reveal what people learned about the movements and what assemblages of learning contributed to such learning.

Results and Conclusions

This research illustrates that first, learning is race-based and race-centred, focusing on democratic knowledge based primarily on critical race theory. Second, key actors and actants forming assemblages of learning include movement intellectuals, hashtags, NGOs and social movement groups. Third, learning extends to the wider community through an inclusive membership and a community empowerment agenda. It suggests that learning can be further supported with physical materials and objects (Hall, 2012), physical spaces for artistic, creative, and capacity-building programs and non-formal learning opportunities for organized inter-movement/community dialogues to further promote learning at the (inter-)community level.

Research Relevance

This research speaks to the conference theme on researching work and learning in times of change by focusing on the informal learning and advocacy work of adult learners in the civil society in Canada at a time when the ‘double pandemic’ (Alfred, 2021, p. 16) of racism and Covid-19 health crisis calls on adult educators and researchers to bring to the fore work and learning for social and racial justice. The research also relates to the conference’s sub-theme on migration, work and learning as it makes visible how migration contextualizes racialized immigrants’ learning needs to conduct activist work against racism in a multicultural society such as Canada, their ways of learning, and ways of knowledge mobilization.

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Paper 24

Adult language, literacy and numeracy learning in Aotearoa New Zealand: The benefits of strategic policy making and the consequences of policy vacuums

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper has two inter-related purposes. The first, is to draw attention to the positive impacts of third way, strategy-based policymaking generally and in the Literacy, Language and Numeracy (LLN) adult education sector. The second, is to highlight issues emerging from the loss of this high-level policy development and attention in the LLN sector since 2019.

Problem

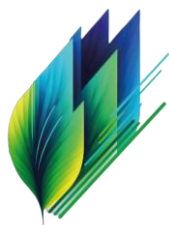
The changing nature of work, as well as the economic and social consequences of climate change, COVID and conflict, demonstrate the urgent need to enable citizens to participate in lifelong learning. The most recent version of the Adult Literacy Strategy (ALS) 2015-2019 (TEC, 2015) expired in 2019. Strategy documents released since 2001 have provided essential guidance to the LLN sector through the creation of short and long-term priorities over 1-3 years. Subsequent funding streams designed to support these priorities have lifted capacity within the sector and extended LLN priorities beyond the adult and community education sector.

Method

This public policy case study utilises a political economy and institutional analysis framework in order to analyse: policy documents from the Ministry of Education; the Tertiary Education Commission; and Ako Aotearoa (central publicly funded professional development organisation for tertiary education) and accompanying literature on the ALS and the wider tertiary education context in Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ).

Context

This paper contributes policy-based insights to research completed as part of a five-year project entitled *The expression, experience and transcendence of low skills in Aotearoa New Zealand* publicly funded by the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE). The project, now in its final year, employed a mixed methods approach. The quantitative team utilised international survey data linked to NZ's integrated data infrastructure (IDI), which anonymously links administrative data from multiple government departments and other survey data. A core resource was the NZ based Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) survey published in 2016 (OECD, 2016). The qualitative team conducted a series of case studies focusing on targeted populations; Māori, NZ's indigenous population, and Pacific peoples, one of the country's most significant migrant populations. On-going discussions and



literature-based research has also informed the project, supported by an advisory group of government officials and literacy organisations and practitioners and wider stakeholders. This paper contributes to this strand of work.

The Adult Literacy Strategy (ALS), launched in 2001, represented a significant moment in adult literacy policy. While it did not do enough to address the concerns of Māori, it nonetheless reflected significant thought and attention of policy makers to the organisations and individuals involved in LLN provision (Coben & McCartney, 2016; Furness & Hunter, 2017). The policy addressed a core need in the sector which was the provision of professional development capabilities for LLN practitioners and the development of what has come to be called an infrastructure to guide LLN provision. The infrastructure incorporates: “quality assurance; teaching and learning resources (including Adult Literacy and Numeracy Learning Progressions, and Pathways Awarua, an online teaching and learning programme); assessment tools; funding systems; and qualifications and professional development opportunities for educators.” (Coben & McCartney, 2016, p. 120). These LLN rest on three principles called ‘knowings’ (Coben & McCartney, 2016). They are: “Knowing the demands – of the situations that learners want or need to manage; Knowing the learner – knowing what the learner can do already, in order to determine the next learning steps; Knowing what to do – to help learners move on to the next steps.” (Coben & McCartney, 2016, p. 120).

Findings

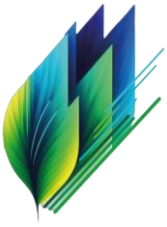
The development of a third way strategy-based policy approach has lifted the capacity of the adult LLN sector to contribute to the wider tertiary education context demonstrating the value of this kind of policy development. However, the lack of strategic policy making since 2019 has left a vacuum in policy development, evaluation and implementation. Subsequently, the LLN funding streams remain unaltered, even though the wider contexts continue to change. Furthermore, outdated policy directives are now being responded to in an increasingly ad hoc manner. Organisations with capacity have continued and even extended the policy priorities outlined in 2015. In contrast, commitments, such as the need to embed literacy and numeracy in vocational education, have not remained a priority consistently. Subsequently the sector is returning to a more marginalised position within the wider tertiary education context, where divergent practices are tolerated due to the lack of policy leadership and barriers to capacity building of good practice have been increased.

Conclusion

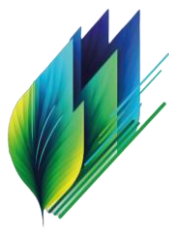
The lack of policy leadership in LLN is creating short and long-term policy and practice issues that hamper and may well prevent the LLN sector from helping those in need to deal with the issues in our current, complex context. To remedy this situation, it is vital that the LLN sector in be led, resourced and supported over the long-term to more comprehensively meet the needs of lifelong learning for adults in the labour market and our diverse communities.

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Migration, learning and social inclusion

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Rationale

Language learning and language education plays a central role in adult migrants' establishment in the receiving country. This issue has gained increased political significance in the wake of globalization (Canagarajah, 2017). Whereas adult migrants' knowledge of the receiving country's official language is often seen as a prerequisite for social inclusion, the alleged lack of language competence is often considered a threat to social cohesion (Rydell, 2018a). However, adult migrants anywhere are a quite heterogeneous group, with different life experiences and conditions for language learning and social inclusion. From the perspective of migrants themselves, language learning is mostly future-oriented, as a means for entering the labour market and higher education (Norton, 2013; Rydell, 2018b). However, with a strong focus on language learning, there is a risk that other factors of importance for migrants' social inclusion are neglected (Dahlstedt & Fejes, 2021; Simpson & Whitesand, 2015).

For adult migrants, adult education is a crucial setting for initial language learning (cf. Fejes & Dahlstedt, 2020a, 2020b). The main focus of initial language learning for adult migrants, as elaborated in European national as well as international policies, is the preparation of these individuals for the labour market, i.e., employability (Lindberg & Sandwall, 2017; Simpson & Whitesand, 2015). However, the relationship between language learning and the labour market is complex.

In this symposium, we present the latest findings from a large-scale longitudinal research program on migration, learning and social inclusion. In 2016-2018 we interviewed 174 newly arrived migrants (of whom many were asylum seekers) participating in different adult education settings in Sweden about their past, present, and future. Two to three years later, 58 of these migrants were interviewed again. This symposium focuses on the follow up interviews and the longitudinal aspects of the migrants' experiences.



Presentations / Papers

Challenges in migrants' opportunity structures in the Swedish labour market

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This paper focuses on the opportunity structures regarding migrants' participation in the Swedish labour market. We draw on a longitudinal research approach where we have followed newly arrived migrants in Sweden over a five-year-period. In this paper, we specifically draw on interviews conducted with 46 migrants when they were newly arrived in Sweden (2017-2019) and follow up interviews conducted three to four years later (2020-2022). Interviews largely came to focus on migrants' paths toward employment.

The analysis presented in the paper is structured along the following themes: First, attention is turned to the migration process which for many of the newly arrived migrants interviewed dictates not only the employment conditions but also working conditions which under the surface may include precarious work. Second, we focus on migrants' entrance into low-qualified jobs as a first step into the labour market. Here we explore the various opportunities to find employment arising in occupations such as personal assistant, teacher-assistant, food-deliverer, pizzeria employee, factory workers and warehouse workers. Third, we turn to how previous work experiences and language skills may provide unexpected opportunities or lead to modest gains despite higher education and extensive working experiences from countries of origin. Fourth, we deal with issues concerning access to networks, non-profit work and internship, as providing possibilities to enter the labour market.

Based on the findings presented, the paper concludes with a discussion of obstacles and opportunities for labour market participation among newly arrived migrants. It is concluded that it may be quite hard to analytically differentiate obstacles from opportunities in migrants' paths toward the labour market. Here, it is crucial to highlight that also unskilled and/or precarious work may provide a path toward social inclusion.

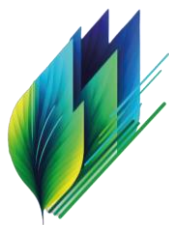
Teacher ethics and fuzzy boundaries of a professional role

Helena Colliander¹, Sofia Nyström¹ & Maria Rydell²

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Over recent decades, there has been a growing interest in issues concerning professional ethics, in particular for professionals working with vulnerable groups in society. In this paper, we focus on teachers working with newly arrived migrant students enrolled in a language introduction programme in upper secondary school in Sweden. We specifically turn attention to the ethical dilemmas the teachers have experienced and how their actions were guided by their professional and ethical judgment. In research, teaching has been described as a moral and heavily valued-laden activity, since it requires a balancing act between the teacher and the students, as well as between the profession as such and the surrounding society. In this field of tension, teachers need to relate to different rules, norms and expectations that affect their approach and actions. The study is based on a longitudinal interview study with 11 teachers who were interviewed on two occasions - 2018 and 2022. By drawing on the concepts of professional ethics and



professional judgment, the analysis presented illustrates the teachers' experiences of being in a squeezed position, where they had to pay attention both to the needs of the students, their colleagues, and their own formal mission. The teachers had to negotiate their involvement in students' wellbeing, and the possible consequences of their decision-making. This negotiation became particularly critical in relation to the teachers' assessment practices. Assessment is a core professional activity for teachers. During the investigated time period, changing migration policies profoundly changed the meaning and consequences of teachers' assessments since they were used in some students' asylum-seeking processes. This, in turn, had consequences for the teachers' actions. Ultimately, this paper turns attention to and discusses the mismatch between the teachers' professional resources and the students' needs and how teachers construct meaning in relation to the boundaries they set up for their work and their understanding of their professional role.

Ethical-methodological challenges in researching newly arrived migrants' experiences of social inclusion

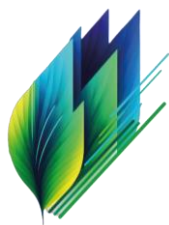
Helena Colliander¹, Magnus Dahlstedt¹, Andreas Fejes¹, Nedzad Mesic¹, Sofia Nordmark¹, Sofia Nyström¹ & Maria Rydell²

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In this paper, we discuss some of the ethical and methodological challenges that arise in research focusing on current living conditions, experiences, and dreams for the future among newly arrived migrants. In the research program presented in this symposium, we have interviewed a total of 174 newly arrived migrants spread across Sweden. During the research conducted, we have been allowed to take part of migrants' stories of entering a new country and building a new life, ranging from worries to wishes and dreams. Many of the participants preferred to conduct the interviews in Swedish, while some preferred the use of an interpreter. Most of the participants had to leave their countries of origin due to war and instability. Some of them had left their families and friends, while others had lost their families and friends. Approximately half of the participants did not at the time of the first interview have a resident permit, and their lives, as expressed by several of them, was on hold. The life situation for many of the participants was thus, in various respects, precarious and psychologically stressful.

In sum, both planning and conducting interviews with this specific group carries with it a range of challenges, which some are elaborated on in this paper. First, we elaborate on issues concerning the power relations between researchers and participants. What do we see and what do we miss out on? What is our position as researchers in entering the field? What role do the researchers' reflexivity play in building a respectful and attentive interview situation with participants living in precarious life situations? Second, we focus on the challenges in building a trustful relationship between researchers and participants. How do we as researchers communicate and interact for participants to feel safe while taking part of the research process, and to understand that we are not from the authorities and that we will not report them to anyone. Third, we elaborate on some of the considerations addressed in relation to the actual interview situation. What challenges emerge when conducting interviews with people with lower skills in the language of the interview, or when conducting an interview with an interpreter? How do we handle requests from participants to help them with contacts with



authorities? How do we balance and differentiate the roles of being a researcher conducting interviews, a fellow human being and that of becoming a therapist? Further, we elaborate on some of the challenges arising in relation to conducting the analytical work. How do we handle the fact that we as researchers have the privilege of making interpretations? Can we as privileged researchers say that we give voice to participants living in precarious life situations?

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3

Professional education



Paper 25

Perceptions about trust: a phenomenographic study of clinical supervisors in occupational therapy

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Abstract

Within Health Care Professional Education, learning in a workplace is part of the undergraduate programme and often referred to as clinical education. The various workplaces where clinical education can be pursued are for instance hospitals, community-based health care units or in primary care. Learning during clinical education is about using authentic experiences from the workplace as the starting point for learning (Dornan et al., 2011; Manninen, 2014; Silén, 2013). One example of such an experience could for instance be about meeting a real patient at a real hospital ward. Even though clinical supervisors know that the students need to carry out professional activities to develop professional competence, there are great variations among clinical supervisors regarding the reasons and timing for letting students perform patient encounters. Letting the student perform patient encounters is a decision based on trust. High levels of trust can risk patient safety, but low levels of trust can hinder student learning. What is it then that make clinical supervisors to decide to let one student meet patients more independently early on during clinical education while hesitating to let another student to do the same? There is a lack of knowledge in the literature about the concept of trust among clinical supervisors in Occupational Therapy. The aim for this study was to investigate different perceptions of trust among clinical supervisors at an Occupational Therapy clinic in Sweden.

Methodology/Methods

A qualitative study with a phenomenographic approach was used. Data collection consisted of 12 interviews with a semi-structured interview guide. The data was analysed with a seven-step phenomenographic approach.

Findings

The findings were formed into categories where three qualitatively different ways of thinking about trust were identified: 1) trust is about the student and is rather



static; 2) trust is a dynamic process based on student performance; and 3) trust is something mutual and interrelated. The findings indicate that trust can be understood in various ways; as being something inherent in the student or about the student, the supervisor, the relationship between them and the surrounding context including the tasks performed. The trust can also be perceived as static or as a dynamic process.

Conclusion

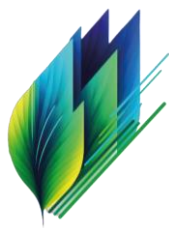
This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the variation of ways in which the concept of trust is understood among clinical supervisors in Occupational Therapy. The findings corroborate with prior research finding that trust can be understood as a multifaceted construct. It contributes novel insights about the role of the supervisor as an influential factor in the trust-building process. A deep understanding of the possible differences in the ways of conceptualizing something can help supervisors support learning by building on this understanding. The results from this study contribute to our knowledge of the drivers behind entrusted decision in clinical education in various professional contexts. We suggest that the results be used in the continuing professional development of clinical supervisors.

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Paper 26

Apprentice Perspectives: Agency, resilience, and withdrawal in work-based learning provision.

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Abstract

This paper draws on agency theories as a mechanism to examine students' emotional responses to withdrawing from work-based learning programmes. By examining tensions, impacts and competing ambiguities in current degree apprenticeship ecology, we argue that the existing policy regime has created an aporia in student and provider agency.

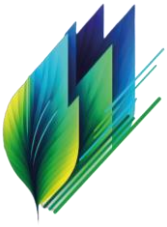
Since inception in 2015, degree apprenticeships have become an established tenet of UK higher education policy (Myers, Reid, and Bloomfield, 2023). Much government output, grey literature, and trade press focus on promoting tertiary work-based learning (WBL) models as important growth areas for universities and necessary alternatives for student success outside traditional Higher Education (HE) teaching frameworks (The Sutton Trust 2023).

Whilst we consider the value of WBL programmes to have great potential for future economic development, tensions persist. There are ongoing policy constraints that reduce flexibility for employers, universities, and apprentices, some of which affect pedagogical and theoretical underpinnings for programme design. For example, business and management apprenticeship Standards focus on more subjective competencies that are harder to assess than profession-specific skills such as in nursing or engineering.

At the policy level there is an implicit assumption that apprenticeship provisions are a good fit with universities and an integral part of future HE strategy. However, whilst there is a body of research on pedagogical approaches in programme design and delivery, the voices of individual apprentices are infrequently heard. Hearing those voices is particularly important when things go wrong.

Constraints and challenges from the specifics of WBL programme design add additional complexities to traditional HE lenses for analysing withdrawal. Whilst Tinto's (1975) seminal work on 'lack of congruency' – that mismatch between individual fit and institutional and social climate - remains a landmark for understanding the messy state of withdrawal, additional WBL factors from further stakeholder involvement on retention and progression, such as involvement from their employers, are worth examining especially in relation to resilience.

Our research uses a group of interviews with apprentices to explore individual challenges they faced leading to withdrawal from their programme. Composite



institutional codes (Brown, 2015) are traditionally used by the sector to classify withdrawal reasons; however, they downplay actual student voices. We revisit agency theory as a lens to reframe apprentice narratives as emotional responses to withdrawal.

Using the fifth of Reich and Hager's (2014) threads for theorising professional practice as a starting point for empirical research, we consider the importance of historical, social, and political contexts to ways of thinking and acting for students who are choosing to withdraw from apprenticeship learning. We explore how complex stakeholder relationships and demands between providers, employers, and multiple government regulations impact on both student and provider agency. The study centres important questions of how neoliberal orthodoxies around 'choice' may not apply to individual circumstances (Butcher and Rose-Adams, 2015) for HEIs or their students. Referring to Archer (2000) we examine questions of how students weigh their circumstances and constraints against their personal goals to determine what is best for them in their social context.

For apprenticeship students, a lack of agency potentially spans their whole student experience. Apprentices may have been given no choice in either HEI or subject content in their degree apprenticeship, or in managing associated areas such as off-the-job time. Additionally, longstanding provider aims to manage an active constructive withdrawal where necessary (Myers et al, 2021) such as in the case of student redundancy from work, are hindered through regulation. This has profound implications as some students may be then forced to accept an unachievable status quo of imposed conditions that satisfy employer, HEI, and funding regulations, with the result that for the studied group of students, the only possible agency some could exert was withdrawal. Regulations here are therefore counter to expected good HE practices that encourage reciprocal pedagogies where students take ownership of their own learning (Cook-Sather, 2020) and develop a sense of belonging (Fabian et al, 2022).

For their institutions, the externally-driven apprenticeship Standard creates an inflexibility in what provision can be offered to different employers, dependent upon their needs, i.e., the same Standard is applied irrespective of the context, which means a less appropriate 'fit' of criteria for apprentices in public sector, not-for-profit organisations, and SME contexts. Additionally, funding rules constrain what assistance can be offered to struggling students.

Whilst our interview narratives capture a wide range of motivations in starting apprenticeship programmes, early analysis has identified several consistent themes in their withdrawal dialogues. A) the burden of work and administration required to complete, B) the lack of alternatives or insufficient safety net when things go wrong such as redundancy, and C) a lack of flexibility in acknowledging former experience in a Standards-based curriculum. These are not exhaustive, as our paper is a work in progress. Our initial findings suggest policy constraints are negatively impacting apprentices' agency, countering any resilience apprentices have for completing.

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Paper 27

Supporting students' self-empowerment and initiative-taking during WIL in Radiography: The change laboratory methodology

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Hesta Fredrich-Nel

Central University of Technology, South Africa

Maria Spante

University West, Sweden

Abstract

In order to address issues arising during work-integrated learning (WIL), students have to draw on resources they have gathered in their university studies, their own personal resources and those available in the workplace context. If students can begin to solve these sorts of work issues on their own then they should be able to gain a sense of self-empowerment and initiative to change and improve their own practices as well as those of the workplace. However, students may struggle to gain such self-empowerment and may require support from their lecturers and peers. Such support, WIL researchers such as David Boud (2013) suggest, is best undertaken through some form of guided reflection. The change laboratory (CL) methodology (Virkkunen and Newnham, 2013) can provide just this sort of guided reflection. In a change laboratory, WIL students are stimulated to raise and collaboratively discuss and refine problems they encounter in the workplace through questioning the current situation in response to 'mirror data'. Thereafter they engage in a structured cycle of expansive learning or EL (Sannino & Engestrom, 2017) in which they utilize the Activity Theory analytic tool of interacting activity systems of work and university, and the EL cycle to analyse tensions and contradictions emerging during WIL (Figure 1). In our research mirror data was gathered through videotaped interviews with WIL students, work supervisors and WIL coordinators. Tellingly, the students bemoaned opportunities to practice their skills during WIL, and supervisors were critical of students lack of initiative and poor work ethic. As Virkkunen and Newnham (2013), suggest, the emergence of such deep seated and intractable problems provides an ideal setting for CL work.

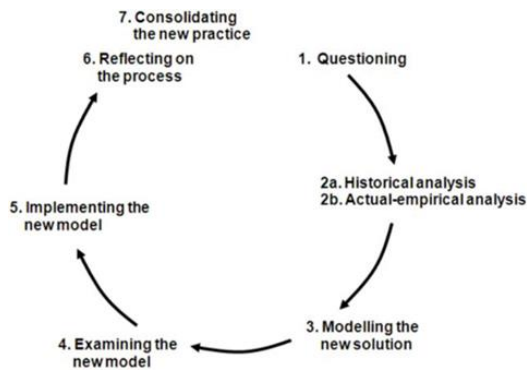


Figure 1: EL cycle after Virkkunen and Newnham (2013)

Following the emergence of tensions (typically phase 2 of the EL cycle in Figure 1) students work collaboratively and creatively to address them. This sort of student agency or self-empowerment development has been reported on in similar CL WIL research by Morselli (2017).

The aim of this research project is thus, broadly, to evaluate whether the activist and interventionist CL methodology may enhance students' sense of self-empowerment during their WIL experiences.

We believe this has relevance for research into work and learning as both the student body and the nature of Radiography workplaces are undergoing change, so that prior approaches and taken for granted assumptions about WIL need to be questioned and possibly redesigned. In promoting a student activist stance, we hope we are also responding in part to Nick Hopwood's keynote call for more activist research which challenges the status quo.

Methodology

The target students are eight fourth-year Radiography students in the Faculty of Health who have already completed substantial periods of WIL in public and private hospitals. They will engage in six to eight two-hour CL sessions between January and March 2024, focused on their WIL experiences and broadly following the EL cycle in Figure 1. The students and time slots have already been identified. From video-taped data of the workshops, the researchers will seek evidence of dilemmas raised by the students, their collaborative attempts to create new processes/concepts that may serve to resolve these dilemmas and their reflections on concretising these new practices. Evidence gathered will be further analyzed against criteria for the development of 'transformatory agency' as outlined by Kerosuo, Mäki & Korpela (2015).

Thus far, the researchers have gathered mirror data (as above) for the student WIL change laboratory, gained ethical permission to conduct the project and presented it to Faculty Management so that the purpose and process of the project is understood and debated. This is an important step as academic staff may not fully comprehend and support the sort of student activist CL research proposed here (Blomsø, Jakhelln & Postholm, 2023).

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Paper 28

Exploring how a revised interprofessional learning curriculum is enacted in undergraduate health education programs at a medical faculty

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Abstract

Today's Health Professions Education (HPE) need to contain high quality learning activities that provides students from various programs with the opportunity to learn with, from, and about each other in order for them to develop interprofessional competence. The importance of interprofessional competences and teamwork has been highlighted by, for instance, WHO (2010). Many HPE around the world that support interprofessional learning (IPL) at their faculties use different learning approaches, sometimes including a fully integrated curricula specifically for IPL. At the Medical faculty at Linköping University, Sweden, a fully integrated interprofessional curriculum has been a clear feature since the start 1986 (Wilhelmsson et al., 2009) and the latest revision was in 2016.

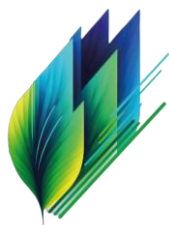
There are few studies on fully integrated curricula specifically for IPL, how it is created, revised or performed. The aim of this study was to analyze the ambitions and outcomes of a revised interprofessional learning curriculum in health professions education programs.

Methods / Methodology

A mixed method design for theory-based studies in accordance with Lilliedahl, Sundberg, Wahlström (2016) was used. Further, to facilitate the interpretation and theorizing of empirical findings, a theoretical framework of curriculum development (Lee et al., 2013) was employed. In order to triangulate and nuance the findings various perspectives was included: documents, individual interviews with key persons involved in the development of the revised curriculum and focus group interviews with teachers and students.

The documents included consisted of syllabuses and study guides from all the involved HPE programs. Also, educational program plans and teacher guides for the HPE programs, and specific IPL-information to students for each IPL module respectively, were included. Document data was analyzed using a qualitative document analysis (Bowen, 2009) together with a content analysis with a directed approach (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Focus group interviews will be analyzed through a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

(Expected) Results / Conclusions



The analysis of the document study resulted in one overarching theme named “A planned, lived, and attended interprofessional curriculum” including four main categories inspired by the theoretical framework, i.e., 1) Future orientation of Health practices; 2) Desired capabilities and competencies of students; 3) Teaching, learning and assessment; and 4) Organizational support structures. The findings of this study identified a variety of aspects relating to the why and how of curriculum revision. Aspects included what drives a change like this and what facilitates making it work. For instance, an IPL coordinator with mandate equal as the respective HPE programme directors contributed with legitimacy. Intentions that were not implemented were identified and possible explanations as to why those were not implemented were recognized, such as the feedback from the health care sector. The balance between pedagogical innovation and pragmatism, in terms of creating a comprehensible curriculum suitable for teachers with a variety of experiences, is a pattern prominent both in the document analysis and in the analysis of the focus group interviews. This study identified that the links provided between organizational support structures and the expectations on teachers were not aligned.

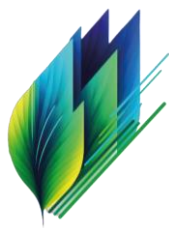
Relevance to research field of work and learning

This study on how a revised interprofessional curriculum were orchestrated is relevant for many settings within Higher Education, beyond education of future healthcare professionals. For example, when redesigning a curriculum there seems to be a fine balance between pedagogical innovation and pragmatism that needs to be acknowledged when designing curricula. These findings are valuable also for other professional educators where cooperation between educational programs is a feature preparing students for future working life.

Further, the findings of this project will contribute to the field of interprofessional learning, in terms of aspects important for organizational design and delivery.

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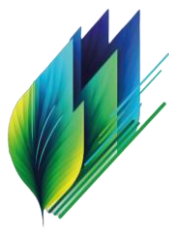
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Abstract

Curriculum development processes in higher education have traditionally focused on administrative and regulatory processes emphasising the curriculum document as the key artefact (Barnett & Coate, 2005). This focus means that the work of teaching academics is almost invisible. While there is an increasing body of literature on professional learning in higher education (Ambler et al, 2020), much of its focus is on professional learning for teaching and learning rather than on the curriculum development practices of teaching academics (Daniels, 2017). This study uses a practice perspective, in particular the theory of practice architectures (Kemmis et al. 2014), to investigate the curriculum development practices in an Australian university and the professional learning of the teaching academics as they practice. Such an approach understands curriculum development practices in higher education as not just about developing documents but an entangled ecology of practices (Kemmis et al. 2012). A key research question is: 'how did the teaching academics learn to practice curriculum development' and to come to practice differently (Kemmis 2021). The exploration of this question is based around a case study of the curriculum development practices in developing a new online subject as part of a new course at an Australian university. The authors participated in a critically reflexive process of their involvement in the curriculum development practices. Additional data was gathered via key curriculum design documentation collected throughout the year-long, whole-of-course process.

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Paper 30

Can Q Methodology bring to light the values that underpin courses that prepare students to work collaboratively as effective health advocates?

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Abstract

Over Research Framing

Patient and health advocacy is an ethical and professional responsibility of all health professionals. To be an advocate, graduates need to be taught professional knowledge on how to engage in both public health advocacy and equity focused advocacy, which are both underpinned by the values of patient centred care (PCC). The PCC approach values partnerships between patients, families, and health professionals in making healthcare decisions. This approach signifies a shift from the traditional paternalistic approach in which healthcare decisions had limited input from patients or families (Delany, 2018).

Advocacy also requires the capacity to work collaboratively and in multidisciplinary/interprofessional teams. Multidisciplinary teams are best described as health professionals from different disciplines who may work independently, in parallel or sequentially on different aspects of a project or service delivery within their disciplinary boundaries (Khalili et al, 2019). Whereas collaborate interprofessional collaboration occurs when multiple health workers from different professional backgrounds provide comprehensive services by working with patients, their families, careers and communities to deliver the highest quality of care across settings (WHO, 2008). Importantly, collaborative practice is also an accreditation standard in health professions programs, and one that many educators struggle to embed.

An interprofessional education (IPE) advocacy curriculum innovation linking learning about advocacy to collaborative and professional practice for final year health professional students, is to be implemented in 2024, at the University of Melbourne, Australia. The initiative has been specifically designed to increase student awareness of advocacy and foster the development of true collaborative competencies required for effective advocacy in practice.

The IPE platform for teaching advocacy requires students to review and explore the skills, values, attributes that the current and future health professionals will need to embrace and perform in their roles as patient and health advocates through the unique but connected perspectives of each of the disciplines. As effective patient and health advocacy in practice is rarely uni-professional, and transdisciplinary skills and active collaboration are essential. In developing the content this way, health professional students will have the opportunity to be future ready, gaining the skills and knowledge needed for their future work



leadership, scholarship, collaboration, and practice in relation to advocacy. Moreover, the IPE education initiative has been designed to enhance these skills to prepare students for future collaborative practice and interdisciplinary partnership to optimise patient care and therefore, health outcomes.

Methodology

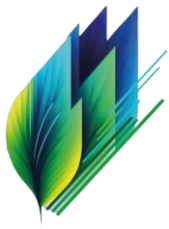
To better conceptualise what educators 'value' when they participate in the delivery of the advocacy curriculum. Q methodology (Stephenson, 1953) was selected to identify the perspectives held by participants – Subject Coordinators and Heads of Departments – about the values that underpin the curriculum of the Doctor of Physiotherapy, Doctor of Medicine, and Master of Public Health programs. Additionally, as Q methodology used as an evaluation tool can explore and prioritise educational values and beliefs (Ernest,2011). From an interprofessional perspective, the methodology offered a way to see the similarities, and where there may be differences, across these three professions. Thus, allowing participants the opportunity to reflect, evaluate on the normative claims and their own perspectives.

Results/Conclusions

This paper reports on the results of using Q methodology as an effective research method to identify underpinning values held by a diverse range of health professionals' higher education academics. Additionally, this paper discusses how the results of the evaluation helped shape student assessment to ensure important values and perspectives underlying the IPE advocacy curriculum innovation were explicit and embracing an equity focused PCC approach to healthcare.

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Reconfiguring Learning in a Disrupted Internship

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Abstract

In the context of workplace learning, organizational socialization is the pivotal process through which individuals acquire the requisite skills to function effectively within a specific organization and adapt their behavior to align seamlessly with its norms and practices (Fisher, 1986). This journey of sense-making and learning is intended to equip neophytes with the knowledge and competencies essential for their transformation into valuable contributors to organizations. (Klein & Weaver, 2000). However, the predominant focus of organizational socialization research often gravitates toward focusing proactive newcomer behavior and formal or informal socialization tactics, sidelining a critical aspect: challenges that may hinder this socialization process (Saks & Gruman, 2011). Addressing these hurdles is paramount, as neglecting the contingency approach to socialization practices leaves a substantial gap in our understanding of how newcomers perceive and navigate their own socialization journey (Cooper-Thomas & Burke, 2012).

Critically, learning provides a common link between organizational socialization and the process of becoming a fully functional staff member of the organization (Antonacopoulou & Güttel, 2010). Taking a practice stance, our paper investigates challenges faced by undergraduate interns in adapting to disrupted learning during organizational socialization.

Method

This research project utilizes a descriptive approach, drawing inspiration from phenomenological methods proposed by Van Manen (2016). It centers on undergraduates (N = 22, 15 females, and 7 males) engaged in business marketing internships at Singapore-based companies as part of university training. Participants were interviewed during the second and fourth internship months and each interview lasted about 45 minutes. The semi-structured interview schedule explored interns' work processes. Interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis.

The methodology comprised three stages. First, we thematically coded the entire dataset using NVIVO software, focusing on two broad themes: "materials" (tools, software, documents, and technologies used) and "internship experiences" (work types, challenges, and perceptions). The second stage identified functional work



episodes both in the workplace and remote work as reported by interns. Each transcript was individually analyzed, and a matrix documented work activities, technologies, achievements, and challenges. In the third stage, we distilled individual experiences, focusing on differences between workplace and remote work experiences, focusing on speech indicators like 'I thought,' 'I realized,' 'I think,' 'I believed,' 'it seems,' and 'I learnt.' Three researchers cross-verified reductions for bracketing, and member checking with a research assistant ensured emerging patterns resonated with participants' experiences.

Results

Findings revealed interns experienced structured onboarding programmes, responsive peer support and spontaneous interaction with co-workers at the physical worksite as important for supporting their learning at the workplace during regular, i.e. prepandemic periods. These experiences contrasted with the remote internship experiences that interns had to transition into during the pandemic. Engagement in internship activities during the latter period evolved as interns responded actively to seek learning opportunities through an increased focus on intentional structuring of time and systematic use of digital technology to seek peer support and interaction with colleagues virtually.

Relevant to research field of work and learning

We foreground how interns were able to re-orient themselves to new work arrangements during the transition from working at the workplace organization to their homes by turning the pandemic into an occasion for workplace learning, albeit remotely.

This work adds new knowledge about how interns responded during disrupted times by mobilizing activities by means of which they could learn. By explicating how learning takes place during a crisis, our study can inform human resource management practices in the context of atypical situations. In this sense, there are possibilities for cross-fertilization of two fields of research – higher education and organizational change – offering promising avenues for researchers.

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How to learn architecture on the workplace : an example of distributed tutoring

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Abstract

In this article two different conceptions of tutoring are discussed. The first stem from French language work in vocational didactics, where the tutoring relationship is often described as asymmetrical at the epistemic level. The tutor is seen as having an active role, organising the activity, "showing off" the mastery of the task or a high epistemic position (Kunégel, 2005; Mayen, 2015, 2022), whereas the novice is described as a performer who responds to what is suggested in the tutoring relationship. A second conception, derived from the socio-historical approach to learning in work situations (Billett, 2010, 2004; Fuller & Unwin, 2003), qualifies this asymmetrical vision and sees the learner and his work environment as engaged in a co-construction of meaning, involving a reciprocal transformation. According to this perspective, the novice is seen as the bearer of agentivity, able to choose when and in what context to engage and to negotiate the relevance of the affordances proposed.

For some years now, tutoring has been receiving particular attention in vocational education research. Tutoring takes shape in work situations which are complex from a learning point of view, due to their integration of the profession as a whole (Mayen, 2000). In these situations, productive activity takes precedence over learning (Samurçay & Rabardel, 2004), in variable configurations (Filliettaz, Rémerly and Trébert, 2014), and experienced professionals may provide support for novices in their zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1935/1978).

Based on an analysis of the interactions between a trainee in architecture and her architect tutor in a work situation and an analysis of the trainee intentions, this presentation explores the contributions of the trainee and the tutor to the tutorial relationship and to trainee learning.

To answer our research question, two types of data were compiled, which produced complementary results.

The first type of data aims to document the tutorial interactions in a authentic context. The work in progress over two non-consecutive weeks were filmed for a total of 80 hours of footage. The cameras were used to film both the tutorial interactions between architects and the trainee, and her own activity on the computer, during co-construction or execution tasks. The corpus presented here is constituted by 10 videos of filmed interactions between the trainee and her architect tutor, coordinating their efforts to create 3D images of an architectural object.

The fine-grained analyses of the filmed interactions between the trainee and her tutor highlight two interesting aspects of this relationship. First, the trainee's agentivity that is visible through her turns of speech and on her way to manage



waiting periods not marked out by the tutorial relationship. Second, the tutor's method of direct guidance towards the trainee. He offers a space for co-construction, supporting an epistemic symmetrisation between the tutor's and trainee's contributions. These are considered as complementary in resolving the practical problems they face.

The second type of data provides a complementary contribution to interactional analysis. It documents the trainee's experience of the tutorial relationship and her internal intentions during interactions with her tutor. In that perspective, the trainee attended an explicitation interview (Vermersch, 2009) on the basis the 10 videos of her interactions with her tutor.

The fine-grained analyses of the trainee's internal intentions during the tutorial relationship highlight her ability to grasping the learning opportunities offered by the tutor. They also highlight her ability to offer in turn to the tutor resources, allowing him to carry out his activity without hindrance. This dynamic would support the epistemic symmetry with a view to learning, on the one hand, the finalisation of the task for which she is responsible, on the other.

According to these results, the conception of scaffolding in tutorial relationship, as carried essentially by the tutor will be discussed. A distributed approach of tutoring will be presented and the conditions likely to make this particular tutorial relationship possible will be outlined. Prospects in terms of research and the design of environments conducive to this type of support will be presented in the conclusion.

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Paper 33

A Qualitative Study of Transformative Learning During Internships

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Abstract

Transformative learning in workplace research is gaining much attention, as business environments are increasingly becoming more complex and uncertain than ever before (e.g., Kwon et al., 2020). Transformative learning is the process of acquiring new knowledge and perspectives that deeply alter a person's world view and self-identity (Mezirow, 2020). This typically happens when individuals encounter experiences or information that challenge their existing beliefs or engage in self-reflection and dialogue with others who have different perspectives. It involves confronting one's own assumptions, biases, cultural norms, and social structures that shape their understanding of reality (Mezirow, 2020; Taylor, 2018)

This piece of research aims to investigate the process of transformative learning in the workplace in the context of student internships. As students enter the workforce for the first time, many will be confronted with novel situations that may challenge their pre-existing worldviews, assumptions and behaviours, thus enabling transformative learning (e.g., Kasworm, & Bowles, 2012). Thus, we chose the context of student internships to examine this topic of transformative learning in the workplace, in particular, focusing on the trigger events that may enable transformative learning and individual orientations that may increase the likelihood of transformative learning.

Methodology

Context

Students undergoing the Full-Time Bachelor's in Human Resource Management Degree Programme in a Singaporean university have to undergo a mandatory 6-month internship. They will be evaluated by supervisors in the middle of the 6 month internship, and at the end of the 6 month internship. At the same time, throughout the six months, they will be required to submit a weekly reflection, and a final report at the end of the internship.

Data Collection Procedure

We randomly sampled 13 students from the internship programme and conducted virtual interviews via zoom which lasted for around 1 hour each. All interviews were transcribed verbatim.

Procedures and Results of Thematic Analysis



We conducted an iterative coding process on the students' weekly reflections and final assignment. Results from this phase of thematic analysis rendered the following initial themes regarding internship experiences as presented in figure 1.

Theoretical Model of Transformational Learning During Internship

Our coding and discussions yielded the following theoretical model.

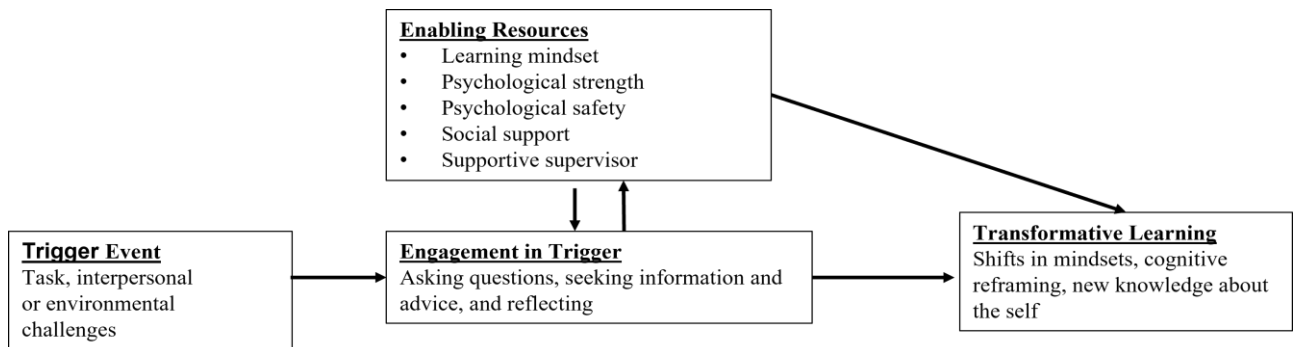


Figure 1: Model of Transformative Learning During Internships

Key Findings: Outcome of Transformative Learning via Internship

Trigger events play a crucial role in the personal growth and development of individuals (e.g., Henson, 2020) and can serve as a catalyst for positive change (Updegraff & Taylor 2021). This is supported by our research which found that trigger events prompts transformative learning.

One of the key findings of this research is that on top of acquiring new knowledge and skills, students experienced mindset shifts and cognitive restructuring, all components of transformative learning. This finding is consistent with the literature where it was shown that internships have a significant impact on students' cognitive shifts, influencing their attitudes, learning behaviors and professional skills (e.g., Minnes et al., 2020).

Another key theme that stood out was the realisation of the importance of being more adaptable and flexible in their thinking and behaviours. This theme is reflected in the current literature on how internships can enable students to be more adaptable and flexible (Ocampo et al., 2020).

Star-Glass (2006) articulated how business internships can prompt transformative learning by affirmation of coursework and competence training. Most of the literature on transformative learning during internships has focused on skills development and mindset shifts. In our research, we found that one important aspect of transformative learning in internship is the discovery of one's self, be it hidden strengths or shortcomings.

Psychological safety, the belief that one can express oneself without fear of negative consequences, plays a crucial role in transformative learning (Kwon, 2020). It fosters a safe space for dialogue, promotes unlearning, and facilitates critical reflection and interactions, all of which are key components of transformative learning (Kwon, 2020), and also encourages risk-taking and experimentation (e.g.,



Lateef, 2020). Similarly, we found that trigger events prompts engagement with trigger, especially in the presence of psychological safety.

While the literature on social support in transformative learning focuses on the work or learning context, we found that support from one's social circle external to the context of the experience enables transformative learning as well.

Another finding is that even in the absence of trigger events that may overwhelm, students who go into the internship with a learning orientation are more likely to ask questions and seek information and advice. Our findings are consistent with the extant literature which documents how a learning orientation, particularly a focus on critical reflection and willingness to explore assumptions, can prompt transformative learning (Eschenbacher, 2020).

Conclusion

This piece of research is an exploratory study into the process of transformative learning during internships. Future research can focus on how students' pre-existing mindsets, orientations and worldviews may impact the process and outcome of the transformative learning process.

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Paper 34

Promoting authenticity in authentic assessment: a critical discussion

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Abstract

Authentic assessment has been mooted as an important assessment strategy in higher education for decades. The reason for this is that assessment tasks should not seek simply to test the attainment of some abstract knowledge or skill, rather they should have meaning beyond the need to generate grades. Authentic assessment has been fostered not only as a reaction to the kind of grossly inauthentic assessment tasks only found in educational institutions, but also because the assessment tasks students were expected to complete often had little counterpart in the world of graduate practice that students were soon to enter. In recent years, the employability agenda has also increased the pragmatic emphasis on authentic assessment across all disciplines, with moves to add vocational features to courses that were previously not seen as preparation for work.

Is authentic assessment a convenient gloss on activities to make them seem more relevant to students and employers? Or does it represent a more fundamental educational shift that values a range of ways of thinking about authenticity that are needed regardless of whether there is a neo-liberal influence in higher education? The idea has practical merit in that it is a rhetorically useful notion that most parties can agree to be of value, without having to dig too deeply into what is meant by 'authentic'. Reviews of authentic assessment have identified common features, for example: exhibiting realism of context or tasks, focusing on competence development and providing a challenge to higher order thinking (eg. Ashford-Rowe, Herrington & Brown, 2014, Villarroel et al, 2018). The characteristic that most authentic assessment tasks tend to share is a focus on connection to tasks that occur in the world of practice. This is quite straightforward when considering courses that prepare students for entry into one of the professions: to graduate students need to be able to demonstrate that they can do the kinds of tasks they will meet when employed in the profession, it is less so when there is not an immediate link between course and subsequent practice.

There have been critiques of this position, in that it can sometimes represent a naïve realism, focussing too much on the content of the task and not enough on



authentic processes. Most recently Jan McArthur (2023) argued that it is not enough that assessment tasks reproduce problems in society: assessment should prepare students for the future through actively promoting social justice and contributing to the transformation of society.

The aim of this conceptual paper is to extend critiques such as these while retaining a strong commitment to the importance of authenticity in assessment. It will consider the importance of the perception and experience of authenticity by learners themselves and ways in which learning at work takes place, the inherent relationality of tasks, and how this is not captured by typical 'authentic' tasks. Finally, it will seek to shift discussion of authentic assessment into consideration of multiple forms of authenticity. It will discuss *psychological authenticity*, *ontological fidelity*, and *practice theory perspectives* and how they can influence assessment design.

In *psychological authenticity*, perceptions of whether something is authentic or not is a matter of individual judgement across a number of dimensions, and so appearance of authenticity to the learner is central. *Ontological fidelity* is whether a task represents a convincing narrative of real people and problems in context. *Practice theory perspectives* promote a comparison of the practices of the student and the practices in which a professional task is embedded. Whilst these practices persist beyond individuals and particular tasks, assessment can only focus on a sample of practice, and so should be carefully positioned in relation to the whole.

In any assessment one or more of these forms of authenticity may be prioritised. However, conscious and deliberate design of assessment needs to occur if any form of authenticity is to be realised. Design relates not just to the selection of a task, but the (un)controllable processes that surround it, the extent to which students buy-in to it, and its relationship not only to other proximate assessment activities, but to the nature and purposes of the curriculum. It is suggested that a more nuanced and sophisticated view of authentic assessment is needed if education is to be consistent with a student becoming a capable practitioner and the kinds of activities in which they will engage post-graduation.

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Instructors' reflexive body-work in maritime safety training

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Abstract

Habit expresses our power of dilating our being-in-the-world, or changing our existence by appropriating fresh instruments. If habit is neither a form of knowledge nor an involuntary action, what then is it? It is knowledge in the hands, which is forthcoming only when bodily effort is made, and cannot be formulated in detachment from that effort (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2014)

In the paper we intend to explore and illustrate the concept of embodied learning – or the acquisition of *knowledge in the hands* – in the context of simulation-based maritime safety training. Simulation-based safety training is used in the maritime domain to prepare both students and professional seafarers (in “refresher” courses) for different emergency situations at sea, including firefighting, medical aid and evacuation (Viktorelius & Sellberg, 2021, 2022). In the training, various scenarios are physically simulated at training centers (e.g. onboard training ships, in lifeboats, and in buildings designated for fire drills), where participants practice how to perform and coordinate actions (e.g. search and rescue in darkness near hot fires) in sensorially and kinesthetically authentic environments, generating rich bodily experience. The embodied actions and experiences are commonly recognized by instructors and students as necessary for learning how to handle complex and dangerous situations at sea. However, while in practice, a lot of professional maritime education and work-based learning focuses on the development of practical knowledge (e.g. the incorporation of practical skills such as navigation) the embodied nature of professional learning has been neglected by most researchers in this domain (Sellberg & Viktorelius, 2020). It can also be argued that one of the greatest benefits of simulation-based education, that is, its possibility to expand students *being-in-the-world* by inducing certain *lived* intercorporeal experiences, has not been sufficiently studied and theorized in educational research in general. The paper therefore addresses the question of how embodied learning in simulation can contribute to professional knowing and being? By focusing on embodied knowledge and learning in maritime education and training (MET) we aim to advance the understanding of the formation of professional skill in MET and contribute to the growing and interrelated literature on embodiment in higher education (Green & Hopwood, 2015; Hyland, 2018; Loftus & Kinsella, 2021; Prentice, 2007) and simulation-based professional learning (Abrandt Dahlgren et al., 2016; Hopwood et al., 2014; Rooney et al., 2015). This aim is achieved by developing an empirical-phenomenological account of the incorporation of embodied skill or *habit* (in Merleau-Ponty's sense of flexibly mediating skillful engagements with the world) in simulation. Theoretically the study is situated in phenomenologically grounded analyses of embodiment, skill



and learning (Dreyfus, 2014; Gallagher, 2005; Montero, 2016; Stolz, 2015; Sutton et al., 2011) recently featuring in practice-based studies of professional learning and knowing (Dall’Alba & Sandberg, 2014). The study draws upon ethnographic field work, including observations, conducted interviews, focus groups and collected interactional data (with GoPro cameras mounted on students and instructors) from two Swedish maritime training centers which we analyze in light of the articulated phenomenological framework.

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Paper 36

Postgraduate Business Professionals: 4th Industrial Revolution work readiness

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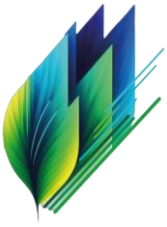
Abstract

The fourth industrial revolution means digitization and the automation of work (Schwab, 2016). It is considered by many to be the most important societal and economic trend in the world and it will primarily revolve the nature of work, business, and society in the coming decades (Arntz, Gregory, & Zierahn, 2016; Frey & Osborne, 2013). The fourth industrial revolution (4IR) might lead to the exclusion of thousands of jobs and the withdrawal or fundamental change of many existing employments. Simultaneously, new employments, new businesses, and fundamentally new ways of work will possibly arise (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014). The stepping up of technology will condense the shelf life of existing knowledge, expertise and skills, and require different competencies which need to be developed, as specific activities of professions become mechanized, employees will be obligate to focus on innovative activities which require diverse and technological skills (Van Dam, 2018). Approximately half of subject knowledge acquired in the first year of a four-year technical degree program is obsolete by the time of graduation.

Thereby, that digitization and automation might be one of the most important issues to shape the future nature of work, learning and career choices. Therefore, this study aims to explore the readiness of postgraduate business alumni for the 4IR and associated changes impacting the nature of work and business professions.

Universities must ensure today's postgraduate business courses are delivering the right skills sets and knowledge for business graduates of the future. Today's graduates will experience the rapid changes associated with the adoption of Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) smart technologies (artificial intelligence, machine learning, robotic processing automation, natural language processing, neural networks etc) and digital transformations throughout their careers. Therefore, the aim of this study was to investigate the readiness of postgraduate business alumni for the 4IR and associated changes impacting the nature of work and business professions.

The review of the literature focused on research and literature related to work readiness (Mumme & Cameron, 2019; Verma et al., 2017) and graduate employability skills frameworks (AIB, 2009; Cameron et al, 2017, Forrier & Sels, 2003), technology (AI & Cybersecurity) awareness (Zhang & Dafoe, 2019; Adu & Adjei, 2018), digital ethics (Loi, Heitz & Christen, 2020), digital competency



frameworks (Carretero et al, 2017) such as the European Union Digital Competency Framework (Vuorikari et al, 2016), the impact of 4IR technologies on professions (Ooi et al, 2019; Shealy et al, 2018) and digital skills for business professions (Nankervis et al., 2019; Nankervis & Cameron, 2023).

The research objectives for this study are as follows:

RO1: Explore the extent that business courses are preparing business professionals for the changing nature of work associated with the adoption of new data-driven technologies and associated digital transformations.

RO2: Investigate the levels of 4IR technology awareness of business alumni in terms of the impacts on their profession and the impact of AI and new data-driven technologies on business models, strategy, operations and the workforce of the future.

RQ1: What are the key knowledge, skills and competencies that business graduates require for dealing with the increasing and rapid adoption of 4IR technologies (smart technologies, AI, machine learning and neural networks) in business.

RQ2: How are business professions being impacted by the adoption of 4IR data-driven technologies?

RQ3: How can businesses courses (undergraduate and postgraduate) better prepare business professionals for the future of work in the 4IR?

An exploratory quantitative mono method approach was employed utilising an online survey of postgraduate business alumni from Australian universities (n=430). This paper outlines the development of the data collection instrument and initial descriptive findings. The survey focused on two broad areas: Careers and employability skills and awareness of 4IR smart technologies and the potential impacts on respondents' professional practice and careers.

Preliminary analysis is currently being undertaken. Some of these preliminary findings indicate a lifelong learning approach is necessary for a responsive method to the 4IR technologies – this includes upskilling, openness to innovation, agile responses, adaptability, resilient and collaborative leadership. Approximately one third of respondents (32%) felt their job had not been enhanced by smart technologies or were unsure. However, 5 percent felt their jobs were enhanced to a large scale, followed by 20 percent who felt their job had been enhanced in “many areas” and 43 percent felt their job had been “enhanced in a few areas”. A key finding was the low coverage of Data analysis and statistics, Data Literacy, Digital Ethics and Digital Collaboration across postgraduate business degrees. The data analysis and study will be further developed. It is envisaged the research will assist in informing future research regarding the future of work, strategies for increasing the 4IR employability of business graduates and to better prepare business professionals for the impacts of 4IR data-driven technological adoption and associated impacts on the future world of work, business professions and careers.

The study was undertaken prior to the emergence of ChatGBT and subsequent rapid increase of generative AI software and large language models (LLM). Therefore, further research would need to accommodate the effects of these technologies as major disruptors which are already impacting universities and professions. With this in mind, further research can be conducted, and in particular, qualitative research which would provide a richer understanding of areas requiring greater attention, based on the careers of alumni, and discipline



specific issues. Research involving Professional Bodies and major employer groups/industry sectors representing some key business professions would also be fruitful. This proposed research could be undertaken to gauge what may be current graduate skills and knowledge deficiencies and explore future skilling and knowledge sets to assist in informing postgraduate business education and learning.

Keywords: postgraduate business professionals; Fourth Industrial Revolution; work readiness; smart technologies; employability

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Development of leadership competencies in a military context: Systematic literature review

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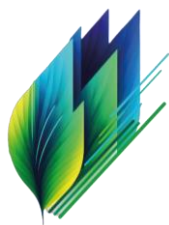
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Abstract

The world as we know it is at a crossroads of rapid, complex and unpredictable changes. For Cunha (2021), these changes are characterised by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity, which, as Costa and Baio (2023) point out, are mainly manifested at the political, economic, social and migratory levels. And these issues end up drastically affecting climate change and the actions of states to guarantee their sovereignty and national security. Leadership action is therefore more necessary in times of crisis (Moura et al., 2019). Accordingly, states are taking action to develop and strengthen their armed forces, which ends up having an immediate influence on military higher education (Navio, 2018; Binková & Štěpánková, 2023), of which we highlight the development of leadership competencies in officers (Yogev et al., 2022; Siew & Koh, 2023) with a focus on the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA). Thus, considering the characteristics of leadership in a military context, which make it unique, complex and extremely dynamic, given the systematically changing nature of military operations (Costa et al., 2023; Bunin et al., 2021) and that it can be expressed through military leadership competencies that have been previously designed, described and grounded in the officers' training curriculum (Costa & Rouco, 2023), a condition that describes them as capable of being developed through learning processes (Coutinho, 2014; Almeida, 2017; Muirequetule & Machado, 2018), this study addresses the following guiding question: how can we develop the military leadership competencies of Subaltern Officers and Captains in the FAA, based on the state of the art?

In order to operationalise this question, the following objectives were defined: to identify the ways of developing leadership competencies in the military context available in the literature; to characterise the ways of developing military leadership competencies described in the literature. To this end, we decided to carry out a systematic literature review, which according to Vilelas (2020) is indicated to take stock of the state of knowledge of the phenomenon under study, based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) method, divided into three phases: identification, screening and inclusion (Page et al., 2021; Shamseer et al., 2015). In accordance with the indications of this methodology, studies are being consulted in the Scopus, Science Direct, SciELO databases and the Portuguese Open Access Scientific Repository (RCAAP), published between January 2018 and October 2023, according to selected inclusion and exclusion criteria. It is expected that this study will provide a reasoned description of the various didactic-methodological options for



developing leadership competences in the military context available in the literature in the years selected for analysis, which will result in a theoretical contribution to the body of science on this topic. This contribution will refer both to a systematisation of the ways in which leadership competences are developed in the military context, and also to knowledge about the development of learning in the context of military training and the performance of duties, within the framework of the education and professional development of these personnel. On the other hand, the idea is to use these results to analyse the possibilities of adapting best practices to the context of higher military education in the Angolan Armed Forces in the field of developing the leadership skills of their non-commissioned officers and captains. It is also hoped that the results of this review will be used as a theoretical lens for possible future empirical work, as well as for deciding on the best methodological options to adopt when conducting these studies.

Keywords: Leadership, military leadership competencies, development of military leadership competencies, professional training processes, systematic literature review, PRISMA.

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Paper 38

Biographical Learning Related to the Work of Mature Learners Studying for Education Degrees in the Czech Republic and Germany

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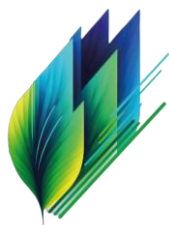
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Abstract

The dissolution of the normal biography, a process that began in the early 1970s and continues to the present (cf. Kohli, 1986), refers to social change and transformation. This change is negotiated under terms such as risk society, reflexive modernity and individualisation (cf. Albrow, 1996; Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1990) and is also reflected in the world of work and learning. Thus, a large number of people no longer stay in one occupational field throughout their lives but may change their occupation (in many ways). This can be seen in the increasing numbers of mature students (adult learners) in the Czech Republic and Germany - defined as those who are older than "ordinary students" at the start of their studies and who have not taken up studies directly after completing secondary school, but have already completed vocational training, for example. The Czech Republic's and Germany's educational systems have many traits in common. Still, there are also significant differences - the major one for mature students is the necessity to have the upper-secondary leaving exam certificate to enter higher education in the Czech Republic. In contrast, in Germany, there are alternative pathways to it. Because of entering higher education later in life, mature students typically have a broader range of life experiences, including professional, familial, and personal challenges. Their "educational and working life pathways are diverse" (Siivonen & Filander, 2020, p. 2). The concepts of biographical learning and biographical work were introduced to study those non-normative trajectories and will be used in this study. This paper's aim is to combine a biographical perspective with a comparative angle on how mature learners' previous biographical experiences affect their work experiences in two neighbouring countries.

Methodology

The dataset is built from two research projects with biographical interviews with mature learners. The biographical interviews were based on the biographic narrative interview method (BNIM) that was developed mainly by Schütze (1992), Rosenthal (2004) and Wengraf (2011). The research sample consisted of mature students enrolled in education degree programs in Germany and the Czech Republic. For the aims of this analysis, we picked from this broader sample those who were, at the time of the interviews, already working in their field as teachers of different levels of the education system. To analyse the data, we employed



holistic content narrative analysis (Lieblich et al. 1998). We present our results by contrasting two cases (one from each dataset).

(Expected) Results / Conclusions

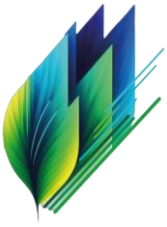
The results show that the professional views and perspectives of the trainee teachers - from both datasets - are highly influenced by their biographical experiences. However, there are also differences in location-bounded and how certain actions are anticipated with specific pupils. These result from different experiences but are framed by the specific Czech and German education systems and the resulting opportunities for mature students. To conclude, the biographical experiences were shaped by the structure of two different educational systems. For professionals in education, biographical learning and biographical work are crucial for enabling them to explore and shine more light on how they were shaped by their educational trajectory in order not to let those influences unintentionally and unconsciously influence their workplace learning. Teaching more biographically oriented methods in higher education can be a valuable professionalisation tool not only for teaching professions.

Relevance to research field of work and learning

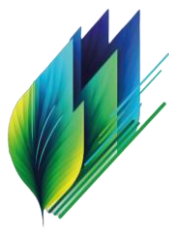
The results of this paper show how the biographical experiences with education are reflected in the professional views and behaviours of workers in education. By doing so, they indicate links between biographical learning and workplace learning. Also, Hodkinson et al. (2016) pointed out four overlapping dimensions between workplace learning and individual biographies and, therefore, biographical learning. Evans et al. (2004) explored those dimensions as tacit knowledge and skills in learner biographies outside the qualification or training setting but didn't consider the broadest biographical context. What is, therefore, specific in this study is that for mature learners in education degrees, the type of workplace where they work now was, for a long time, part of their educational trajectory when they were pupils and later students in higher education. It has shaped their current professional views. Moreover, it was shaped by the specificities of the country's educational system and the historical time. This paper investigated how those links can be reflected in the biographical narration.

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Researching work and learning in times of change

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Rationale

The wicked research field of elderly care

Elderly care is under pressure due to triple challenges of an aging population, costly technology and rising public expectations regarding the quality of health and care services (Bevan, 2012). Hence, the elderly care sector is subject to continuing development, and the wide range of organizational, managerial, and educational initiatives makes it an interesting field of research (Bringselius, 2021; Kamp & Hvid, 2012;), when researching work and learning in times of change.

In the Global North, the quality in elderly care is sought regulated and standardized by importing New Public Management strategies (Dahl, 2009; Villadsen, 2022). However, it seems to exclude experiences from practice and to hinder space and time for learning (Dybbroe, 2008), and to privilege reproductive learning logics and a a-priori-knowledge base over developmental learning logics and experience-based knowledge (Ellström et al., 2008; Møller & Rohwedder, forthcoming). Also, there is a lack of research addressing learning perspectives in elderly care (Møller et al. 2021).

The above exemplifies that the elderly care sector is challenged by what Rittel and Webber (1973) define as wicked problems. Wicked problems cannot be solved once and for all by mono-disciplines. They require ongoing collaboration and learning due to their unstable character, systemic nature, and dependency on various stakeholders (Wegener et al., 2021). In exploration of issues relevant in the research of work and learning in elderly care, a new Nordic, inter-disciplinary research community was formed, funded by the Independent Research Fund Denmark (project no. 1147-00007B). From this work, the symposium presents three learning perspectives on the handling of wicked problems in elderly care:

1. How are wicked problems played out in the micro-systems in care work, and how can frontline workers address wicked problems as a driver for learning?



2. How to develop leadership to facilitate learning and organizational capacity building?
3. How to understand the concept of 'expansive learning environment' in elderly care?

Presentations / Papers

Wicked problems as triggers for learning – a micro-perspective on co-production in care work.

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This 'Wicked problems' is a concept commonly used to describe types of societal problems at macro-organizational, interorganizational and policy levels (Rittel & Webber, 1973). The agenda of the presentation is however to explore how wicked problems are played out in micro-systems in care work practices and handled through co-production. The concept of co-production refers to collaborative approaches going beyond traditional service delivery models by involving service users and other stakeholders to jointly create and deliver public services (Osborne et al., 2016).

The presentation takes off from a theoretical paper on wicked problems and co-production using qualitative vignettes, which have shown to be helpful when exploring complex issues (Jackson et al., 2015). The qualitative vignettes are based on the voice of elderly people, and their experiences with the quality of work and the interactions in the professional micro-system of their everyday life. The study takes a learning perspective on wicked problems and is inspired by the pragmatic conceptualization of experiences as framed by Dewey (1916).

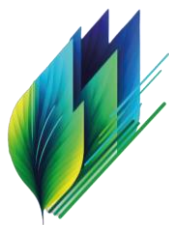
The study shows that wicked problems are embedded in everyday care work, and that the wickedness adds an uncertainty to care work, as the professionals must adjust themselves to the needs and dignity of the elderly person and as different interests in the performed quality are at stake. Further, the study shows that uncertainty and wickedness can serve as a trigger for a kind of learning that is in proximity to situations and problems faced in daily work. Hence it is important that education to care work focuses beyond more basic problems of for example self-care and prepares future professionals to collaboratively address wicked problems.

Leadership in elderly care – the implications of a neglected organizational cornerstone

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The eldercare sector is undergoing dramatic changes these years, as new paradigms, rationalities and not least new types of organizing are introduced. The movement is motivated by the increasing acknowledgement that the current way of operating in the eldercare sector is no longer sustainable (Thomassen & Jørgensen, 2021). The list of wicked problems to be solved is long, whereas the list of solution is much shorter.



When solutions are discussed, focus is primarily on how to change and develop the daily practice of the social and healthcare workers – absent is the discussion of the managements' role (Bringselius, 2021) in developing the elder care sector into being capable of providing quality elder care in a future of high complexity.

Rohwedder and Thomassen (2023) problematize the absence of focus on management in the (Danish) debate regarding the development of the elder care sector, as management has a decisive role in developing the conditions and possibilities for new ways of 1) organizing and 2) developing the competences of the elder care workers to handle increasing complexity.

As research on management impact on developing sustainable elderly care is scarce, this paper focuses on the dilemmas, challenges, potentials, and not least possibilities experienced by managers working in diverse areas of the elder care sector. Through the lens of pragmatic learning theory (Dewey, 1916) and organizational capacity building (Krogstrup, 2017), the objective is, besides gaining a deeper understanding of previously mentioned issues, to discuss possible new pathway for developing a sustainable eldercare sector.

How to understand the concept of 'expansive learning environment' in elderly care?

Charlotte Wegener¹, Rita Solbakken² & Cecilie Høj Anvik²

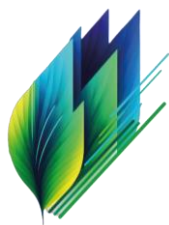
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Worker recruitment, retainment, and upskilling are interwoven challenges in the elderly care field. Although these are priorities in both Norway and Denmark, the complex demands, and treatment of healthcare students and licensed practical nurses (LPNs) is complicating the fulfillment of such goals. A richer account of learning environments, vocational education, and experiences of care work is necessary to provide a competent and reliable workforce for the future. Responding to the urgent need to attract and retain qualified elderly care staff, a core objective of a newly launched project, LABCare, is to explore how conditions for learning may be enhanced through collaborative arrangements between vocational education and municipal employers. Built around the concept of Expansive Learning Environments (ELE) (Fuller & Unwin, 2004), the project proposes an interdisciplinary, comparative study that extends across demographic and national boundaries. An ELE is characterized by horizontal, cross-boundary activity, dialogue, and problem-solving practices, while a restrictive environment, on the other hand, is characterized by narrowly defined jobs, fragmented tasks, and limited movements through time and space. Care work has recently been examined in relation to this framework (Ellström et al., 2008), but an overall framework with designable features applicable to elderly care learning environments has not yet been developed. In this part of the symposium, we engage in a discussion of the applicability of the expansive-restrictive framework to the field of elderly care work and education. The aim is to move towards a context sensitive understanding of ELE which will shed new light on a longstanding matter of how best to provide for learning for all participants in elderly care practices.

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Symposium

Student perspectives on education-to-work transitions

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Alison Taylor, University of British Columbia, Canada

Jelena Popov, University of Copenhagen, Denmark & University College London, UK

Chair:

Helena Colliander, Linköping university, Sweden

Rationale

That today's young people lack necessary employability skills and are insufficiently 'job ready' on leaving education has been a dominant political discourse within Western societies for nearly

50 years. This symposium brings together papers that address the issue of how young people are "prepared for work" through their university classes, internships, term-time work, and the broader range of experiences they undergo as they transition to adulthood. The notion of preparation for work includes ideas about how young people from diverse backgrounds plan for careers and develop professional dispositions, but also how they learn about work, what they value and their understandings of what is valued by employers. This symposium draws on insights from the UK and Canada to explore the variety of understandings, experiences and strategies that young people learn, undergo and deploy in their transitions to work. The papers

highlight the voice of students themselves in these processes and their views on the range of influences that support, hinder or change their varied transitions. The papers depict the forms of expertise that young people feel that they build to become 'work ready' through their journey through education to work. Our symposium reflects on contemporary changes to work, from new technologies, such as AI to global upheaval and how the systems that support young people are responding and adapting to new challenges.

Presentations / Papers

Becoming 'Work-Ready': The Role of Undergraduate Curriculum and Immaterial Expertise in the Transition to Work

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'Work readiness' is a contested term. This paper problematises the *sui generis* global 'employability' skills discourse by exploring alumni's whole experience at university, beyond the formal learning outcomes from their degrees, and how their experience currently, or could better include them in practices of community (Gherardi 2009; Wilde and Guile 2021). Although many universities seek to integrate the development of soft skills into the curriculum and to work with



industry on curriculum development, dissatisfaction with graduates' preparedness for work continues across a range of work sectors (Succi & Canovi, 2020). Graduates recognize this gap too. In an internal 2019/20 Graduate Survey, only 64.4% of graduates agreed that "I am using what I learnt in my studies in my current activity". Professional learning researchers recognise that degree knowledge and skills are a resource that will need to be continually 'recontextualised' (i.e. contextualised, modified and adapted) in the workplace rather than 'transferred' and 'applied' at work (Guile 2019). Through interview data and diary entries from alumni and students (n=30), this paper documents how alumni experience this process of recontextualisation by presenting their reflections on their university experience, job searching strategies and transitions to work. It contributes to the field of work and learning by presenting the concept of 'immaterial expertise', a concept that aims to incorporate situated approaches to work and learning by focusing on labour that might not form part of a balance sheet or in a curriculum, but is nevertheless vital for getting the job done, and reflecting on the ways in which higher education curriculums support the development of this form of expert labour (Wilde and Guile 2021; Guile and Wilde 2018).

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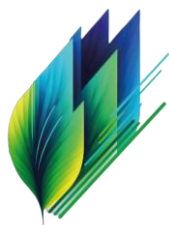
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Learning to juggle' through everyday school-work transitions

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The range of influences on university students' dispositions toward work include prior work, families, term-time work, academic courses, and other work-integrated learning experiences. Literature on professional learning tends to focus on the dispositions that student develop through work-integrated or practice-based learning (e.g., Kennedy et al. 2015). While this research is important, this paper expands the conversation by exploring some of the other influences. In particular, I look at how undergraduate students' reflections on their high school work, university term-time work, and family stories about work contribute to their evolving dispositions toward work and career. My discussion draws on selected qualitative data from a diverse sub-sample of students involved in the Hard Working Student (HWS) research study, which followed 57 undergraduate students at a research-intensive Canadian university over three years. Multi-modal qualitative data collection included focus group interviews, life maps, and audio diaries. This yielded a rich dataset from which portraits of students were developed.



Preliminary analysis suggests that students often trace their work ethic to parents and parental expectations influence their horizons for action. For many, high school employment contributes to their identity as student-workers. Finally, students' experiences in paid and unpaid term-time work (whether related to career aspirations or not) noticeably shapes their dispositions toward work in general and career work in particular. The forms and force of these influences on students' ideas about work reflect socio-demographic differences. This paper contributes to research literature on work and learning by elaborating how students' dispositions toward work and career evolve over time. It contributes to research in higher education that centres student voices (in their diversity) and recognizes the relational nature of students' histories and imagined futures (Black & Walsh, 2021).

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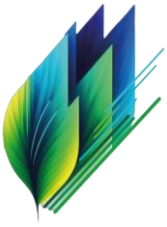
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Learning in unaccredited internships as developing 'horizontal expertise'

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In the contemporary context of education to work transitions, internship has become a more versatile workplace learning setting than strictly a preparation for a profession (Billett 2008). It has been suggested recently that unaccredited internship can be seen as a separate work activity from accredited work placements that needs to be examined in its own right (Guile and Lahiff 2022). The aim of this article is to contribute to an emerging field of learning in unaccredited internship by focusing on the learning challenges that arise in unaccredited internship and the capacities that interns develop as a result of tackling the challenges. To that end, I identify a set of analytical concepts from vocational learning literature rooted in the ideas of sociocultural and cultural-historical activity theory such as boundary-crossing, recontextualisation and identity re-negotiation as resources for thinking about the challenges associated with learning in unaccredited internship. I then draw on these ideas to analyse the discourse on unaccredited internships from five focus groups with University students and recent graduates (n=15) using dialogical methodology (Markova et al 2003). I show that the interns were learning about occupation, the workplace and themselves and as a result they were able to transform old and engage in new activities. I suggest that interns develop an emerging capacity to learn and work competently across multiple contexts and to initiate and coordinate subsequent cycles of boundary-crossing between education and work. I call this "interns' horizontal expertise". The paper explains how the notion of interns' horizontal expertise is informed by the existing concepts of horizontal expertise of seasoned professionals in inter-professional activities and boundary-crossing in work placements (e.g. Engeström et al. 1995; Beach 2003; Bakker and Akkerman 2017) but can also be seen as a distinctive additional facet of horizontal expertise.



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*Professional work
and learning*



Paper 39

Analysing interactional practices with colleagues in early childhood education : shifts between assessment and support for professional development

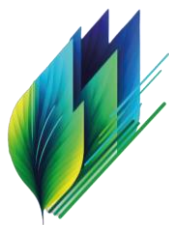
Marianne Zogmal
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Abstract

This contribution explores the transformations observed during the successive phases of training sessions in which early childhood educators learn to analyse self-collected videotaped interactions at work (Filliettaz, 2013, 2022). These educators are in charge of guiding and counselling their colleagues in the implementation of an early language development program within childcare facilities. Therefore, educators are potentially both objects and agents of analyses on professional practice. The analyses of the film during the training sessions focus on the different participants visible in the video recordings. With regard to the children, educators try to identify how to support the linguistic competences of children having little language production and to increase their opportunities to engage in interactions. As far as the educators are concerned, the analyses discuss professional practices which are considered as inefficient or inadequate to reach their educational goals. The analytical process therefore involves an assessment of professional practices accomplished by colleagues. However, participants in the training course carefully avoid to make judgements about their colleagues by adopting an asymmetrical position as experts.

The aim of this contribution is to explore the training process and to understand how the oscillations between assessment practices and professional development support change in practice over time, during different phases of the training. In order to study the discussions during these training sessions, this contribution adopts a multidisciplinary approach, based on the research from the micro-sociology of everyday life (Goffman, 1961), ethnomethodology (Garfinkel, 1967) and conversational analysis (Schegloff, 2007). In multi-participant situations in ever-changing contexts, encounters involve more than accomplishing actions. Processes of "meaning-making" (Kress & al., 2001) make it possible to share and co-construct knowledge and different points of view. The interweaving of verbal language, mimics, gestures and body positioning as well as the use of materials constitute multimodal resources for mutual adjustment. The modalities of participation of the interactants make it possible to study their respective positioning.

An analysis of interactions can be used in training, following collective research approaches, known as "data sessions" (Harris et al. 2012; Stevanovic & Weiste, 2017). Such approaches give insight how video-based interaction analysis can be understood and recognised in social sciences not only as a research method, but also as a "pedagogical institution" supporting learning and professional development. In the training sessions presented in this contribution, « data sessions » based on the principles of conversation analysis are used by



practitioners in vocational training contexts to facilitate the development of their interactional competences (Filliettaz, Garcia & Zogmal, 2022).

The empirical analysis focuses not only on evaluative statements, but also on the mitigation and implicit nature of evaluative arguments. It investigates various video extracts of the training sessions that form a training trajectory and observes the changes that occur over time. The research questions relate to a) how and when, through their interactional activity in training, educators orient their attention to the professional practice of their colleagues; b) how they position themselves with respect to the professional practice visible in the video and discussed within the group; c) how these positions change over time and collectively within the training group 4) how participants' attention to the risks of evaluative practices may be facilitated by the training device itself.

Based on these observations, the paper reflects on the interactional methods used to avoid judgmental attitudes and asymmetrical positionings. More generally, the objective of this paper is to illustrate how, by engaging in a collective and guided analytic experience based on audio-video recordings of ordinary work interactions and multimodal transcripts, practitioners may become more reflexive about the role of language and interaction in the accomplishment of professional practice.

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Paper 40

Professional learning to transform multiple aspects of a school: Outcomes of a suite of Change Laboratories

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Abstract

This study is framed within Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT). Consistent with CHAT's commitment to promoting meaningful change through research, the study adopted a formative intervention approach. In formative interventions researchers work with participants to promote change, without knowing what that change should be in advance. The Change Laboratory is an established approach to formative intervention, based on the theory of expansive learning. Expansive learning is not about existing knowledge being transferred but about professionals learning what is 'not yet there' (Engeström 2016), creating culturally new practices, artefacts and concepts (Engeström 2022). Increasingly complex understandings of the object of activity create new possibilities for acting. The object of an activity is that towards which actions are directed, the thing those involved are working on (Engeström 2016).

The analysis traced expansive learning, systemic contradictions, the emergence of agency through double stimulation (after Sannino, 2015), including warping actions (a metaphor to understand how participants move themselves out of stasis by throwing and pulling on particular anchors, Sannino 2022). Germ cells and ascent from the abstract to the concrete (Engeström 2020) were also folded into the analysis.

Methods

The research was conducted in one Pre-school to grade 12 school in Sydney, Australia. The school established four groups of teachers and school leaders, each with a distinct aim: To revitalise Grade 9, recognising issues in student disengagement at this time; To support co-curricular participation among students and enhance the quality of activities they participate in; To support effective approaches to learning and wellbeing in International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma program (final two years of school), recognising students struggling with academic pressure; To support effective student approaches to learning and wellbeing in the High School Certificate (a parallel program also in the final two years), recognising false perceptions of this being academically 'lower' and the need to help students lift their independence as learners.

Two additional Change Laboratories were later added: one focused on how dedicated Learning Support worked with classroom teachers in Pre-school to Grade 6; and one focused on reporting and feedback – a whole-of-school issue.

Each Change Laboratory consisted of between three and five participants (school leaders and teachers), except the reporting one, where there were more than 20



participants. The groups met once per term for two years (8 workshops in total). Workshops were audio recorded and transcribed.

Results

Significant change was accomplished in each group. The presentation will outline how systemic contradictions were identified and resolved, how conflicts of motives were escaped by developing new motives, kedge anchors that were pulled on, and germ cells that developed from initial ideas to multi-faceted concrete forms. One example is given here, relating to the High School Certificate (HSC), the final examination students take in Grade 12. Contradictions were found between tools and object, wherein representations of HSC successes linked to exam results (exchange value) contradicted the purpose seen by the school, which was for the HSC to allow students to reach valuable destinations later in life (use value). A second contradiction was between rules/norms and the object, where students, parents and staff tended to have lower, less academic expectations of HSC students (compared to those taking the International Baccalaureate pathway). This was understood as a conflict between motives students had to coast through the 'easy' HSC, versus those to commit and grow through choices linked to their passions. A germ cell model identified a critical action as 'driving *your* HSC not drifting *the* HSC in which students took responsibility for a variety of choices and practices. This established the HSC as a passion pathway toward valued destinations.

Relevance to the field of work and learning

This study is unusual in the co-presence of multiple two-year change laboratories within the same institution. It also extends the use of change laboratories to foster significant change in schools (eg. Bal et al 2019), focusing on new aspects (eg. Bal et al 2019). Analytically, the study brings together TADS, including recent developments relating to kedge anchors, and the germ cell as related to formative interventions (Engeström 2020). Framed in this way, it contributes to understandings of how agency can be facilitated pedagogically (Engeström et al 2022), putting theory to work 'dangerously' (Stetsenko 2020b) in a spirit of moving towards futures that are better than the status quo. In this case, these futures related to Grade 9 students (a time when disengagement from schooling and school work can peak), wider aspects of education beyond formal subjects, and growing succeeding as learners with wellbeing intact towards the end of secondary school.

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Paper 41

School Leaders' Professional Learning in Swedish Municipal Adult Education – Improving Their Pedagogical Leadership through Action Research

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Abstract

Swedish municipal adult education, MAE, is facing severe challenges in terms of quality, and there is a call for research from a school improvement perspective (Mufic & Fejes, 2020). This paper aims to meet this call, and reports on a study that focused on school leaders in MAE and their professional learning about their pedagogical leadership practices while initiating local school improvement using action research.

The study has been conducted in the context of a one-year advanced continuing professional development course organised by Karlstad University in 2021 – 2022, in collaboration with Mid Sweden University and Stockholm University. The course was developed for and directed towards school leaders in Swedish MAE specifically, as requested by the Swedish National Agency for Education. The content of the course focused on the research field of adult education and school improvement, pedagogical leadership, theories of leadership practice, leading school improvement based on scientific foundation and proven experience, in accordance with the Swedish education act (SFS 2010:800, chapter 1 §5) and action research. As there is no coherent definition of leading schools based on scientific foundation and proven experience (Forssten Seiser, 2019) or school leaders' pedagogical leadership (Grice, Forssten Seiser & Wilkinson, 2023), the course was set up as an action research project and aimed to explore, collectively as well as individually, MAE school leaders' pedagogical leadership while initiating local school improvement, based on local challenges, using action research. Teaching included group as well as individual supervision. Towards the end of the course, the school leaders wrote individual articles about their local action research processes and reflected on the influence of their pedagogical leadership practices on other practices and how changing the former may enable local school improvement processes. The purpose of the study is to explore MAE school leaders' professional learning about their pedagogical leadership during the course through the lens of theory of practice architecture (Kemmis et al, 2014). The research questions are:

- *What constitutes MAE school leaders' practice architecture as pedagogical leaders while initiating local school improvement?*
- *What insights did the school leaders have into their pedagogical leadership of what enables and constrains their local school improvement efforts?*



Method

Qualitative data consist of seven school leaders' individual written reports. Data were coded into sayings, doings, and relatings in accordance with the theory of practice architecture (Kemmis et al., 2014). The analysis focused on the interrelatedness between arrangements related to sayings, doing, and relatings, in which the practice architecture and its enabling as well as constraining traits emerged.

Expected Results

Expected findings reveal a practice architecture in which enabling and constraining traits seem to be mostly influenced by social-political arrangements. In particular, school leaders' views of themselves as pedagogical leaders, how they relate to the legal demand to lead education based on scientific foundation and proven experience, and how they understand action research as an approach to school improvement influence their leadership practices. Desired school improvement is constrained by school leaders' interpretation of pedagogical leadership as equivalent to instructional leadership. Contrastingly, school improvement is enabled by school leaders who interpret pedagogical leadership as setting the arrangements for other professions to become co-owners of the improvement process. The most significant aspect of the school leaders' professional learning in the course may be their insights into the importance of making arrangements to pave the way for school improvement, then stepping back and allowing other professions to take the lead, and still remaining active in the process. Results may be discussed in relation to Kemmis' (2023) idea of the mosaic of leadership.

Conclusions

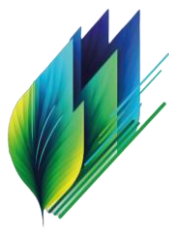
By understanding their pedagogical leadership as system players, MAE school leaders influence practices within local MAE in a way that reinforces the professionalisation process of the teaching profession.

Relevance to the research field of work and learning

The study contributes to the research field of work and learning by illuminating MAE school leaders' professional learning and its potential influence on other practices that altogether have an impact on quality within local MAE.

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Paper 42

Time and its influence on the work and learning of course directors in higher education

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Abstract

Time has been acknowledged as being a part of workplace learning and learning across the lifespan, yet there is little empirical research that explores the multiple aspects of time that shape learning at and for work. Within the broader workplace learning literature, time has often been conceptualised as a singular notion and as a unit of measure and has more recently expanded to encompass multiple aspects and factors that make up 'time in learning'. Recent conceptualisations of time and learning have focused on learning as change across time with respect to learning across the life span (Goh, 2022). Others have taken up practice approaches to consider the 'temporal organisation of social life' and ideas around 'temporal rhythms' (Blue, 2019, p. 922). Further, Hopwood (2014, 2016) has written about time as one of the four essential dimensions of workplace learning. This paper presents empirical evidence of the multi-faceted nature of time and learning in the context of work, where time is foregrounded as a critical yet often overlooked part of learning at and for work. Framed by a practice orientation, this paper draws on evidence from a study that investigated the work and learning, of course, directors in higher education to explore the various aspects of time and their impact on work and learning.

Eight course directors (academics responsible for a degree program) were interviewed virtually via an online video-conferencing platform using the Interview to the Double method (Nicolini, 2009) and interviews were recorded then transcribed verbatim. The participants were drawn from across four faculties within an Australian university with varying levels of experience as course directors – some being new to the role and some having a number of years' experience. Whole transcripts were used to undertake a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Of the themes that were evident in the interview transcripts, time emerged as a key one, with all interview participants noting various aspects of time and the role it played in their work and learning how to do their job. After the initial analysis, the theme of time was explored in greater detail, again using a thematic analysis approach, to explore sub-themes within the broader theme of time and to develop vignettes to highlight the various aspects of time influencing course director's roles.

Evidence from the interviews with course directors showed how time is a multi-faceted concept in learning and surfaced the critical importance of time in considering work and learning. More than just a measure, time was a key influence on both work and learning for course directors and it was experienced differently by different people depending on their own prior experiences and the arrangements at their site of work. Time limited appointments to the job of course



director, lack of time for formal professional development, an expectation to learn quickly and ‘just in time’, and limited time to learn a new job were all important factors in learning at and for work for course directors and shaped their approaches to learning the role. Moreover, other aspects of time such as learning to manage and balance demands on one’s time in a new role, learning the rhythms of a new role, and balancing the course director role with an academic position also played an important part in shaping experiences of working and learning for course directors. There were various drivers of time evident from the interviews, with time and its use being driven or influenced by the individual course director, the team within which the course director worked, the faculty and institution, and also the needs of students within the courses. Within contexts of new public management in higher education (Hood, 1991) and the adoption of management approaches from the corporate sector (Birnbaum, 2000) time was also influenced by the business aspects of the role and rhythms of the higher education “market” and the need to recruit and retain students.

Including time as an important part of work and learning brings an additional dimension and complexity to both the study of work and learning and the practical support provided to course directors in their role. Current approaches to supporting learning for course directors, and those in similar roles, such as professional development workshops, are called into question by the evidence presented in this paper. Traditional, more formal, approaches to learning tend to themselves be time-bound and not necessarily provided at a point in time most useful to the learner. Moreover, a focus on specific skills, while necessary, is insufficient and may not be serving course directors well. Taking a practice approach also opens up new avenues in considering work and learning, providing a lens through which work and learning can be considered as site specific rather than focused on a role that may differ across faculties or departments depending on the arrangements at the site of practice. Course directors, and those who support their learning, therefore need a more emergent view of the practices of work and learning that is specific to the site of work rather than a focus on skills and procedures.

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Split shifts in home care and the concept of working time: a qualitative study from Austria

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Abstract

One of the many ways used to make labor flexibly available and cost-effective is to divide the working day using split shifts. Split shifts are working shifts that are interrupted by a period of unpaid time of varying duration. In this qualitative study on the home care sector in Austria, we investigate the workers' experiences of split shifts as example of fragmented work and atypical working times. To shed light on the experience of fragmented working time, our contribution focuses on *the unpaid interruption between two shifts* as a central element of this working time model. The theoretical framework for our research is set up by three approaches: an extended definition of work, a phenomenological perspective on life worlds, and, at the center, a critical discussion of the complex temporalities of work.

Methods / Methodology:

We opted for an interpretative methodology that relies on a triangulation of methods and draws on the constructivist grounded theory approach of Charmaz (2014). We chose interpretive social research because it enables the reconstruction of people's constructions of meanings and actions, as well as the contexts in which these take place (Keller and Clarke 2018).

We conducted three organizational case studies of Austrian care institutions. To approach the life worlds and experiences of the care workers, as well as the organizational and regulatory aspects, we combined several different methods of data collection: open-ended qualitative interviews with loose guidelines, semi-structured expert interviews, observations of work settings and interactions, and document analyses (most importantly, of collective agreements).

Results / Conclusions:

On an empirical level, the findings show that split shifts imply severe challenges for the workers in their lifeworlds. On a conceptual level, the research emphasizes the need to consider complex and subjective dimensions of time in researching working times. Adopting approaches to time that consider both the organization of work and the workers' experiences (Glucksmann 2005), as well as the subjective character of time (Shipp and Jansen 2021), our findings suggest that even seemingly clear delineations between work and non-work time are in fact fragile and ambivalent. In that sense, the interruption between the two shifts in split shift work is neither work nor real leisure. This points to a perspective on time that challenges a clear-cut linear, chronological understanding, but states that time has many more dimensions than the dominant linear clock-time concept is able to capture.



Relevance to research field of work and learning:

Split shifts are currently a widespread means of work organization, yet little is known about what this working time arrangement implies for the workers' experience of their jobs, their time, and their everyday lives. This lack of knowledge on split shift work in the literature on work is surprising, as split shifts are relevant in the context of much discussed topics such as shift work, unsocial working times, and the fragmentation of employment. Moreover, split shifts are common in many countries.

On the basis of the empirical results, a theoretical and conceptual contribution is being made by emphasizing the importance of the subjective dimension of time and by taking into account the non-linear, non-standard notions of temporality for organizing work. With regard to the field of learning, our research indicates that in the context of working split shifts, some organizational learning is transferred to the employees. To categorize and utilize the diffuse temporality of the interruption as a form of leisure, care workers must learn to mentally distance themselves from the omnipresence of employment and the following shift work. This ability to set boundaries is a prerequisite for care workers to use the unpaid interruption between two shifts as necessary regeneration time.

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Paper 44

Professional Learning in High-pressure, Time-sensitive, and Unpredictable Scenarios

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Abstract

This paper delves into the intricate realm of learning within crisis management organizations, specifically focusing on the incident command structure (ICS). ICS is an internationally widespread approach to deal with crisis and extreme events (Bigley & Roberts, 2001). ICS work presents a distinctive case of professional learning as it occurs in high-pressure, time-sensitive, and unpredictable scenarios. This work is heavily routinized and provides limited room for individual discretion, reflection, or discussion, which are typically considered prerequisites for professional learning. This tension between urgency and long-term resilience in crisis management organizations is a central challenge, and the study explores how fast-response public organizations address this dilemma through scenario training. We aim to answer the following research question: How can learning be facilitated in high-pressure, time-sensitive, and unpredictable scenarios?

To answer our research question, we study organizations that are vital for society's safety in times of uncertainty and change. The research examines how participants in three diverse crisis management organizations (military, police, and county administrative board in Sweden) learn to function effectively within the highly routinized ICS. As the ICS emphasizes standardization and coordination, it provides a suitable backdrop for studying how participants learn in these contexts. Drawing inspiration from practice theory (Schatzki, 2005), theories of participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991), and organizational routines (Kremser et al., 2019), this study seeks to shed light on the complex nature of learning in high-pressure, time-sensitive, and unpredictable scenarios. Through these perspectives, the study takes into account the nuanced and situated aspects of learning within the context of incident command work.

The study employs fieldwork conducted during training sessions, allowing for a comparative analysis to distinguish universal ICS features from organization-specific elements. The data from our field work encompasses scenario training sessions in each organization (two military, two police, and one county administrative board), done by two researchers simultaneously, and each scenario have played out over 2-5 days (A total of ~288h observational data). In addition, 18 semi-structured interviews and documents from the organizations supplements the data.



Analysis of the data will take place during the winter of 2023-2024. Preliminary findings show, for instance, that instructors are constantly switching between approaches to learning. They move from providing pressure and stressing the participants, to reflective discussion and analysis. This entails different ideas of a “proximal zone of development” that are held by the instructors. Another central observation concerns how time and place matters in how the scenarios are made “real” or “realistic”. This also entails the views on what the future crisis will be, where participants shape the ideas of future from their experience of the past. The study advocates for a perspective on learning that encompasses the intricacies of human interaction and considers various factors such as power dynamics and material arrangements. By adopting a participation perspective on learning, which views learning as inherently social and situated, this research seeks to address the complexity of acquiring routines in organizations, particularly within the unique context of crisis management.

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Paper 45

The Ideal-typical Professional Identities of Human Resource Practitioners

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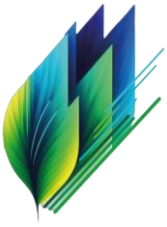
Abstract

Modern organisations increasingly demand that HR practitioners adapt to roles such as strategic advisors, change makers, and business partners (Ulrich, 2020), requiring a broad set of skills and knowledge due to complexities introduced by digitalisation, including HR analytics, artificial intelligence, and automation (McCartney et al., 2021; Persson & Wallo, 2022). This evolution underscores HR's critical role in guiding organisational strategy and managing people-related issues (Rivers, 2019). However, there is a notable gap in understanding how HR professionals perceive their roles amidst these shifts and construct their professional identities within strategic HR management and organisational change (Syrigou & Williams, 2023). This gap is significant for two reasons: it highlights the challenge HR practitioners face in navigating the evolving HR landscape and aligning with organisational objectives, and it points to the limitations of current HRM models, which often fail to capture the nuanced realities of HR practice, including role conflicts and the dynamic nature of the field (Keegan et al., 2018).

This paper aims to contribute knowledge about different professional identities represented among HR practitioners, from Weber's 'ideal types' framework. Ideal types are not representations of reality but rather a portrayal of typical traits of a phenomenon (Eliaeson, 2000). While there has been limited research on the professional identity formation of HR practitioners, even fewer studies have centred on the practitioners' own perceptions and daily experiences.

The empirical material used in the study consists of 34 qualitative semi-structured interviews with HR practitioners in public and private Swedish organisations. The theoretical framework is grounded in Weber's (1949) ideal types (cf. Stapley et al., 2022), which still today proves relevant for analysing empirical contexts (Swedberg, 2018) concerning for example individuals' positions in organisations (Frederiksen et al., 2020). Drawing also on Jenkins' (2000) insights on social categorisation, this study employs a qualitative thematic analysis to discern the professional identities of HR practitioners.

The findings reveal that the studied HR practitioners perceive and handle the unclear and indistinct role of HR by learning and constructing three forms of professional identities in relation to it. The identities represented are ideal types



(Weber, 1949), which implies that they represent typical traits of an identity type and should not be confused with ideal or desirable traits.

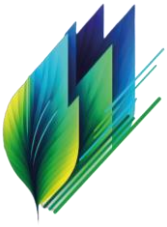
HR identities relate to how the HR-practitioners understand their everyday practice, what they do and for who they do it, and are presented in the form of ideal types. The characteristic of each ideal type differs from the others, and part of identity formation lies in categorising oneself and others to define who we are as well as who we are not (Jenkins, 2000).

The three ideal types learned and constructed among the HR practitioners are “the Driver”, “the Defender”, and “the Disturber”. Firstly, there is the “driver”, a type of HR practitioner focusing on organisational profits. The driver identifies as a business partner and an efficiency and organisational expansion advocate. The driver also distances oneself from an abstract, soft, and relation-oriented HR identity. Secondly, there is the “defender”, who works first and foremost to defend the interests of the managers. The defenders see themselves as someone whose mission is to facilitate the work of the managers and thus disidentifies with HR practitioners who questions the managers, making their life more complicated. Thirdly, there is the “disturber”, who is not afraid to challenge the managers to defend the interests of the employees. This ideal type can be understood as somewhat of an opposite to the defender as the disturber does not want to be seen as someone who constantly supports and unreflectively serves the managers. Instead, the disturber takes responsibility for ensuring the rights of the employees and dares to question or inform the managers when needed.

In the paper, a conceptual model illuminates our theoretical contribution of defining these three ideal-type professional identities and relating them to HR practitioners’ social categorisations of themselves and others regarding who they wish to be and who they distance themselves from. This model provides a deeper understanding of how the loosely defined role of HR practitioners is handled, as HR practitioners learn about various expectations from different stakeholders, such as employees, managers, and organisational leaders. The model can be used as a pedagogical tool in HR education and organisations employing HR practitioners to facilitate discussions and reflections about their work and identity. For example, HR students’ may discuss how they, in their future practice, would like to handle their professional role and practice in relation to the ideal types. It may also inform organisations about HR work policies to better support HR practitioners’ working environment and social roles. The model presenting the different ideal type identities is not normative, nor does it represent the ideal traits of an HR practitioner. Instead, they illuminate and reveal the characteristic traits of three different ideal types. However, the model considers the demanding process of navigating between different stakeholder needs, which other models have been criticised for lacking (O’Brien and Linehan, 2014). This model might inform further research on how it responds to HR practitioners within different geographical settings and organisational cultures. Moreover, continued research might study other professional groups to see if the ideal-type model is also relevant in other professional contexts.

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HR professionals work with diversity and inclusion in organisations

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Abstract

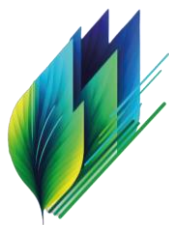
This paper explores HR professionals work with diversity and inclusion (D&I) in organisations. Many organisations claim the importance of having a diverse staff composition when it comes to observable aspects such as gender, ethnicity and age and non-observables, aspects such as culture, cognition and education. However, research also focus on the importance of inclusion, i.e. employees' experiences that their unique contributions to the organization are valued, that their participation is encouraged (Shore et. al 2011; Shore et. al 2018) suggests that inclusion is important conditions for both individuals to learn and develop and for organisations to perform better.

Enhancing diversity has on an organisational level, usually been addressed through different recruitment strategies and practices, and research show that HR professionals perceive challenges with recruiting underrepresented groups (Osman & Thunborg, 2019) but most studies of inclusion have focus on managers and their work.

The aim of this paper is therefore to explore and understand HR professionals' work with diversity and inclusion in different organisational practices. Moreover, we elaborate on the following questions:

- How are HR professionals involved in the work with diversity and inclusion in different organisational practices?
- What consequences do their involvement have on enhancing diversity and inclusion in the organisations?

To explore and understand HR-professionals' work with diversity and inclusion, the paper takes its point of departure in a practice perspective (Buch, et al, 2015) elaborating on organizing (Czarniawska, 2014, sense-making (Weick, 1995) and identity (Thunborg, 2016) as central concepts. Practice here refers to what different actors do and say in their work with diversity and inclusion and how this work become part of everyday work with, in this case diversity and inclusion in organisations (Buch, et al. 2015). In organisations different practices for diversity and inclusion are formed through ongoing processes of organising in which actors coordinate their actions and continually make sense of them retrospectively (Weick, 1995). Finally, we elaborate on the concept identity, here defined as how HR-professionals perceive and present themselves in social relationships (Thunborg, 2016) and in this case in relation to the practice of working with diversity and inclusion.



Methodology

The empirical material in the paper emanates from participant observations from two interactive R&D- project, one from a Swedish University focusing on gender awareness (Andersson & Amundsdotter, 2021) and the other from an industrial company, focusing on diversity and inclusion. Both projects are finished and the analysis mainly focused on middle managers. In this paper, we re-analyse participant observations and reflections of meetings focusing on HR managers and HR partners and what they said and did.

(Expected) results

A preliminary result shows that HR professionals either were actively or passively involved in the work with diversity and inclusion work, which impacted on both how the work was organised, how they made sense of in the organisations but also how their professional identity impacted on their way of working.

Conclusions

HR could be a central part in working with diversity and inclusion, but that it requires knowledge and engagement as well as support from management to be successful. Earlier research suggests that top managers are important for the success of organisational change in general. In this paper we also claim that HR managers are of importance for HR-professionals to become active in organisational changes as well.

Relevance to research field of work and learning

The paper contributes to knowledge about HR professionals and how they work with creating conditions for and change in organisations but also discusses their identity formation as HR professionals

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Paper 47

Knowledge, power, learning and diversity in recruitment processes: An interrogation of how diversity and inclusion is negotiated between human resource practitioners and hiring managers.

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Abstract

Inclusion and diversity (D&I) are crucial themes for organizations aspiring to be seen as attractive employers. Organizations develop policies and strategies regarding how to develop a diverse workforce (Dean and Zamora 2022). Ortlieb and Sieben (2013) argues that ethnic minorities in various ways is a 'critical resource' for organizations today. One way of addressing, attracting, and retaining this critical resource is for companies to develop a solid D&I image. Romani (et al., 2019) argues that diversity measures may reproduce inequalities in organizations, by benevolent, yet potentially discriminating rationalities that positions marginalized groups as inferior, strengthening the hierarchical order in organizations rather than challenges it.

Against this background, we seek to critically how values of D&I is negotiated in the relationships between hiring managers and HR recruiters in a large company in Sweden. The aim of is to gain knowledge about how hiring managers and HR-recruiters negotiate D&I in recruitment processes. The following research questions has directed our attention in the analysis:

- What meaning is ascribed to diversity and inclusion in recruitment processes?
- What categories are negotiated as part of diversity and inclusion in the organization and how are these categories constructed and their meaning negotiated?

Analytical approach and theoretical framework

This study departs from a Foucauldian perspective, focusing on two concepts. Firstly, we understand power/knowledge as intertwined concepts, where one cannot be separated from the other. Here, power is an intrinsic part of every social relationship (Foucault 1990). The other analytical tool from Foucault's toolbox is games of truth (Foucault 1997). Together they are two useful concepts for analysing negotiations between hiring managers and HR recruiters regarding how 'truth' and meaning is established in negotiations.

Methods / Methodology

The empirical base of our analysis consists of 16 hiring processes in a large corporation in Sweden. All hiring processes were white collar, high skilled positions. We have conducted online observations of start-up meetings, where the



hiring managers and HR recruiters discussed the upcoming recruitment, what role and competences that were needed, how the job ad should be formulated etcetera. Further, we observed screening meetings where candidates were ranked and chosen for interviews. After the job interviews had taken place, a decision meeting between the HR recruiter and hiring manager were also observed. In total we have empirical material from 93 different meetings in the 16 hiring processes we followed.

(Expected) Results / Conclusions

Conclusions and results are very preliminary because the analysis is not yet completed.

- The value of D&I is sometimes positioned in relation to meritocracy (Konrad et al., 2021). Hence, D&I and meritocracy can be competing discourses, where meritocracy is seen as something that can be devalued when D&I is highlighted in recruitment processes.
- Another preliminary conclusion is based on how power positions influence the negotiations between HR recruiters and hiring managers. Here, the informal learning is imbued by hierarchical power where the hiring manager is positioned as the expert of meritocracy i.e., skills needed for the job position. However, HR recruiters are positioned as experts on D&I and can in that capacity challenge the meritocracy discourse promoted by the managers.

Relevance to research field of work and learning

Workplace learning can be achieved both informally and more formally in organized educational efforts. Our focus is on informal learning that takes place in relationships at the workplace (Tynjälä, 2008). We see informal learning as an important aspect of developing the expert knowledge needed in recruitment processes. From a Foucauldian perspective, learning can be understood as matter of seeking to influence others' ways of conceiving certain issues and to shape the conduct of others (see Fejes & Nicoll, 2008). Thus, the game of negotiating truths about D&I in recruitment processes can be analysed as learning in the relationship between hiring managers and HR practitioners.

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Paper 48

The Bluewashing of Civilian Investigators? Symbolic work, Power, and Learning in the Police

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Abstract

This paper presents an analysis of how symbols and symbolic actions matters in workplace socialization and participation. In 2021, the Swedish police union launched a campaign called “bluewashing”, where they criticised that civilian employees in some areas were given the same status as warranted police officers. As an example of how symbols (the colour blue) and their connotations are used to express status and create difference, the campaign draws attention to important aspects of how power works in organizations. The material aspects of power connected to participation and socialization in workplaces have not received enough attention from researchers.

In our study, we use the theory of social-symbolic work (Lawrence & Philips, 2019) to analyse the relationship between civilian and police investigators in their struggles for recognition, participation and status. The social-symbolic work perspective emphasizes actors’ motivations and resources as highly situated, understood as products of the specific material, relational and discursive locations of the actors. Earlier works on power and workplace learning has almost exclusively addressed discursive, systemic and relational aspects (Lindberg et al., in press). One important aspect of this study is therefore also to forward our understanding of (socio-)material perspectives on power, which hitherto have been relatively little understood (McMurtry et al., 2016). Using a social symbolic lens, we investigate how materials (things) conjugate with discourse and relations to accentuate difference and status. In other words, how symbols and symbolic action do (or undo) gender and professional status. The research question we address is: How is status, hierarchy and difference expressed and negotiated through symbols and symbolic actions?

The research setting is the Swedish police. Like in all police organizations, symbols of authority and hierarchy are particularly salient. This includes uniforms, insignia, and equipment, as well as titles that reference a paramilitary past. The police as a research setting is therefore particularly well suited to inform researchers on the significance of symbols connected to learning and power. Adding to this, we investigate a major change in the police, where large numbers of civilians are hired as criminal investigators. Criminal investigation has hitherto mainly been the task of warranted police officers, but this change means that civilians are working alongside them with the same work descriptions and formal status. The civilians entering the police organization are mainly female with university degrees, while



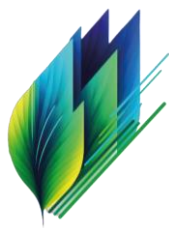
police officers are mainly male and have a shorter education. Therefore, this study also has a focus on gender aspects of symbols and power that can create inequalities in workplaces.

We interviewed 71 criminal investigators (56 civilians and 15 police officers) and conducted ethnographic observations on three different investigative units that employs both civilians and police officers. The ethnographic observations amounted to a total of 11 days of data collection. All data is collected, and analysis will follow in the winter of 2023-2024. We will conduct an abductive analysis (Saetre & Van der Ven, 2021), where we use the theory of social symbolic work to structure and make sense of the data. We will contribute to developing the theory through our empirical observations, particularly concerning the aspects of materiality in social symbolic work.

Preliminary findings suggest that difference and hierarchy is made and maintained using a number of symbols. The symbols are also at times the focus of negotiation and conflict. Examples of symbols that are at work and can be found in our material are clothing, uniforms, insignia, and ways of presenting oneself. In addition, and more surprisingly, food, bodies, and books are also the focus of negotiations and making differences between police officers and civilians, as well as men and women. Implications for workplace learning connected to issues of power and gender are discussed, particularly through showing how symbolic work guides socialization and participation in the workplace.

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Learning professional behaviour for situations involving death - A practice architecture analysis of police death notification training

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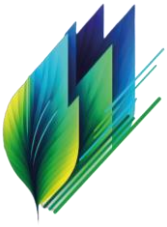
Abstract

Police officers are regularly tasked with delivering death notifications to bereaved next of kin in situations where death has been sudden and unexpected, such as in cases of murder, suicide, or road accidents. These situations may involve intense emotions of traumatic loss, and to engage in these emotions as a professional has been described as highly challenging. The professional police officer needs to meet reactions such as shock and anguish in an appropriate way while simultaneously balancing personal compassion with control and the administrative duty (Walter, 2005). To train for these situations is important, yet very challenging.

In this paper, we draw on the theory of practice architectures (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008; Kemmis et al., 2013) to analyse professional behaviour in death notice training for police students, characterized by specific sayings, doings and relatings. Thus, the purpose of the paper is to further our understanding of training practices that can support preparedness for emotionally challenging situations.

The paper builds on interviews and participant observations of death notification training sessions in Swedish police education. In total, four two-hour scenario training sessions with actors in the roles of next of kin was observed by two separate observers. In addition, interviews were conducted with the teachers involved in the specific training sessions (n=4). These interviews served to describe constraining and enabling dimensions in the training practice of death notifications. Interviews were also conducted with teachers involved in professionalism courses within the studied police education centre (n=7). These interviews served to give insights into teachers' views of police professionalism more broadly and how police training was organized to facilitate personal and professional development. Data was analysed using concepts from the theory of practice architectures (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008; Kemmis et al., 2013). This meant that we analysed arrangements surrounding death notification training as well as central sayings, doings and relatings within this social practice. All data was analysed using NVivo 12.

Findings show some commonly occurring challenges in professional behaviour related to death notification situations. Specifically, police students experienced the training as emotionally difficult. In the reflection sessions following training, they described the social role as a professional giving death notice as emotionally



taxing and uncomfortable. In short, 'death work' is an aspect of policing in which professionalism is put to the test. Regarding social relations in the training sessions, it was evident that students struggled with balancing administrative duty and procedural rules with personal compassion for the relatives they were communicating with. With a lack of experience, police students tended to have narrow and limited room for enactment. Thus, they fell back on what they knew as a guide for action, meaning that a risk was that the social situations would be characterized by technocratic aspects of the death notice while leaving out situational awareness and adaptation. Conversely, when students were more confident to engage in interpersonal relations and embrace the complex emotions that a death notice might provoke, the result tended to be more situationally adapted. However, this approach also provoked feelings of insecurity: A reoccurring fear among the students was that overly excessive displays of empathy and compassion would violate expectations on their professional role, others' as well as their own. The paper **discusses** how death notification training explicates a form of 'boundary work' where students negotiate their professional role by weighing empathy and compassion versus demands for distance and control. When these aspects are balanced, students were able to display 'informed situational flexibility'. We put forth that this concept is a defining characteristic of police officers' professional behaviour in death notification situations. We also discuss the potential of scenario training and enactment as an approach to mitigate some of the challenges such as discomfort, insecurities that are associated with emotionally challenging situations within policing.

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5

*Organisational learning,
development and change*



From Tensions to Transformation: Facilitating Learning at the Boundaries for Systemic Change

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Abstract

Many organizations are actively trying to innovate and reinvent in response to the growing complexities of our social, cultural and economic environments. However, change related initiatives are hard to sell and slow to mobilize if they require co-ordination and collaboration between multiple actors. When some progress is achieved, the efforts of change fail to crystallize into meaningful transformations. This is because multiple forms of boundaries exist within organizations and change efforts don't remove boundaries, they just rearrange them (Jaeger & Pedersen, 2020). On one hand these boundaries can be the epicenter of tensions and contradictions, and on the other hand, they carry great potential for learning and serve as catalysts for change.

A review of existing research shows that organizational boundaries have been conceptualized in multiple ways (Jaeger & Pedersen, 2020). These boundaries take different forms and are created, maintained and dissolved in various ways (Vakkayil, 2012). As Akkerman & Bakker (2011) point out, boundaries are expected in domains which have a high degree of specialization and interdisciplinary work (p. 133). These boundaries can be ephemeral, fluid and invisible, or tangible and codified in regulation and structure (Hernes, 2004). Other scholars have conceptualized boundaries to be symbolic (Lamont et al. 2015), social (Lamont & Molnár, 2002) and identity, competence and power based (Santos & Eisenhardt 2005).

Boundaries are created when socio-cultural differences lead to discontinuation of action or interaction (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011). Jaeger & Pedersen (2020) and Akkerman (2011) refer to the dialogical aspect of boundaries, stating that boundaries get activated through communication and trigger dialogue. Boundaries are seen as an invitation into the unfamiliar, creating the possibility for learning (Akkerman, 2011) and reflecting on what is part of me versus what is not (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011).

The terms boundary crossing denotes how some actors need to enter territories in the workplace that may be unfamiliar to them, and they may feel unqualified to some extent (Suchman, 1994, p. 25). Crossing boundaries implies movement into unfamiliar domains and can provide the following learning potentials: 1) renegotiation of relations 2) new perspectives 3) hybrid practices 4) third spaces and mutual understanding of shared tasks and problems (Akkerman, 2011). However, review of power-sensitive boundary spanning research illustrates that power allows, expands and hinders boundary spanning practices and outcomes (Collien, 2021, p. 443), and historically rooted power relations can hinder learning and knowledge sharing in organizations (p. 450). Boundaries govern the everyday lives of people within an organization and power is exercised within organizations



through various forms of knowing. When scholars explore why particular boundary spanners are more successful than others, it is not sufficient to only focus on boundary spanning activities. Power relations at work must also be understood (Collien, 2021, p. 443).

Methodology: Thematic literature review.

(Expected) Results/ Conclusions: A deeper appreciation of the complexities presented by the various types of boundaries within organizations and the power structures they uphold.

Relevance to research field of work and learning: This conceptual paper aims to equip researchers at the intersection of work and learning with insights into boundary relations, power dynamics and learning opportunities which can lead to transformative organizational change.

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An integrative literature review concerning organizational change competence

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Abstract

Organizations are constantly evolving as a response to continuous changes in the external context, and several concepts have been developed to understand specific skills and capabilities necessary for a successful change (e.g., Soparnot, 2011; Teece et al., 1997). However, these various concepts do not capture the holistic perspective that is needed to understand competence requirements in today's rapid change pace. The focus in this review is on planned and intentional activities that encompass all or parts of an organization for the purpose of changing all or parts of the organization from its current state to a desired future state (Stouten et al., 2018). More specifically, this review concentrates on proactive and strategic change management approaches to navigate the rapid transformations in working life. Competence is applied in a broad perspective and with an interpretative view, where competence is not limited to individuals but extends to groups and organizations. As suggested by Ellström (1997), competence is seen as an interaction between an individual's (or collective's) potential capacity and the conditions, requirements, and opportunities presented by the specific job or task. The aim of this paper is to explore the concept of competence during an organizational change process.

Methods

Focus, content, and limitations were established based on the review's purpose. Next, inclusion and exclusion criteria were formulated. The literature search identified 3021 unique studies of which 32 were included in the review.

Results

The results of this paper show that organizational change, its conditions, and its process, differ at different levels in the organization. Applying a competence perspective to different levels clarifies how the required competence during change varies depending on the level that is in focus. Change competence can thus be found at different levels in an organization, but with different content depending on whether it concerns an operational role or a strategic role in the change process. Based on Ellström's (1997) reasoning and the findings of this review, the meaning of change competence can be described as the potential capacity to utilise existing competence within the organization as well as the ability to use and develop competence to be able to meet external or internal generated needs for organizational change. It entails questioning and testing of established or assumed



tasks, goals, and conditions related to professional roles, quality, productivity, and working conditions. It requires individuals or collectives to surpass the given or taken-for-granted boundaries encountered in their activities, demonstrating a proactive and adaptive approach to navigate and shape change within the organization. Sharing competence and experiences during change may thus develop into learning. From an organizational perspective, an organization's change competence can thus be understood as organization's ability to use existing competence and to develop competence in order to deal with internal needs of change and to develop resilience to external change pressures.

Conclusions

Change competence is a unifying concept that can be found at all levels within an organization but with different content depending on mission or role in the organization and in the change process. An organization's ability to meet future rapid transitions may thus depend on its ability to apply existing competence, and through learning, develop change competence.

Relevance to research field of work and learning

The findings highlight that managers and change agents are significant during change, not only to manage and lead change, but also to support and visualize competence and experiences that exist among all in the organization. The theoretical contribution of this literature review is the concept change competence which, in difference to other nearby concepts capturing planned changes, includes exchange of knowledge and opportunities for learning during organizational change.

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Paper 52

Moving Towards Tighter Coupling: Mapping the Micro-Macro Linkages in Canadian University Language Schools

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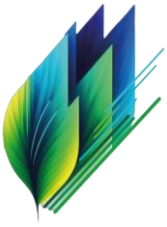
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Abstract

Fierce competition for student tuition fees is prompting English language schools in Canadian universities to adopt new business models that are making some of those units more tightly coupled and in doing so, challenges teachers' motivations for entering the profession in the first place. As teachers and administrators attempt to address students needs within a recoupled governance structure, they may experience what scholars call "turmoil" – an erosion of longstanding meanings regarding the purposes and expectations in an organizational unit (Hallett, 2010). This paper seeks to understand how teachers' professional identities and motivations to enter the profession are challenged by the evolving entrepreneurial trends in their workplace. Building on established micro-level organizational concepts such as "sensemaking" and "street level bureaucracy," 15 ESL teachers share how their professional identities and their workplaces have been disrupted against a new context of change in university administration. Through semi-structured interviews and an in depth literature review, this presentation seeks to bring their professional experiences to the forefront in a time of turbulent change in Ontario's higher education sector.

On the ground, instructors and administrators are impacted by external forces beyond their purview and yet they must adapt to new policies which have an impact on their work and their workplace. I hypothesize that more tightly coupled units will trigger greater resistance and turmoil among teachers; specifically, their sensemaking will lead them to see changes as limiting their professional discretion in the classroom. This remains a relevant topic in the research field of work and learning because higher education institutions are shifting their mandates and in doing so, they force instructors to re-think their professional identities. Historically, higher education has been thought to be loosely coupled giving those who work within the discretion and autonomy to respond to an arising situation as they see fit (Labaree, 2020). This trend towards tighter coupling sees discretion and autonomy severely limited and gives space for resistance to manifest. The workplace then has the potential to become a place of contention as employees seek ways to "make sense" of this recoupled environment. Such research would help link employee reactions to broader societal and economic changes and could help policy makers in thinking about the ground level experiences as they introduce new policies.

Lipsky's (1981) concept of Street Level Bureaucracy explains that discretion within public service work (e.g. teachers, police, social workers, etc) allows employees to use their discretion to create shortcuts to successfully manage their work. Using this as my conceptual framework, I hope to demonstrate that the limitation of this discretion due to external forces increases the likelihood of resistance on the

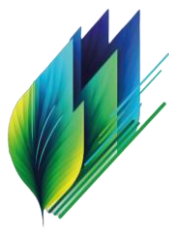


ground level. With the introduction of any sort of change, even gradual change such as the trend towards a business model, the likelihood of turmoil increases as instructors engage in sensemaking processes in a bid to recapture lost autonomy.

In addition to 15 semi-structured interviews with Ontario ESL teachers, I wish to conduct an in-depth literature review that captures this macro-level drive towards entrepreneurialism and the micro-level experience from instructors on the ground. The protocols for conducting this review will be adopted from Rogers et al. (2016) and will include a systematic review of provincial government reports, university and college funding reports, and educational consultancy series from the early 1990s (when Ontario turned to international student populations to backfill lagging government support) to present day. The purpose of conducting this review is to map how the shift towards an entrepreneurial method of revenue generation has forced instructors and administrators to also shift their professional identities from student-oriented ones towards profit-oriented ones and in doing so, changes the “work” that teachers originally signed up for.

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Paper 53

Understanding a local collaborative project to prevent, detect and handle female genital mutilation from an organizational learning perspective

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Abstract

Studies on interventions to prevent or respond to female genital mutilation (FGM) are scarce within a European context, and much is needed to implement better work practices, and change attitudes and behaviors (Matanda et al., 2023). An organizational learning perspective can contribute to the understanding as well as the execution and output of such interventions. Education and learning targeted at health care workers and other professionals are important to increase their possibilities to prevent FGM and provide sufficient care for women who have been exposed to FGM (Matanda et al., 2023). There is a lack of sufficiently documented and systematically monitored working methods in a Swedish context (Swedish Gender Equality Agency, 2022). Matanda et al.'s (2023) review as well a recent report (Swedish Gender Equality Agency, 2023) on a Swedish interagency government assignment to prevent and combat FGM both highlight the importance of multifaceted interventions, co-ordination and collaboration.

This paper draws from a research project that examined a local collaborative project to prevent, detect and handle FGM in a district of a medium-sized Swedish city where a large proportion of the residents come from regions in the world where FGM prevails. The purpose of the research project was to examine the participants' experiences of the collaborative project and their perceptions of its importance for the development of knowledge, work practices and interorganizational collaboration with the aim of improving work to prevent, detect and handle FGM. Among the aims of the collaborative project was to increase knowledge of FGM among employees within the participating organizations. At the start of the project employees and managers were offered a lecture before each organization started to develop their own action plans and work routines regarding FGM. A group consisting of representatives from each organization (approx. 20) was set up to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences, and to maintain collaboration after the project had ended.

Methods

Questionnaires were sent out at three different occasions to all employees within the participating organizations. Qualitative interviews were conducted with representatives in the collaborative work group in the early stages of the project, before and during their work with action plans and routines, as well as after the



project had ended. The researchers also participated in the group meetings and in the development of a conceptual model to support the organizations in their work to set up their plans and routines. However, the main purpose of the meeting attendance was to observe and gain a better understanding of the participants' experiences and perceptions of FGM, as well as the varying organizational conditions for carrying out this work.

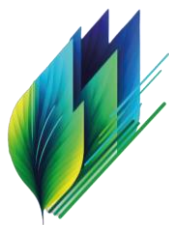
Findings

Comparing questionnaire responses at the beginning and end of the project, the participants reported increased confidence in talking to girls and women at the indication of FGM and being able to help girls at risk of FGM, a clearer division of roles and responsibilities, anchoring and support from management, as well as more regular discussions in the workplace, both formal and informal. The project had contributed to the development of structures and functions enabling the participating organizations to conduct systematic work against FGM. The qualitative answers revealed obstacles at different stages of the project. The remaining obstacles concern difficulties in turning theoretical knowledge into practice, and lack of time and commitment. FGM was still seen as a low-priority issue within the organizations. Despite increased confidence in handling FGM, many felt uncomfortable and considered it stigmatizing to ask direct questions about FGM and feared it could be a violation of trust. Notwithstanding the difficulties, many participants hoped and expected that the work initiated by the project would be further implemented within the organizations, that interorganizational collaboration would be further strengthened, and that this type of collaborative set-up would be disseminated to other organizations within and outside of the local area.

The empirical findings will be discussed from a situated and process-oriented perspective of organizational learning (e.g., Nørlem et al., 2022; Ohlsson, 2014; Wallo et al., 2019). It is apparent that managerial support was a crucial factor to create legitimacy for the issue of FGM, enable employees to assign time for the work during the project, and to open for change and development in the organization regarding routines and practices (c.f. Beattie, 2006; Kock & Reineholm, 2020; Wallo et al., 2022; Wallo & Lundqvist, 2022). Another important aspect is how formal learning can stimulate informal learning activities and enhance organizational learning (Bednall & Sanders, 2017), especially the task of putting theory into practice. An overarching theme is how these learning and developmental processes can be understood within the interorganizational collaborative practices (Andersson et al., 2011; Mörndal, 2018) that are being developed as a result of the project.

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Internal capacity building within the Police organization in Sweden

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Abstract

In connection with both national and international changes in the external environment, the police are facing increasing and new demands from both the government and citizens (Bergman & Karp, 2021; Police Union, 2022). In the media, the debate about the competence of the police has also been raised in relation to rising crime and gang-related activities, often noting that the police are "lacking" or "deficient" in competence (Gårdsäter, et al., 2008; Persson, 2022). To be able to meet both current and future challenges, the police authority has been tasked by the government to develop a strategic plan to ensure that the right competencies are present within the organization and that these resources are used to contribute to the greatest possible benefit and efficiency (The Swedish Government, 2017).

Against this backdrop, questions arise about what is considered desirable competence among police officers. In several of the policy documents related to police development work, competence development initiatives in the form of training and further education are presented as solutions to many of the identified challenges, such as unresolved criminal investigations, prosecutions, and police conflict management (Police Authority, 2022). Thus, the competence of the police can be seen as a debated issue, which researchers have also engaged with by establishing quality indicators to identify differences in the performance of police officers (Holgersson & Knutsson, 2012) and by identifying success factors in the form of successful police investigation examples (Borglund, Öberg, & Persson Slumpi, 2011). What is missing in these contexts is the police personnel's own perceptions of competence in relation to theoretical and practical knowledge. Therefore, the paper aims to investigate how competence development (CB) initiatives are formulated and transformed in various arenas within the police authority's organization, by focusing on the selection of what is considered legitimate knowledge and competencies in this form of workplace learning.

To study how CB initiatives are organized, document analysis and interviews with those responsible for the in-job training courses and participants will be carried out. Even though the competence development initiatives of the police authority have not been previously investigated by police researchers, workplace learning has been studied within the educational science field, among others (Argote, 2011; Moore, 2004). As the analysis of the empirical material needs to be guided by a theory that is relevant to how knowledge is organized in both a work and educational context, as well as the relationship between them, Lundgren's (1997) curriculum theory can be advantageously employed. The theory, originating within the field of educational science, has also been previously used to examine workplace learning, including by Moore (2004), who expanded the view of



curricula by examining them in a work context. Here, the focus is directed towards why certain content is selected for teaching and how this occurs in competence development initiatives at different levels within an organization (Lundgren, 1997). Curriculum theory can also be used to investigate how values and perceptions regarding what is considered desirable knowledge shape learning in the workplace.

CB development initiatives represent an unexplored field within police research. As the study focuses on the connection between policy, organization, and educational practice, the theoretical framework will also highlight tensions among these different levels. Here, curriculum theory can contribute to revealing the complex processes that lead to the organization and implementation of competence development initiatives in a certain way, as well as the consequences of this, both for those involved and for society at large, which encounters the police officers who have undergone competence development. The study thus provides a sought-after contribution of knowledge to both the research field, the police authority, and the general public.

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Paper 55

Emerging learning conditions in the shift from generation to adoption of an organizational innovation process

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Abstract

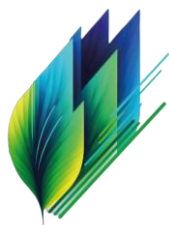
Organizational innovations are necessary for organizations to keep up with external pressure. However, organizational innovation processes in organizations are complex, not least because organizations often generate and test new ideas in one location and adopt or implement them in others (Damanpour, 2020). In our view, innovation is a process that entails the development of a new idea, that creates value, and is taken in use (cf. Mulgan, 2007). Even so, researchers often study generation and adoption phases separately (Damanpour, 2020).

The purpose of the paper is to explore and discuss conditions for organizational innovation in public sector organizations. We do so by drawing on previous research on conditions for learning (e.g. Billett, 2004, 2012; Ellström, 2006; Fuller & Unwin, 2004; Høyrup, 2010) and organizational innovation (Damanpour, 2020).

The paper builds on a qualitative case study of an organizational innovation process in a Swedish municipality. The process was followed from development and testing of a new approach to the provision of health and care (H&C) until the early stages of adoption of the new approach throughout municipal H&C operations.

Data was collected through interviews (two sets of interviews, in total 19 interviews with first-line managers, change leaders and H&C workers), participant observations (13 workshops with first-line managers or H&C workers led by change leaders), formal documents relating to the new approach to H&C, and 3 seminars/workshops where top managers, first-line managers and change leaders took part of the initial research results to discuss them. A data-driven thematic analysis inspired by Braun and Clarke (2006) was performed to search for enablers or constraints both in the generation and early adoption phases of the organizational innovation to be. The enablers and constraints were then categorized as various types of learning conditions in light of the theoretical framework.

The new approach that eventually was developed entailed a completely new way of thinking about and providing H&C services, which required educating both first-line managers and H&C workers and developing more rehabilitating work methods, focusing what the patients could do and what they could train to do. For example: instead of helping an elderly person to get dressed, the elderly person should receive adequate support to do so herself. The main finding in regard to the innovation process is that new emerging barriers that constrained learning in the innovation process continually formed. Routines for care administration and aid



assessment; staff planning; budget processes and separate budget units; and multiple and parallel organizational change processes were examples of the kinds of barriers that emerged and constrained learning during the transition from test to adoption. The barriers were formed in a complex pattern of domino-effects raising through overhead departments and administration systems. These barriers could not be foreseen when the innovation process started and most of them emerged in the shift from the generation phase to adoption. The case thus showed that the H&C operation was able to develop and test the new idea but found it difficult to implement the innovation throughout the organization and thus benefit from its potential good value. In order for the new approach to H&C to be fully implemented, the emerging barriers needed to be addressed, triggering changes in other than the H&C operations.

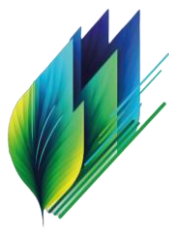
This paper is relevant for work and learning since it provides an empirical example of unpredictable and somewhat surprising barriers that hampered learning and thus also the innovation process. The paper thereby contributes with increased knowledge about the notion of emerging conditions for learning and organizational innovation in public sector organizations.

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6

Learning in work



The relationship between workers' aspirations, learning strategies and training motivation

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Abstract

Training is an essential component for individuals to learn new skills and enhance existing ones. Employee training is an imperative component in ensuring that individuals remain abreast of the dynamic changes taking place within their respective sectors. Training serves to provide employees with knowledge associated with emerging technologies, while also enabling them to acquire specific skills that are essential for professional growth and development. However, the proportion of the employed population engaging in training initiatives is merely moderate, with a notable decline observed among older workers. The objective of this study is to examine the relationship between employees' ambitions for proficiency in their work, utilization of learning approaches, and engagement in training activities, together with the subsequent application of acquired knowledge and skills in the workplace. Furthermore, this study aims to examine the motivational factors of employees by employing the Self-determination Theory (SDT). Specifically, it will explore the impact of autonomy, relatedness, and competence, which are the key drivers of SDT, on employees' motivation to engage in learning activities. The present analysis utilizes data from the Skills and Learning Study (SLS), a comprehensive nationwide survey conducted in Singapore in 2022. The survey included a total of 4,772 participants who were actively engaged in the labor force. Preliminary results indicate that individuals who expressed strong aspirations for competence in their jobs are more inclined to engage in training activities. Moreover, when these individuals also exhibited personal attributes conducive to deep learning, a higher rate of engagement in training was seen. In addition, there is an increased likelihood that participants will report that the training has led to a noticeable improvement in their skills. It has been observed that employees who display personal characteristics that correspond to deep learning and has strong aspirations for competence are more likely to participate in activities that are directed toward their own personal development as well as activities that are social in nature. Regarding the three factors influencing the motivation to learn, these group of participants indicated a much greater degree of autonomy, relatedness, and competence. These preliminary results have provided evidence that workers' aspirations towards being good at what they do and their learning strategies effects their level of training participation as well as the knowledge acquisition from the training sessions. Hence, it is crucial to understand the influence of organizational factors, such as workplace practices and job quality, on individuals' aspirations. Additionally, it is essential to examine the impact of the three drivers of SDT on learning motivation and if learning approaches can influence these drivers.



Keywords: Training participation, learning strategies, Self-Determination Theory



Paper 57

Literate Practices in Worklife Histories, Transitions and Learning: Evidence from the Australian context

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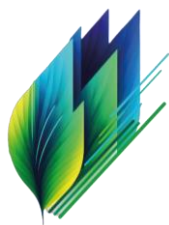
Abstract

This paper explores the forms and functions of literacy in the sorts of experiences adult workers make when they negotiate transitions across their life course. It also reflects on the sorts of learning that may arise from such literate experiences and their contributions to the richness, diversity and heterogeneity of educational provisions encountered by adult workers across their lives.

The paper proposes detailed findings from the first phase of the project – Practices and policies for sustaining employability through work-life learning – funded by the Australian Research Council (DP 190101519). The project aims to generate evidence-based policies and informed practices supporting work-life learning arrangements to promote Australian workers' employability (Billett, Salling Olesen & Filliettaz, 2023). Much is made of the importance of adults' learning across their life span, particularly for work-related purposes (Billett, 2009). This learning is now seen as being both important and urgent as the requirements for work constantly change and the need to be employable over a longer portion of adult life grows stronger. The different kinds of educational experiences are likely to be particularly helpful when adults are making transitions to different kinds of work or workplaces and confronting significant worklife challenges. Therefore, it is important to understand how that learning arises and how it can be supported, guided, and augmented by educational provisions and by other forms of support.

To contribute to this topic, a mixed-method research design has been implemented, combining qualitative interview data with a large-scale survey (Le, Billett, Salling-Olesen & Bargaliev, 2023). In a first phase of the project, 66 informants from diverse occupational classifications were interviewed, from across gender and ages. Each provided retrospective accounts of their worklife history of learning (Salling Olesen, 2016) through two interviews, the first being general, and the second focusing more deeply on an elaboration of transitions, seen as significant by the informants. This method enabled to capture and document over 300 instances of worklife transitions.

Preliminary analysis on these Phase 1 life history interviews established that transitions are strongly shaped by domains of knowledge that need to be learnt by workers as they progress through their life course (Billett et al., 2021). These domains of knowledge may comprise not only (i) occupational skills, (ii) work-related knowledge, and (iii) worklife engagement, but also (iv) cultural practices and (v) language and literacy skills. From there, it appears that experiences related to language and literacy seem to play a significant role in the kind of learning required to perform worklife transitions.



To gain a more in-depth understanding of the role and place of language and literacy skills in the sorts of transitions reported by informants in the interview data, this paper proposes to revisit some transcripts based on these interviews and to analyze the way language and literacy constitutes a significant domain of practice and knowledge involved in work and life transitions and trajectories. By borrowing from the theoretical frame of interactional ethnography, and the concept of “literate practice” (Barton, 2007; Burnett & Merchant, 2020; Castanheira et al., 2001), the paper investigates the forms or shapes of literacy experiences in worklife histories and answers the following research questions: How is the topic of literacy experienced during transitions? What kinds of concrete and tangible situations exemplify literate practices? How do these experiences evolve across the work-life course? What unifies or distinguishes these experiences across working lives? In a second analytic move, the paper reflects on the role or functions of literacy experiences in work-life histories: What role do these literate practices have in the accomplishment of transitions reported in the data? What sort of learning might arise from such experiences?

To unfold these questions and research topics, the paper progresses as follows. The first section explains the theoretical frame adopted to conceptualise literacy in relation to worklife experiences. It defines literacy as a social practice, materialized in tangible and situated events experienced by individuals in their working lives (Filliettaz, 2022). The second section, dedicated to a presentation of the methodology, elaborates on the concept of literacy event and investigates how such events emerge across life history. The four consecutive analytic sections explore different facets of these literacy events as they are being referred to by informants in the interview data: (i) the situational characteristics of literacy events, (ii) their semiotic properties, (iii) their contributions to learning, and (iv) the ways informants position themselves in terms of agency when responding to literacy events. Findings of the qualitative and quantitative empirical analysis show that literate practices often emerge as guided experiences, which take place both in formal and informal settings. These experiences also constitute means for continuity and coherence across working lives, and not only as obstacles or causes for disruptions and discontinuity. In a concluding section, the paper discusses the qualities and significance of literacy events and their role in worklife histories and transitions.

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Skill Gap, Informal Workplace Learning, and Job Satisfaction Among Workers: A Latent Class Analysis

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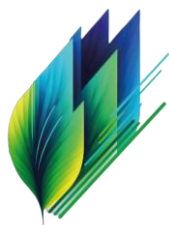
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Abstract

The increasingly rapid changes in today's economic and technological landscape have boosted the demand for a highly skilled workforce. Thus, skill shortages have emerged as a major concern in recent industries, organizations, and governments across the globe (OECD, 2019; Horbach & Rammer, 2022). Skill shortages refer to a disequilibrium situation in which the demand for a particular type of skill exceeds its supply in the prevailing labor force (Junankar, 2009). For employers, coping with skill shortages can be costly and time-consuming, as it entails additional challenges, such as financial constraints in offering training programs for the existing workforce and difficulties in competing with other firms to recruit skilled workers. Moreover, an unbalanced allocation of human capital and resources in the labor market may widen the skill gap among workers, thereby perpetuating economic inequalities between low- and high-skilled (OECD, 2019).

Inequalities in skills may pose significant threats to individuals, organizations, and even the aggregate economy of a country. A broad consensus among scholars and policymakers exists, emphasizing the importance of developing learning initiatives in the workplace to address the skill gap among workers (Jarvis, 2006). The widely accepted notion is that knowledge and skills can be acquired through both formal and informal means of learning, even outside institutionalized settings (Desjardins, 2015; Rubenson, 2011). This implies that the level of skills can be further developed beyond traditional schooling, and the workplace may serve as an adequate venue for daily-basis learning and improvement, especially for the marginalized workforce (Olsen & Tikkanen, 2018).

Previous literature has revealed a positive relationship between informal learning and the development of both basic and advanced skills (e.g., Ferreira et al., 2018; Korshunov et al., 2023). In particular, participation in informal workplace learning (IWL) is often considered an antecedent for workers' economic outcomes, both of which are fundamental aspects of adult learning (Cedefop, 2016; Desjardins, 2017). In other words, informal learning at work plays a significant role in individual human capital enhancement and, in turn, may lead to better workplace engagement and job performance. Nonetheless, there have been limited empirical investigations delving into how IWL and its workforce outcomes vary across different groups of workers with divergent profiles in skills retention.

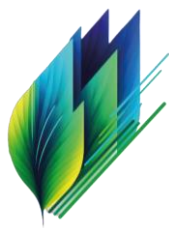


In this vein, this study examines a typology of workers based on their skill level, IWL participation, and job satisfaction. Using the 2017 U.S. PIAAC data, we conducted a latent class analysis to identify distinct types of workers according to the degree of skills proficiency and utilization, as well as their informal learning experiences. In addition, we demonstrated how dynamics across the individual- and organizational-level factors predict class membership. Lastly, we explored how the identified latent classes are heterogeneously associated with job satisfaction. This study will deepen the understanding of diverse patterns of workplace learning and outcomes that are differentiated by skill level. Based on the findings, we will discuss implications for policy and practice to address workplace issues concerning the skill gap.

Keywords: skill gap, informal workplace learning, job satisfaction, latent class analysis, PIAAC

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Paper 59

Developmental collective learning: A synthesized framework

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Abstract

Research Framing

Innovative development in changing times requires that people at all levels in organizations engage in developmental collective learning. This means that they exchange perspectives, debate, observe and build on each other's work, give each other feedback, interpret situations collaboratively, and perhaps most important: develop shared visions and competences, action repertoires and practices.

Processes of developmental collective learning has been researched in a wide array of disciplines and contexts, and many theories, frameworks and models have been developed. We believe that this diversity is a good thing but at the same time it makes the field fragmented insofar that insights from one area might not reach other areas where they could be useful. In other words, researchers of collective learning need to learn collectively to a greater extent. We want to contribute to such a development. The aim of this paper is to advance knowledge about collective learning by bringing together insights from the field and thus contributing with a synthesized model. The model will center around features that are common to most of the research, but differences in focus and tensions will also be reflected.

As Ellström (2011;2011) argues, developmental learning has to do with creativity and innovation in contrast to adaptive learning having to do with mastering pre-defined tasks. We argue that collective learning can be both developmental and adaptive. While adaptive collective learning involves socialization and discipline, developmental learning involves innovation and change.

Methods / Methodology

We will make a broad search trying to find models, theories and frameworks dealing with developmental collective learning as defined above. We will focus on research explicitly using terms like collective learning, social learning and organizational learning. However, we are also open for including research using other terminologies. We include both conceptual and empirical papers, as well as different theories and methodologies and theoretical focus. A major demarcation is that we will focus on research on the learning associated with social interaction between individuals in an organizational context. Thus, we omit research dealing primarily with individual learning or with development primarily on



organizational level, including a lot of research in the field of organizational learning. Another demarcation is the focus on innovation and change rather than stability, or using March's (1991) terminology: we focus on exploration rather than exploitation.

The analysis will be conducted in several steps. First, we choose a number of publications contributing with conceptualizations of developmental collective learning. With conceptualizations, we mean some kind of (contribution to) theory, framework or model explaining how people learn together in a context of changing times. Second, we analyze the conceptualizations that they make of the collective learning, its conditions, processes and outcomes, seeking commonalities and differences. Third, we seek to identify dimensions that might make sense of commonalities and differences, for example empirical contexts or theoretical assumptions.

(Expected) Results / Conclusions

We believe that some important dimensions of differences might revolve around cognitive vs social focus, e.g., whether researchers focus the actors' exchanging of ideas (e.g., developing shared mental models) or their efforts to participate (e.g., constructing identities and practice). The role played by emotions and values might also be important. Another possible focus might be on the different aspects of critical reflection, i.e., critique for improvement vs emancipation (Wallo et al., 2022). This is also related to the role of power and conflict (in contrast to consensus) in processes of collective learning, an area that has received limited attention, possibly because of the normative and practitioner-oriented tendencies of the research (Newman & Newman, 2015; Field, 2017).

Relevance to research field of work and learning

Our meta-theoretical model can be used as a stepping stone for further studies, to compare and classify research as well as a tool for analysis.

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Jumping into the Deep End: How Israeli Tech Workers Learn and Stay Relevant Throughout Their Careers

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Abstract

Work Theoretical Background and Rational

As technology advances, skills and knowledge become obsolete faster (Harteis, 2018), and career transitions are expected to increase (Dede, 2020). Consequently, there is growing interest in understanding how working-age adults learn to remain employable and prosper professionally (Billett, 2023).

Workers in the tech industry are a compelling case for examining continuous, lifelong learning throughout a career due to constantly evolving skills and knowledge requirements (Lemmetty, 2023). Additionally, workers are often responsible for their learning (Lemmetty & Collin, 2020), are comfortable using digital resources to learn (Ben-David Kolikant & Ma'ayan, 2018), and tend to switch jobs frequently (Koplyay et al., 2014). To illustrate, according to the Israel Innovation Authority (2022), in 2021, approximately 10% of all Israeli tech industry employees chose to leave their jobs, mainly for another company in the industry.

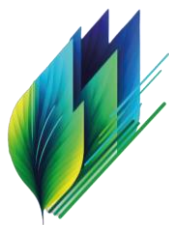
Previous studies on tech workers indicated that they learn a lot in the workplace in informal and self-directed manners (Ha, 2015; Lemmetty & Collin, 2020). Challenges stemming from their work are significant antecedents to these learning processes (Hirschmann & Mulder, 2018; Nerland, 2008). Less attention was paid to employees' frequent transitions between jobs.

Research goal

The focus of our study is on workers' learning concerning their imaginary professional future.

Methodology

We interviewed 16 workers in various technological professions (e.g., programmers, product managers, and algorithm developers) from different companies in the Israeli tech industry. Interviewees' ages ranged between 30 and 35, indicating they gained industry experience while also having substantial career years ahead of them. Snowball sampling was used to obtain the sample. The interviews were analyzed thematically, using the constant comparison method (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).



Findings

Similarly to previous studies, interviewees reported that their learning is mostly informal and self-directed (e.g., Ha, 2015; Lemmetty & Collin, 2020). Antecedents to this learning originate from challenges in daily work (Hirschmann & Mulder, 2018).

Our findings add to this picture. Interviewees strategically seek to create a gap between their current abilities and job requirements, where the learning required to close this gap is likely to enhance their capacities and thereby their relevance and employability, not necessarily in the same role, company, or even field of expertise.

Relevance

Poell and Van Der Krogt (2016) contend that workers today face a complex challenge: they must learn simultaneously to establish themselves in their current jobs while also learning to secure the future of their careers. Our study reveals a strategy used by Israeli tech workers to ease this tension by treating the current job as a training track for the next one.

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Paper 61

Assembling Textures of Practice: Expansive-Restrictive Learning Environments at the Thrift Shop

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Abstract

Roald and his car – spaces open or secluded, with and without people – anxiety, the car and movement in and out of social spaces – driving a car as a possibility for movement and thus for staying – driving a truck a possibility for a future. Distances and petrol prices as barriers. City life as an impossibility.

Roald is a young man assigned to a public employment programme located in a thrift shop. Marie interviewed him about his experiences in the programme and this was her first brief fieldnote. To Roald, his car and driver's licence provides an imagined escape route that allows him to stay in the programme. Also, they allow him to stay where he lives in the countryside and go by car to the thrift shop. At the thrift shop, Roald is free to work in a secluded space without contact to other people if he prefers so. Roald's emphasis on his car, his driver's licence, and the notion that he can always leave – certain social spaces or the thrift shop altogether – is intuitively relatable yet puzzling as it does in no obvious manner resonate with social theories of workplace learning as matters of access, and learning trajectories towards increased participation.

The aim of this paper is to take as a point of departure the concept of an expansive-restrictive continuum of learning environments at work (Fuller & Unwin, 2004) and suggest it can be theorized, not as a continuum, but as a texture of practice (Gherardi, 2019) in which expansive-restrictive dynamics of practices emerge, change, and disappear. Accordingly, we ask:

What are the expansive-restrictive dynamics of the emerging texture of Re-Use? In which ways do a conception of learning environment as textures of practice shed light on (new) possibilities for learning for young people outside education and work?

Methodology

The empirical outset is ethnographic data from Re-Use, a thrift shop in an urban Danish town, where the local municipality has placed an employment programme for young adults currently not in education, employment, or training. The study was part of a larger project on adult participation in communities, funded by Velux Foundation.

Studies of workplace learning possibilities for young adults with interrupted or problematic work histories have shown that participation in local workplace settings (as opposed to simulated work activity) best support the wish to learn (Evans, et al., 2006, p. 14), since these can affirm individuals in their skills and ability to contribute.



During the project, the first author visited Re-Use four times over four months, each visit lasting 2-5 hours in which she carried out ethnographic observations and conducted interviews with a sensitivity to how place matters in the practice under study (Finlay & Bowman, 2017). The research took off from the epistemological stance that research is a social practice in its own right (Gherardi, 2019), that it is performative and as such produces realities, not merely representing realities 'out there'.

The analysis is inspired by Dewey's term 'abductive reasoning' and draws on Pragmatism's explicit rejection of dualisms. It does not give ontological priority to neither humans nor materiality but to the processes in which these practices emerge.

(Expected) Results / Conclusions

The development of the expansive-restrictive continuum has rested largely on social learning theory, which – despite a sensibility to materiality – foregrounds human interaction. Here, we position the locus of attention in textures of practice (Gherardi, 2009): in the sociomaterial situatedness of an emerging practice and suggest that the “expansive-restrictive” is not a continuum but rather non-dualistic dynamics of learning environments.

Relevance to research field of work and learning

Inspired by Fuller and Unwin's (2004) work on the expansive-restrictive continuum of learning environments, this study points to interwoven processes of expansive and restrictive dynamics. The title *Assembling new Textures of Practice* thus refers to human and non-human actors' movements and flows simultaneously created by and creating the sociomaterial learning environment.

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Paper 62

“Just because I carry it well doesn’t mean it is not heavy” – Working and learning within the emergency industry

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Abstract

Navigating life and death on a daily basis is part of working in the emergency industry. An industry that is considered to be a high risk profession with higher suicidal rates (e.g. Whiting et al. 2019) as well as negative impacts on mental health due to frequent and repeated confrontation with trauma (e.g. Regehr et al. 2002; Behnke et al. 2019). Saving lives also holds value and offers many defining moments for transformative experiences (Paul, 2016) and transformative learning (Mezirow 1991) that may lead to personal development and growth (Eschenbacher 2023), ultimately changing “how we think and experience our lives, and by extension, ourselves” (Meadow & Paul 2021, p. 10-11).

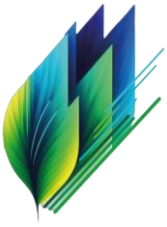
What role does research on work and learning play in a high risk profession such as the emergency industry? The main question this paper will address and seek to answer is: What do professionals experience as burdensome?

This paper offers empirically based insights into working and learning within the emergency industry. To shed some light on the range of burdensome experiences, this study examines the reflections of 35 first responders and firefighters who actively work or have worked in the emergency industry. All of them participated in a course on trauma and disaster psychology being part of their degree in Catastrophe and Disaster Management B.S. at Akkon University of Applied Sciences Berlin, Germany. The data has been analyzed using Mayring’s (2022) qualitative content analysis.

The participants were asked what makes their profession feel burdensome and if there are burdens that stand out and make it particularly challenging for them to stay in their profession. They were invited to share an example where they felt burdened and could still carry out their work responsibilities, what helped them and whether or not the way they thought about the burden had changed and if so, in what ways. They were also asked to share an example where they continued to feel burdened and what feelings came up in that situation. Another question addressed the structural level and how the way the system is set up adds to the burden or makes it difficult to stay in the profession and what changes they were hoping for.

Some results, such as shift work and having to navigate life and death situations on a daily basis were rather predictable when it comes to the question of what is considered to be burdensome. This includes losing patients, especially babies, or in one example, a firefighter who had to watch a victim burning in a car as his colleagues could not arrive in time as traffic blocked the way to rescue the person.

Other experiences and dynamics that were identified were more hidden and could even seem contradictory, such as what was considered as unnecessary rescue



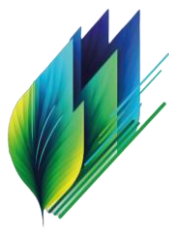
missions being incredibly frustrating as they push the work volume and length of shifts towards the absolute maximum. Not being able to use the many skills they learnt in such unnecessary rescue missions, made some of them feel like they had the wrong job or were wasting their potential.

Even though these examples seem quite contradictory (having to witness horrible things vs. participating in unnecessary rescue missions) they share an underlying problem: Participants were not able to do what they have been trained for, what brings them to this workplace and gives them identity: To help others and save lives.

This research helps to uncover and learn about the more hidden, personal and social dynamics this workplace has to offer and the learning that is involved (Sawchuk 2022). It shed light on working and learning within the emergency industry.

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Paper 63

Practices of workplace interactions and their influence on learning and careers of women in STEM jobs

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with collaboration of Cory Elbrechter and Svenja Uhleman

Abstract

Work related changes are not only the result of technological and organizational transformations. New configurations of work and learning also emerge from due to demographic reasons as well as shifts in the educational achievements and occupational decision-making.

In Germany, the so-called skilled labor shortage is discussed as major challenge for the labor market. In response, policy makers attempt to improve vocational education and to attract more people to the labor market. One of the chosen strategies aims to address the issue of the gender divided labor market by drawing more women into technical jobs. To support women in the STEM-sector¹, educators have been trying to spark girls' interest in mathematics and technical subjects in schools and vocational training. Additionally, universities have been developing mentorship programs for female STEM-students to improve their self-confidence and to assist with career decision-making.

However, statistics show that while the number of women in STEM study paths has increased, the increase has not yet met expectations (Hild & Kramer, 2022; Mint-Forum, 2022). This could be explained by the fact that these measures focus primarily on the competencies and orientations of girls and women, relegating the context of workplace experiences to the background. In contrast, our research project aligns with approaches that argue for a stronger consideration of specific workplace experiences and of workplace culture (Gill, Rhonda, Mills, & Franzway, 2008; Singh, Fouad, Fitzpatrick, & Chang, 2014). Workplace culture has been found to be an important factor for satisfaction and engagement, and thus for career development (Korte, Samantha, & Sarah, 2019).

Following this path – and with the goal of addressing the repeatedly observed underrepresentation of women in STEM-fields – we are conducting a research project that analyzes women's experiences in STEM workplaces and studies which workplace-related social practices promote or hinder the professional development of women.

Based on the concept of social communities (Lave & Wenger, 1991), we are interested in identifying workplace practices, understood as "accepted ways of doing things, embodied and materially mediated, that are shared between actors and routinised over time" (Vaara & Wittington, 2012), S. 287, (Wilz, 2015), p. 259) cf. (Engel & Göhlich, 2022), S. 88),(Elven & Schwarz, 2018).



Whereas the broader research project will combine survey-data and in-depth interviews, the focus of this conference paper are first insights into our explorative interviews with female engineers. These interviews were conducted with women who had just started to work in the field of STEM. Participants told us about their experiences at the workplace, about workplace-satisfaction, career-perspectives, and different degrees of autonomy.

By continuing our thematic analysis, we expect to find different bundles of practices in workplace interactions that enable or constrain professional inclusion - understood as social sense of belonging, (Capras, 2021) (Xu & Lastrapes, 2021) and the possibility to contribute one's own skills and ideas (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

These insights can be understood as building blocks in the bigger research building that intends to investigate the influence of social practices at the workplace on learning, inclusion, and career development.

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Paper 64

Making Intentional Disjuncture the New Workplace (dis)Comfort Zone

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Abstract

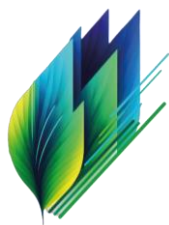
Work is both personal and business, both the inner and the outer life—including our values. In this paper, I will argue that we can learn *from more* of our moments at work, as well as learning *more in* our moments, if we develop what I will refer to as a ‘posture of intentional disjuncture.’

The paper will delineate the concept of the posture of intentional disjuncture and its implications for workplace learning starting with Jarvis’ assertion that “all human learning begins with disjuncture—with either an overt question or with a sense of unknowing” (Jarvis, 2009). For Jarvis, disjuncture is the gap between our biography and our current experience (Jarvis, 2009). A posture of intentional disjuncture proactively seeks and embraces disjuncture, and remains curious to learn and grow. It sits alongside “ultimate disjunctural questions” (Jarvis, 2012a), contributing to the sense that there exist levels of disjuncture that require further exploration.

Workplace learning provides a container for the posture of intentional disjuncture. Building on previous theoretical development papers presented at RWL11 and RWL 12, here I will discuss: Jarvis’ personhood-based learning model and the role of disjuncture; how Dirkx’s “emotional self” adds (and does not add) to our understanding of disjuncture from the perspective of personhood; the importance of inquiry and reflection based on Argyris & Schön’s double-loop learning; the posture of intentional disjuncture through the role of values (highlighting the place of faith as an implicit value); and, the potential limitations of the analysis of workplace learning through the lens of intentional disjuncture. I will conclude with future avenues for research using this approach.

Jarvis observes that socio-cultural meaning points to meaning systems which “reflect the subcultures into which we were born, and which we learn unreflectively and memorize. It is these early experiences that give rise to the birth of the conscious self, which helps us find our place in a specific social structure and social situation” (Jarvis, 2012a). These experiences span an individual’s biography—including their values and emotions (Jarvis, 2012a; Jarvis, 2009).

When harmony is absent, it triggers disjuncture because it gives rise to uncertainty in situations where the individual is both unsure how to act or has a positive experience (“magic moment”) that awakens emotion (Jarvis, 2012b). Emotion played a key role in disjuncture for Dirkx when he participated in a workshop that evoked feelings that surprised him (Dirkx, 2001). Here I would argue that his experience relates to the need to assume a posture of intentional disjuncture. In his later work, Dirkx states that “we can know ourselves and the world meaningfully only through the images [frames] that we create. These images are intimately



bound up with our emotional experiences of the world”—even though individuals seek to brush away their emotions as baggage (Dirkx, 2008). Dirkx also emphasizes the soul in adult learning as a way to address the wholeness of learners’ lives (Dirkx, 1997) including values such as faith. I will continue to explore the relevance of emotions as a framing device for the posture of intentional disjuncture.

Double-loop learning focuses on exploring undiscussable topics—to surface and tackle assumptions and be open to self-examination (Argyris & Schön, 1978). Indeed, “effective double-loop learning is not simply a function of how people feel. It is a reflection of how they think—that is, the cognitive rules or reasoning they use to design and implement their actions” (Argyris, 1991). Single-loop thinking is, by default, thinking that we take for-granted and this is what disjuncture, as Jarvis envisioned it (Jarvis 2009), disrupts. For-granted thinking is also what a posture of intentional disjuncture will actively and consistently bring into question.

Implied within both Dirkx and the work of Argyris & Schön is the workplace reality that individuals—more often than not—learn to conform to workplace norms. Yet Jarvis asserts, “my understanding of adult education is not learning to conform, it’s learning to be a human being” (Jarvis et al., 2015) and this includes values. As this paper builds out what a posture of intentional disjuncture could mean in a theoretical sense, it will consider both the implicit

(unconscious, internal) and the explicit (conscious, external), as well as notions of the subjective and objective, and the role of perspective / perception coupled with expectation. It will also explore aspects of covering / compartmentalization of identity, including the impact / relevance of “identity salience” (Burke and Stryker, 2016), to allow for the reality that some (perhaps, most) individuals might prefer to avoid intentional disjuncture.

As I pursue my graduate studies, this theory development paper will contribute to my PhD thesis focusing on the intersection of intentional disjuncture and the lived experiences of practising Christians in for-profit workplaces in North America to positively impact the ever-evolving diversity and inclusion- and mental health-based conversations in today’s workplaces.

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Workplace Learning for Experts in Knowledge-Intensive Industries: A Literature Review

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Abstract

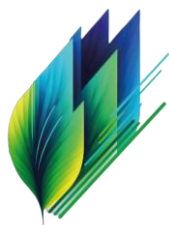
The global landscape is experiencing a transformative phase characterised by digitalisation and the green transformation (Harlin et al., 2022). Competence shortages are becoming more pronounced as industries transition, particularly in knowledge-intensive sectors (Wallo et al., 2023). Such shortages emphasise the need for a comprehensive understanding of workplace learning strategies suitable for highly skilled experts to stay ahead of the changing demands and contribute effectively to industry and society (Poquet & de Laat, 2021; Rangraz & Pareto, 2021).

This paper aims to present an ongoing literature review, examining activities used for facilitating workplace learning for highly skilled experts in knowledge-intensive industries.

The following research questions guide the review:

1. What learning strategies and interventions have been reported as effective for highly skilled experts in knowledge-intensive industries?
2. What challenges and barriers to workplace learning are frequently encountered by these experts?
3. What are the identifiable knowledge gaps in the existing literature, and what areas necessitate further study to enhance our understanding of workplace learning in these industries?

Regarding criteria for inclusion and exclusion, studies were considered if they (i) pertained specifically to workplace learning strategies and interventions for highly skilled professionals in knowledge-intensive industries, (ii) were published in English, and (iii) appeared in peer-reviewed journals between 2010 and 2023. This more recent timeframe ensures that the findings are relevant to current challenges and solutions in workplace learning. Older research, while valuable, might be less applicable to the modern context, especially given the pace of change in knowledge-intensive sectors. Moreover, focusing on a limited number of years makes it feasible to delve deeper into each article, ensuring quality over sheer quantity. The exclusion criteria encompassed studies that focused solely on novices or low-skilled workers, did not centre on knowledge-intensive sectors or focused on students or pupils in school rather than at work.



In total, our search string included 59 terms. For learning, we used variations of terms such as “workplace learning”, “learning at work”, or “lifelong learning”. For the experts, we used e.g., “highly skilled experts”, or “highly qualified employees”. We also added terms to capture professional development, such as “competence development”, “upskilling”², or “human resource development”. We conducted the searches in Scopus, Web of Science, and ERIC.

The searches yielded 5760 unique studies. When this abstract is written, we have commenced screening the articles using Rayyan software. This step will ensure that only the most pertinent articles, adhering closely to the study’s aim, progress to the next stage. All shortlisted articles from the screening process will subsequently be read to ascertain their relevance. Data extraction and thematic analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) will be performed during this phase, focusing on key findings, methodologies, and insights relevant to the research questions.

The expected results will provide a comprehensive analysis of the learning strategies, interventions and methods used in previous research to increase the learning of highly skilled experts in knowledge-intensive industries. In addition, the organisational, group and individual conditions that enable or hinder the experts’ learning will be elaborated. This literature review will also clarify the knowledge gaps in the field. We anticipate this could include using theoretical perspectives and concepts, evaluating the interventions and the need for longitudinal studies. The study intends to contribute by drawing attention to an understudied group and their opportunities for professional development at work. The results can be used in organisations to increase strategic competence and competitiveness.

This paper’s subject is relevant to the research field of work and learning. It offers a timely analysis, focusing on the learning needs of experts in knowledge-intensive sectors. It can play a significant role in reshaping learning strategies to align with current industry requirements.

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Paper 66

A critical review of Work-integrated learning (WIL) through the lens of cultural historical activity theory research (CHAT)

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Abstract

WIL plays a vital role in enhancing graduate employability. Such employability is not just an economic imperative but is also of benefit in assisting students' finding decent, productive work. The persistent problem with WIL, however, is that universities and workplaces operate in different ways for different purposes and the two do not always easily articulate with one another (Le Maistre & pare, 2004)).

Dominant theories of WIL may tend to view the university and workplaces as separate entities pursuing separate goals rather than their having often different purposes which are articulated across partially shared objects. Furthermore, more traditional WIL constructivist/reflective learning theories such as that of Kolb's experiential learning cycle learning may underplay the socio-cultural forces operating in each of these institutions, as well as the dialogic and mediated nature of learning (McRae, 2015). There is thus a pressing need to provide research theories which take into account the complexities of differences and learning across different institutions, with their different historical and cultural milieux which are themselves undergoing change, if we are to assist students in preparation for decent work.

From a cultural historical activity theory (CHAT) perspective learning can be considered as occurring within a collective system which is object-orientated, mediated by socio-cultural tools and generally linked to other, related activity systems (Engeström, 2001). Such systems are, furthermore, always multivoiced, dynamic and often influenced by prior historical developments. They are, in addition riven with contradictions which have accumulated over time. Rather than being seen as impediments, these are understood as engines for change and improvement which can promote the system to embark on a journey of expansive and transformative learning.

CHAT may thus be seen as an ideal theory with which to understand the complexities of WIL, in particular as it occurs between different institutions, and to suggest new and improved ways of working. CHAT with its focus on contradictions within and between systems become a potent theoretical tool. The importance of WIL and CHAT is underlined by the current WILCHAT module being offered to WIL PhD students at the first authors' university, University West, a lead university in WIL in Sweden.

Eames and Cates (2011) suggested that though CHAT should be a key learning theory for WIL, there was little evidence of its use in this context. Since that time



there has been much WIL-CHAT research conducted but there has not yet been a systematic and critical review of this body of work, and its contribution to improved understandings of and improvements to WIL. The aim of this critical review is to address these issues, which we hope will be of interest to WIL researchers at the conference. In so doing we also aim to respond in part to Nick Hopwoods keynote that we avoid simplistic dualisms in our research and begin to question the status quo.

In common with a systematic review, a critical review presents a 'synthesis of a variety of literatures, identifies knowledge that is well established, highlights gaps in understanding, and provides some guidance regarding what remains to be understood' (Eva, 2008, p. 853). A critical review is particularly apposite when scholars hold different views, as tends to be the case in the contexts of development and change. The distinctiveness of a critical review is that the results 'should give a new perspective of an old problem, rather than simply paraphrasing what all other researchers and scholars in the field have shown or said in the past' (Eva, 2008, p. 853).

After the systematic review process, we will follow the adapted PRISMA methodology for critically reviewing the literature. In a critical review, the data extracted is coded and thematically analysed, drawing on a theoretical framework (in this case CHAT) to provide new perspectives and theoretically-informed insights into the studies reviewed.

In our first round of the review process we have identified 74 WILCHAT articles from the SCOPUS database which form the basis of our critical review.

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Workplace learning for critical core skills development: Empirical evidence from Singapore

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Lena Boo

Abstract

Aims

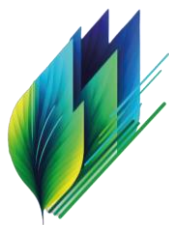
This article aims to show how workplace learning initiated by individuals in enterprises can forge a learning pathway to develop critical core skills (CCS) or soft skills for the purpose of their personal and professional development.

Theoretical Framework

In recent years, many studies, research reports, surveys, even newspapers articles highlighted a problem of the labour market: they reported a skill shortage among employers. According to the survey, 84% of the companies find it challenging to find the right talent to fill their organisations' roles in 2022 as compared to 56% in 2018. The Manpower Group's Talent Shortage Survey (2015) first accounted that nearly 20% of employers considered the lack of soft skills as one of the key reasons they couldn't hire needed employees. LinkedIn's global talent trends (2019) reported that 89% of the recruiters' feedback that the lack of soft skills is the key reason to an unsuccessful hire. To this end, soft skills development could be an effective remedy to be employed and stay employed competitively to face the everchanging demand of the workforce. Workplace learning research has produced a vibrant body of studies on learning at and in the workplace (Eraut., 2007; Billiet & Choy, 2013; Melacarne & Nicolaidis, 2019). The nature of learning at work is gaining popularity, as it enables the difficulties of assessing learning in this context to be acknowledged while drawing attention to the diverse activities and processes which characterize and distinguish workplace learning. Lave and Wenger's (1991) insight that the community of practice (rather than the individual) should form the basis of an analysis of learning, has highlighted the social and collective nature of learning. This article draws upon the significant body of work labelled situated learning theory (SLT), which has emerged from the works of Lave and Wenger (1991). The existing empirical studies investigating critical core skills drawing on SLT are profession-specific, but lacks transferability. In another word, the credibility to transfer a set of findings to other groups of people, settings and times is not easy to achieve. These studies lacked "goodness of fit". To fill this gap, the present study aims to understand the development of CCS across diverse groups of professions which cover a representative sample of Singaporean workforce and add value to the development of CCS which in turn provides career development for the workforce.

Methodology

A qualitative study using semi-structured interview questions that seek to understand how workplace learning attributes to the development of critical core



skills (CCS). The participants were selected to represent the critical core skills profile of the seven occupation groups in Singapore. The seven occupation groups were categorized from 2000 Singaporean workforce through a national survey on their use and self-efficacy in using CCS at their work. In each occupation group, the individual workers from different occupations were grouped together in terms of their similar self-report usage of CCS. We label these seven groups by their shared features of CCS use. Therefore, unlike earlier research focusing on specific occupation, the present study provides cross-occupational evidence for the development of critical core skills.

Findings and Implications

Participants' narratives of their workplace activities are analysed. The empirical study revealed that everyday practices facilitate learning pathway, for instance, learning from the experience, errors, and also peers within the community of practice. This paper is an in-depth qualitative study of workplace activities across the diverse occupational groups in Singapore which is lacking in existing literature, including participation and involvement practices using the lens of situated learning theory to account for the development of critical core skills. This paper enriches the scarce research base about critical core skills development and participatory practices in the community of practices and its links to organisation-wide performance. The findings may also enlighten the design of workplace learning for CCS development in a more authentic and supportive way.

Keywords: Skills development, workplace learning.

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Paper 68

Managers learning in times of change: making the relational visible

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Abstract

Building on earlier practice-based work finding that managers learn through coming to practice differently (Lizier et al., 2023), this paper explores the relational aspects of managing and how the changed practice arrangements have prefigured new and altered relational practices for managers and their teams. Recent global events have seen workplaces across many countries direct office-based workers to work from home. The ongoing result of this has been that the concept of a single workplace has been replaced with multiple ‘sites’ of work, each with their own practices (Francisco et al., 2022). Managers of teams have needed to shift their ways of “being” a manager in response to the changes.

Taking up recent shifts in management and leadership studies adopting practice approaches (Gherardi & Laasch, 2022; Price et al., 2020; Raelin, 2016) and the use of practice approaches in workplace learning, this paper is framed using the theory of practice architectures (TPA) (Kemmis et al., 2014). As a site ontological theory in the practice tradition, the TPA is particularly useful here to highlight and explore practices of managing and how managers were coming to practice differently through changed practice arrangements and multiple sites of work. Such an approach allows for an enriched understanding of managing as webs of practices rather than as a discrete set of individual manager behaviours.

Twelve managers in the state of New South Wales, Australia participated in the study from across a range of industry sectors. The interviews used the Interview to the Double method (Nicolini, 2009) and were conducted virtually using an online video-conferencing platform where the interviews were recorded then transcribed. Whole transcripts were used through two stages of data analysis. The first stage was a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021) to identify key themes related to the research questions. The second stage of data analysis was framed by the theory of practice architectures through the use of a modified Table of Invention (Kemmis et al., 2014, p. 226).

This research shows how changes in the practice architectures during the COVID-19 pandemic surfaced the critical importance of the relational aspects of the manager’s roles and prompted them to come to their practice differently. Changed practice architectures around sites of work, and the use of new technological tools to communicate and collaborate, influenced manager’s relational practices and made visible previously less visible relational aspects of being a manager.



Moreover, the need to support staff through this time of stress and uncertainty also prompted managers to come to practice differently as they worked to care for and ensure the wellbeing of their teams. For the managers interviewed, 'the workplace' was no longer a single unifying site of practice for themselves and their teams, a shift that required new and renegotiated relational practices. This has significant implications for how we understand learning for managers at work and the ways in which they relate and inter-relate with their teams.

Many of the changed practice architectures wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic are ongoing and have permanently altered the practice landscape for managers in organisations. Such changes call into question traditional modes of management development that focus on specific skills and behaviours that may no longer be serving managers well. Instead, managers may require a greater awareness of relational practices and the role of practice arrangements in enabling and constraining their interactions with their teams. Understanding manager learning as coming to practice differently increases the visibility of relational practices for managers and offers the opportunity to reconsider management instead as a web of managing practices shaped by the practice architectures found at a site.

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Learning leadership: a qualitative case study on leadership development inside engineering consulting firms

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Abstract

Engineering consulting has grown rapidly in the last few decades, demonstrated by increases to both market capitalization and employment in the industry (IBISWorld, 2021, 2022, 2022). Understanding how engineers learn to lead in engineering consulting firms is important as leaders of engineering consulting organizations have an important role. These firms engage in major projects that have significant impact on the public, such as transportation planning, drug manufacturing or drinking water distribution. However, leadership in this context has been understudied by both engineering educators and leadership scholars (Empson & Langley, 2015; Pantic-Dragisic, 2019).

This gap is important to address because, first, engineering educators have been called upon to equip engineering graduates with leadership capabilities so they can positively influence organizations, communities, and society (CEAB, 2017; National Academy of Engineering, 2004). However, extant research treats professional practice as one homogenous context, neglecting to consider influence of organizational form on leadership development. Secondly, engineering consulting is a type of professional service firm (PSF) (Malhotra & Morris, 2009; von Nordenflycht, 2010; von Nordenflycht et al., 2015). PSFs hold unique characteristics that differ from the traditional settings of leadership research, which are often hierarchical, bureaucratic organizations (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Hinings et al., 2015). The distinctive features of PSF impact how professionals define and enact leadership (Empson & Alvehus, 2020; Empson & Langley, 2015). These features include intense client-focus, high autonomy for workers, and a strong professional identity held by the staff (Hinings et al., 2015).



Yet, the study of leadership development within PSFs have been largely neglected by both PSF and leadership scholars (Empson & Langley, 2015).

Aim: Our paper aims to understand how engineering consultants learn and develop leadership capabilities inside engineering consulting organizations. As a part of this work, we examine how organizations may support (or hinder) leadership development of their staff, and how supports may differ across demographic groups.

Conceptual Framework

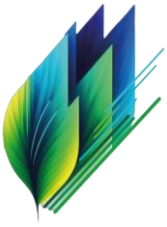
Our work is based on the position that leadership can be learned. We use Situated Learning theory by Lave and Wenger (Lave & Wenger, 1991) as our conceptual lens to examine professionals' development of leadership within engineering consulting firms. Situated learning describes learning as a social process of developing not only skills and knowledge, but also the learners' identity and beliefs through participation with their community - the engineering consulting firm, in our case (Lave, 1996; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Situated learning considers the limitless and intangible ways professionals engage within the firm. This theory is suitable for our study as "on-the-job" training is considered the primary means of development within engineering consulting firms.

Methodology

Our work uses a qualitative case study approach to examine our research questions within of one Canadian mid-size engineering consulting firm. Case studies assume that contextual conditions are pertinent to the understanding of the phenomenon, but where the boundary between the context and phenomenon may not be completely evident (Yin, 2018). Thus, this methodology considers the influence of the organizational form on an individual's leadership development. Our data comes from semi-structured interviews and documents analysis. We conducted semi-structured interviews with engineering consultants spanning different career stages (early-career to senior leaders) and demographic groups (racialized vs. non-racialized, men vs. women). The interviews sought to investigate participants' understanding of leadership and lived experience in developing their leadership capacity. We analyzed interviews transcripts using thematic analysis and the constant comparison method (Glaser, 1965; Glaser & Strauss, 2010), borrowing from grounded theory. We also examined the organization's professed leadership development strategies by interviewing HR professionals responsible for leadership programming. Document analysis of job roles and responsibilities, career progression paths and other relevant training policies supported triangulation of data for the case study.

Preliminary Results

Our preliminary results indicate engineering consultants define key leadership qualities to include communication, active listening, and ability to build or nurture relationships. These findings echo frequently cited skills in engineering leadership literature (Bayless, 2013; Farr et al., 1997; Farr & Brazil, 2009; Handley et al., 2018; Handley & Berdanier, 2019). Due to the complex, highly collaborative, multi-disciplinary nature of engineering projects (Doorewaard & Meihuizen, 2000; Koch, 2004; Malhotra & Morris, 2009), engineering consultants were required to leverage these relational skills over the course of their work, such as engaging with clients, peers, or other consultants. They recalled developing their leadership in informal and unplanned circumstances, despite the availability of formal leadership training opportunities.



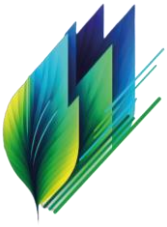
Participants were also greatly aided by expanded responsibilities or roles. These opportunities often came with sponsorship from a more influential member of the firm. Participants credited meaningful feedback as another important part of their development. However, quantity and quality of feedback were inconsistent as it depended on the mentor or peer who provided the feedback. Expected results from our paper will provide further insights into the various opportunities within engineering consulting firms impact leadership development, and how informal or inconsistent supports contribute to inequitable access to the development leadership skills.

Contributions and conclusions

This work contributes to the body of knowledge on professional learning, and, more specifically knowledge on how leadership is developed inside the knowledge-intensive, low hierarchical organizations of engineering consulting firms. Engineering educators benefit from this research by gaining further insight on how engineers learn to influence and lead, building on the existing work in this area (Rottmann et al., 2019, 2023). In addition, this work contributes to the limited empirical studies with PSF on leadership and the limited examination of engineering consulting firms that currently exists in PSF literature.

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Paper 70

A typology of approaches to professional learning and development and the utilization of knowledge and skills in post-pandemic multi-location expert work

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Abstract

After the Covid-19 pandemic, multi-location expert work has become more common than ever before. Studies on multi-location and remote work suggest that tasks requiring high concentration can be performed even more effectively when done remotely, compared to working on company premises (Birkinshaw et al., 2020). In contrast, work that necessitates teamwork, such as negotiation or joint brainstorming, has been found to be inefficient when conducted remotely (Whillans et al., 2021).

Workplace learning activities may vary according to occupation and career level, but they often include individual as well as social, collaborative or interactive learning activities (see e.g. Rintala et al., 2019). Expertise is seen as collective in nature (Hakkarainen et al., 2010), where competence is developed through adaptive and shared expertise in collaboration and participating in workplace situations (Hakkarainen, 2013; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Expertise is seen to develop largely informally and collectively, emphasizing the importance of teamwork.

Increased work in multiple locations affects the interaction among experts and, thus learning in ways we have not yet observed or fully understood. More up-to-date research on the relationships between interaction patterns, the utilization of knowledge and skills, and learning is therefore needed to shape future work. This study focuses on the collaborative situations in expert work. The research examines how remote working is perceived to impact the utilization of professional knowledge and skills, as well as learning and development in the work context.

Methods

This mixed method study combines quantitative survey and qualitative interview data collected in 2022 from 32 employees working in a digital business consulting and service organization. To collect data on informal workplace learning (IWL) activities, a validated IWL short scale consisting of eight items was employed (see Decius et al., 2019; 2023). For data collection on multi-location work and collaboration, thematic interviews were conducted with questions such as: How do you perceive the setting of collaboration (remote, hybrid, face-to-face) affects the



use of your knowledge and skills? Do you see the setting of the collaboration as having an impact on learning and development at work? If so, how?

The analysis was carried out using ideal-type analysis (Stapley et al., 2022), which allows for within-case and cross-case analysis with the aim of identifying groupings ('types') of participants within the dataset. The steps described by Stapley et al. (2022) were followed. Quantitative data and mean values were used to support analysis and to further compare ideal types.

Initial results

Eventually, three types of employees and approaches were recognised via analysis. Remote interaction may be perceived as hindering, promoting or not having an impact on learning or the utilization of knowledge and skills.

As a few initial indications of study's results, it could be noted that employees who perceive the setting of interaction as having no impact on learning are more likely to use reflection (learning from oneself) in their learning than other types. People who perceive remote interaction as promoting learning are less likely to use observation and feedback (learning from others) of others' work in their learning compared to the other groups.

A lot of development and learning are perceived to take place in informal work-related encounters. Spontaneous and informal discussions were found to occur more easily when working in the same premises. Asking colleagues for help is considered easier when done face-to-face. Online interaction is also perceived to narrow the network, making it easier to rely on people close to you rather than contacting those outside your circle.

Relevance to research field of work and learning

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a fundamental impact on the way we work. It appears that experts will not be returning to work on company premises to the same extent as before the pandemic. So far, studies have primarily focused on describing the challenges or benefits of multi-location work. This study indicates that employees can perceive remote interaction as either hindering or promoting their learning and the use of one's own knowledge and skills at work. The quantitative data provides further insights into the IWL activities that may influence employees' experience. This study will enhance our understanding of how future work should be shaped to meet the challenge of continuous learning.

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Paper 71

How mature are your learning efforts?! : A framework for maturity assessment of professional development function in companies

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Abstract

Maturity models have grown exponentially in the last three decades. They help companies assess the current effectiveness of their functions and support figuring out what capabilities they need to acquire next in order to improve their performance. Despite the rich literature on maturity models in many areas (project management, knowledge management, software engineering ...), “training and development” as a professional field suffers from a dearth of models conducive to its functions. Hence, this study aims at developing a framework for assessing the maturity level of training and development function in various organizations. To gather the necessary data, open-ended questionnaires were sent to 62 state-run and private companies. Besides, ATD annual reports on the State of the Industry (2018 to 2021) and LinkedIn Workplace Learning Reports (2019 to 2022) were analyzed. To analyze the data, a taxonomic strategy was used to shape the levels. Based on the research synthesis, a 4-level framework was constructed and evaluated by experts for its credibility. According to the developed framework, training and development efforts in companies can be assessed in four levels as follow:

Ignored: at this level, scarce attention to workplace learning is observed. Performance needs analysis is absent and performance gaps are assessed subjectively. Learning and development solutions are just required when a severe problem sets in. Work problems are simply attributed to lazy and irresponsible staff. As performance analysis is not carried out systematically, instructional design plays no role in learning events and off-the-shelf programs are purchased to fill the vague performance gaps. Development strategies are usually confined to traditional teacher-based lectures and on-the-job learning efforts are not generally recognized. In such companies, no plans are usually found for program evaluation and smile sheets are the only tools for reporting training effectiveness.

Documented: at this level, major processes are documented and followed. Performance analysis is usually carried out by simple questionnaires. As instructional design is an expensive and time-consuming effort, off-the-shelf programs are still popular among most managers and other beneficiaries. Although learning and development solutions are still confined to traditional teacher-based classrooms but there is a comprehensive plan for most staff to attend the training courses based on what their superordinate deem as necessary. Evaluation plans are



based on satisfaction surveys and learning assessment, but little attention is given to on-the-job application and ROI.

Accepted: at the third level, training events are planned systematically and welcomed by other departments. Performance analysis is based on various methods such as Root Cause Analysis, Competency Assessment, Job Analysis and the like. As performance gaps are assessed objectively, instructional design is carried out to fill the known gaps as purposefully as possible. Learning and development solutions are not limited to traditional lecture-based events and on-the-job learning efforts are more popular. Under such circumstances, evaluation plans are designed and implemented to recognize if learning solutions have improved performance gaps.

Strategic Partner: at this level, workplace learning solutions become parts of the company overall development plan. Top managers and other major beneficiaries give painstaking attention to human resource development programs and held the related officials accountable in this regard. Performance analysis is based on company core and functional competency models. Instructional design is among the company usual procedures and off-the-shelf programs have low status on their menu! Learning and development strategies are various and innovative solutions like game-based learning, simulations, learning contracts, microlearning, benchmarking, mentoring and coaching are adopted based the recognized needs. What is more, evaluation is usually carried out to find out if expectations are met or the training investment has paid off.

As is clear, maturity assessment in this framework is based on major processes named performance needs analysis, instructional design, development strategies, and evaluation plans.

Keywords: maturity models, training and development, maturity assessment

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Doing humor for creating integration opportunities through work: the social and professional guidance of workers with mental illness in work integration social enterprises

Ayla Bimonte

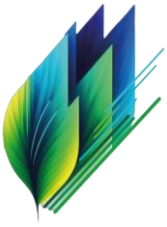
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Abstract

Since the 1960s, a wide range of services and procedures have been developed to help marginalized adults with mental illness to reintegrate the labor market. Amongst these, Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISE) intend to promote social and professional integration through productive work. Empirical research conducted in this field has highlighted the positive impact of WISE on reducing assumptions regarding unemployability of this population (Krupa et al., 2019). The literature also stresses the importance of professional and social guidance to promote integration at work (De Pierrefeu et al. 2017). In this context, the paper focuses on six Swiss WISE based in Geneva and analyzes video-based recordings and transcripts of guidance interactions at work involving professionals and workers with mental illness (Bimonte, 2020). Using an interactional and multimodal approach (Filliettaz et al. 2020), the paper aims to understand how social and professional guidance is interactionally accomplished in this context.

Community of practice can be defined as an aggregate of people who are engaged in an endeavor and have specific practices as ways of doing things, ways of talking, belief, values, etc. (Eckert & McCollen-Ginet, 1992). For the workers in WISES the integration process requires for them to acquire the cultural norms of the society and of the working and community. Research in sociolinguistic and pragmatic perspective considers humor as "one potential manifestation of the discourse of a community of practice" (Holmes & Marra, 2002, p.1685) : so integrate a community of practices also means to learn how the humor is done in that specific community. In this sense, humor can be considered as a boundary marker between belonging or not belonging into a community of practice. From this perspective, humor can be seen as an indicator of the worker's socialization process (Mak, 2017). For this study we are going to investigate humor and its characteristics in a community of practice in an interactional perspective. The data shows that practitioners involved in the community of practice of social enterprises often use humor as means for accomplishing joint actions through face-to-face communication. In this context, the paper aims to understand how jokes are accomplished by participants and what kinds of functions they are fulfilling in relation to social and professional aspects of guidance at work (Holmes, 2000 ; Holmes 2006 ; Holmes & Marra, 2002).

The analyses conducted on the data show that participants may use humor to produce directive speech acts in an indirect manner. In such cases, the propositional content described by the joke is interactionally addressed to a

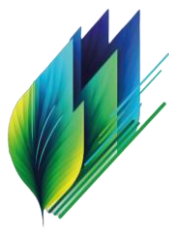


designated recipient and indirectly refers the non-preferential nature of the behavior of the recipient. In this case humor can be a resource for progressing towards a community of practice by learning the rules and values of it. In other situations, humor can be used for affiliative purposes, and participants use humor to talk about their work so as to collectively and progressively agree about the best procedure to apply. In this case humor can create opportunities to be part of the group and reinforces the sense of belonging to a community of practice.

More globally, the analysis illustrates that doing humor and making jokes “about” and “with” workers with mental illness raises important challenges in terms of interactional competences and requires the situated accomplishment of interactional methods referring to a specific community of practice. As such, sharing jokes can be seen as opportunities for socialization in the workplace (Mak, 2017). There is, however, a risk of stigmatisation especially when humor is expressed in front of witnesses which can contribute to create sub-communities and make some participants vulnerable.

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Work-life Transitions in Times of Change: Institutional Support Practices in Canada and Germany

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Abstract

Major changes due to digitalization, migration and climate change are not only observable at the societal level but also affect individuals' pathways of securing, maintaining, or changing employment. The constant change in workplace and occupational requirements bring about increasingly frequent and complex transitions through working life which may present individuals with the need and opportunity for learning and coping (Bernhard et al., 2023). These work-life transitions are associated with several changes, for instance in employment status, in occupation, or in location and can be represented by a complex of personal, institutional and/or brute facts (Billet et al., 2021). Of particular interest in this paper is the role of institutional supports in shaping and supporting these workplace transitions, particularly against the backdrop of diverse regional and cultural approaches to employment and occupations. Drawing on a comparative study of institutional practices of transition support, the aim of this paper is to identify and discuss ways in which learning for and through work-life transitions is institutionally supported in different paradigms of occupation and employment.

Theoretically, this paper builds on the notion of *doing transitions* which asserts "that transitions do not simply exist but are constantly...shaped and produced through social practices, and that transitions emerge and are constantly reproduced and transformed through the interrelation of discourses, institutional regulation" (Walther et al., 2022). It is through the interplay of these discursive, institutional, and individual modes that transitions are constantly produced and reproduced. In this paper, the institutional mode is at the centre of analysis, though always understood in relation to the other dimensions of shaping transitions. Put differently, institutional supports of work-related transitions, e.g. employment agencies or individual counselling, do not solely rely on the individual life-situation of the 'transitioners', but also on laws, policies, and cultural assumptions.

To account for and learn from historical and cultural contexts that affect institutional practices of supporting work-life transitions, this study further draws on the concept of *earning-schema* (Kraus, 2009). This concept articulates those requirements which individuals are confronted with in the context of employment. These include the skills and knowledge to complete work tasks, general competencies, as well as the attitudes towards and relationship with employment (Kraus, 2009). This later relationship with employment will be of particular interest in this paper as it illuminates the links between individuals' approach to work and specific forms of structuring society, such as the labour market, welfare regime and the educational system.

Data have been gathered through semi-structured interviews with experts in employment service providers in Germany and Canada. Comparing practices in



these two countries yields valuable insights against the backdrop of changing significance of occupation in individuals' work-life: Whereas a strong albeit declining orientation on occupations is present in Germany (Rosendahl & Wahle, 2017), the Canadian context is marked by a stronger focus on employability – understood as “individuals' ability to obtain and perform the tasks related to a job” (Nilsson & Nyström, 2013, p. 173). The data are analysed through qualitative content analysis (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2023) with particular focus on the different configurations of qualification and competency, and the tension between flexibility and stability throughout working life.

First results point to different sets of practices in which institutional actors support individuals going through work-life transitions. These actors learn to navigate and engage with the tensions between the needs of individuals', the institutional constraints, and the policy directives. Here, the different employment schemes become salient as the different attitudes toward and relationship with employment affect the ways in which transitions through working life are shaped in the two research contexts.

The findings from this study will be discussed regarding their implications for the provision of institutional supports of work-life transitions in times of change. Learning from the competency-oriented support practices in Canada may be of relevance for regions in which the previously strong orientation on occupations is changing and receding.

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Transformation of Work Processes, Collaboration and Learning through Remote Patient Monitoring

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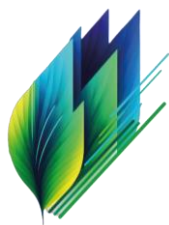
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Abstract

Demographic changes with an elderly population and more patients living longer with chronic illnesses will result in an increased need for care (OECD/European Union 2022, Maresova et al. 2019). Remote patient monitoring (RPM), which allows patients to monitor their health and medical conditions from locations outside of healthcare, such as at home, is one example of a new digital service intended to simplify for patients, nurses, and other health professionals. RPM can broadly be defined as the use of digital technology (apps, sensors, wearables) that enables people to monitor their health and well-being automatically, systematically, and over time – for example, aspects like diet, exercise, sleep, mood, blood pressure and heart rate (e.g., Feng et al. 2021, Azevedo, Rodrigues & Londral 2021). RPM aims at enhancing patients' quality of life through self-care and active participation while also optimizing healthcare resource utilization by reducing in-person visits and hospital admissions. However, there is a lack of evidence of patient benefit and risks (Vallo Hult et al. 2023), and more research is needed regarding how RPM affects clinical practice and how healthcare professionals perceive its impact on their work (Černá 2019; Vallo Hult et al. 2019; Islind et al. 2022).

In this study, we focus on how nurses' work is changed by RPM. In their professional development, it is mandated that nurses should develop the ability to use digital technology in the care of patients, like remote care (Asthma, Allergy, and COPD Nurses Association, 2015). Previous research has identified and outlined challenges and essential knowledge for the digitalization of healthcare, highlighting the need for more research on learning, collaboration and competence development (Svensson 2019; Vallo Hult et al. 2020; Svensson & Vallo Hult 2022), especially regarding nurses continuous professional development, and what role



collegial and collaborative learning and knowledge sharing have for this learning (Khademi et al. 2021, Mlambo, Silén & McGrath 2021). The aim of this paper is to investigate barriers and opportunities of RPM in relation to nurses' working, collaborating and learning. The study is guided by the following research question: What are the implications of RPM on nurses' work, collaboration and learning?

Method

The research setting is in Swedish healthcare and the study is linked to regional work on RPM, based on the development work in one of the larger county hospitals, representing a digital transformation that connects the work of nurses in hospitals, primary care, and municipal healthcare with patients in a different way than healthcare has been traditionally structured (Schoultz et al. 2022). The methodological approach is qualitative. Individual interviews will be conducted with asthma, allergy, and COPD nurses, to gather their perspectives and experiences of RPM. The data will be analyzed thematically using NVivo 14.

Findings and Expected Contribution

The results of this study will take into account the nurses' ability to use digital technology for RPM of patients with asthma, allergy and COPD. This changed work includes supporting and guiding patients and their relatives to manage patient-generated health data and sort through digital information. The findings will also shed light on how nurses establish collaboration across organizational boundaries and learn through collaboration with other professions and with patients. Few studies have focused on this area, especially concerning allergies, asthma, and COPD. In this research, we present a model for nurses' work, collaboration and learning in relation to RPM. The model will include nurses' perspectives on RPM, in terms of the challenges and opportunities it presents for changed work processes and learning. It will also include how collaborative learning can be developed between nurses, their colleagues from different professions, and patients. Based on forthcoming results, another contribution may be to provide recommendations on how RPM can support, simplify, and streamline nurses' clinical work (e.g., through visualization and more efficient consultations with better-prepared patients).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study is expected to contribute knowledge of how new work processes and learning can be integrated into regular work through interprofessional collaboration. By identifying and analyzing nurses' experiences of how RPM affects their clinical work, the results of this study can contribute to developing and improving the daily work of the nurses and the patient experience.

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7

*Vocational education
and learning*



Paper 75

VET teachers' experiences of working with students in need of special support in relation to workplace-based learning

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Abstract

In Sweden, all students have the right to the same support during workplace-based learning as they have in school. Although there are some difficulties when it comes to designing a functional support for students during workplace-based learning (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2014; Swedish National Agency for Education, 2018.). The students' own experiences of the support they receive during workplace-based learning is an area that has not yet been highlighted in Sweden. Neither have the experiences of VET teachers working with these students in relation to workplace-based learning been researched. VET teachers play a central and important role in a well-functioning collaboration between school and working life, which has a major impact on the quality of vocational education and training (Cedefop, 2016). Despite the fact that VET teachers have a central and important role in Swedish VET, research on VET teachers in particular is limited (Fejes, Lindberg & Wärvik, 2017). The aim of this upcoming project is to contribute with knowledge on how VET teachers' experience the work with students in need of support before and during workplace-based learning in Swedish upper secondary vocational education and training. Furthermore, the purpose is to highlight experiences both from VET students who are in need of minor additional adjustments but also from VET students who are in need of greater adaptations and special support. In order to contribute to a wider understanding, VET teachers' experiences of working with students in need of support in relation to workplace-based learning will be highlighted. In this project, Biesta's three domains of education will be applied as this theoretical framework enables the visibility of how VET teachers experience the work with a focus on qualifications, socialization, and subjectification. In order to examine how teachers discuss their students, special educational perspectives will also be employed. These include the compensatory, the critical, and the dilemma perspective.

Methods

I will use a qualitative approach with semi structured interviews with both VET teachers and VET students in Swedish upper secondary vocational education and training. The criteria for the selection are students who are in need of support (additional adjustments and / or special support) in one or more of their vocational subjects and VET teachers with experience of working with students in need of special support in relation to the workplace-based learning. To analyze the empirical data, a thematic analysis will be conducted.



Expected results

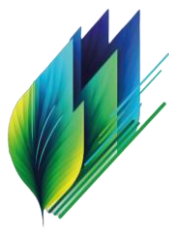
Expected outcomes are findings on how VET teachers are working with students in need of support before and during workplace-based learning. VET students' views on support will be noticed later on in order to be able to make a comparison between VET students' and VET teachers' experiences. Hopefully, the final results will be able to make visible strengths and weaknesses in the work with support before and during workplace-based learning. The hope is to provide knowledge to Swedish upper secondary schools so that work with students in need of support in relation to workplace-based learning can be enhanced.

Relevance to research field of work and learning

The relevance to the research field of work and learning is high, as students participating in a Swedish upper secondary vocational program are expected to have completed at least 15 weeks of workplace-based learning and be employable upon graduating. However, what happens to students who, for some reason, face difficulties in being in a workplace?

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Managing workplace learning in vocational education and training colleges in South Africa

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Abstract

The focus on strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is an international imperative (UNESCO, 2016). In South Africa this comes alongside the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (2023) showing that youth account for approximately 46,5% of the total unemployment and a governmental recommendation for work-integrated learning (WIL) to enhance the employability of graduates from this sector (Batholmeus & Pop, 2019).

Aim

The aim of this study was to explore the procedures and systems to identify, initiate and maintain effective partnerships between TVET colleges and industry partners.

Literature Framing

A critical literature review preceded the study. Seven purposes were identified for partnerships; development of students, lecturers, curriculum, college, company, region and nation. The need for strategic college-industry partnerships were highlighted to address training needs and employability of students.

Methodology and Method

This was a sub-study a national research project of the 50 public TVET colleges in South Africa. An interpretivist approach was followed (De Vos et al., 2011) with collection of quantitative and qualitative data exploration of meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). There was authority from the national education department, ethical approval from a university and site permission from the TVET Colleges. Key ethical dimensions of the study were informed consent, confidentiality, protection of personal information and data storage.

The target population were senior managers of partnerships; and staff members in the role of industry liaison or placement officer. A non-probability, purposive sampling technique was applied (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012).

Data was gathered through a national survey across the TVET Colleges, websites of a random sample of 14 colleges, document review and focus group



interviews. Analysis of text data followed the steps of data coding, categorisation and generation of themes (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Results / Conclusions

Many TVET students do not benefit from a work placement. The focus on management challenges uncovered these as that; peri-urban colleges have low access to employers, capacity falls below placement numbers required, poorly managed partnerships end prematurely, curricula do not meet industry needs, funding is the major challenge.

Mechanisms for responding to challenges were found. These are discussed under the thematic areas of people, policy and procedure, and elements of partnerships. People in colleges and industry are essential to successful partnerships for workplace learning. Also critical are effective policies and procedures for the management of college/industry partnerships. In addition, eight elements of any partnership were identified. One is to “seek new industry partners” (P13) and “initiate the partnership” (P4). Student stipends were most frequently mentioned, followed by the “formalising of the partnership” (P11) and establishing the purpose of the partnership. Other elements included “Monitoring of the partnership” (P20) and the importance of “maintaining existing partnerships” (P5). A further key to success was that all roles are “clearly defined in the founding agreement” (P8). Lastly, training and capacity building so that staff could be effective (Duncan, 2017) was stressed.

Relevance to research in work and learning

It was demonstrated that college-industry partnerships for student and lecturer/staff development are the focus. To achieve the purpose of workplace learning, structures to support the partnership are needed. Industry placements do not meet all the requirements of WIL and alternatives must be included such as simulations, and laboratory-based learning. The shift encouraged is to envisage college-industry partnerships for the purpose of enhancing learning. These partnerships are not static formations, created and then ignored; they are dynamic and changing, and require constant monitoring and active involvement to establish, build, maintain and extend the partnerships for the benefit of all.

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Paper 77

“I take the knowledge that’s in me and I share it”: How lecturers taught each other to prepare students for a field of practice

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Abstract

The economic impact of power outages and resultant need to establish a stable electricity supply remains one of South Africa’s most critical challenges. As electrical infrastructure ages and needs to be replaced it is not surprising that there is a critical shortage of Electrical Engineering Technicians. South African technical and vocational education and training (TVET) colleges offer a qualification in Electrical Infrastructure Construction (EIC), intended to play key role in addressing South Africa’s electricity crisis by preparing students for careers such as: electrical technician, power sub-station manager, electrical contractor, foreman and electrical inspector. The practical exit-level course, Electrical Workmanship, is a key component of the qualification and is the focus of this study. It is in this practical course that the students develop the skills and practices that are needed to install and maintain South Africa’s electrical infrastructure.

There is general understanding that the majority of TVET college lecturers lack both field specific and educational qualifications, and lack the practical knowledge or work-based experience necessary to prepare students for working life (e.g., Taylor & van der Bijl, 2018; Zinn et al. 2019). The study’s aim was challenge these assumptions about TVET lecturers and to obtain the lecturers’ perspectives on preparing students for the world of work. The study therefore responds to the research question: How do the college lecturers prepare students for the world of work?

This study drew on theoretical frameworks that examine knowledge forms in vocational subjects (e.g., Maton, 2014; Winch, 2013). The theoretical framework was helpful in identifying knowledge structures and their organizing principles and for articulating the relationships between different forms, in particular the different forms of practical knowledge and their role in preparing students for work transitions.

Methods / Methodology

The methodology for the study drew on realist evaluation principles (Pawson & Tilley, 1997) in trying to uncover the underpinning logic of the lecturers’ practices. The researchers conducted interviews with lecturers in three TVET colleges across South Africa to gain insights into their prior experiences, views on the curriculum, and practices for preparing students for work in the field of electrical infrastructure construction.



(Expected) Results / Conclusions

The lecturers came from diverse backgrounds and had acquired different educational qualifications and industry experiences. This diversity influenced their approaches to teaching Electrical Workmanship, but all lecturers were equally committed to ensuring that the students were as well-prepared as possible for the work they would take on post qualification. The lecturers had to deal with a poorly conceptualised curriculum, out-of-date textbooks, and inadequate equipment and facilities (as well as the constant power outages which underscored the urgent need for their programme). The lecturers engaged in a range of practices to mitigate the challenges they faced. All lecturers understood the need for better curriculum alignment with industry requirements, the role of theory in a vocational curriculum; through collaboration they were discovering pedagogies of practice to support students' transition to work. Far from the majority of TVET lecturers lacking the education and experience necessary to teach and prepare students for the workforce, the study found that lecturers' were engaging in innovative ways of preparing their students for the world of work.

Relevance to research field of work and learning

This study on lecturers' practice in Electrical Workmanship is relevant to the field of work and learning as it offers insights into how vocational education and training programs could better prepare students for careers through a better connection between theoretical and practical components, ensuring industry relevance, and fostering collaborative teaching approaches. These are universal concerns for work and learning.

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Paper 78

Recognition of prior learning: How does it fit into the institutional logic of VET systems? The case of Switzerland

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Abstract

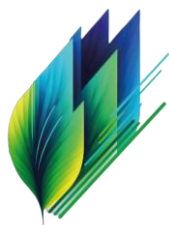
The concept of recognition of prior learning (RPL) is at its core a simple and somehow fascinating idea: competences or knowledge acquired in a previous work or education context should be formally recognised in the VET system. People should not be forced to learn things twice just because VET institutions are not able to deal with knowledge or competences acquired outside the system. Instead of making people duplicate efforts, VET system institutions and the labour market should act more flexibly and find better solutions that allow recognition prior learning.

This idea of RPL can be analysed as a “travelling concept” that has been spread through international policy discourses in different national context. As in many European countries, it reached the Swiss VET policy more than twenty years ago, but it still seems difficult to fully implement it in the Swiss “vocational order”. The dual system with its corporatist and collective modes of action and cooperation is very strong in this country. Therefore, the institutional logic of the “vocational order” organises not only the VET system but also the labour market and is, to a certain extent, part of the national culture.

The recognition of prior learning is an important issue in all areas of transition and valorisation of competences. For example, in the context of migration, when people bring competences from their contexts of origin and encounter obstacles in accessing the labour market or the education system. Or when people want to change employer and have no formal qualification of the competences they have acquired and applied in their current employment. For this reason, RPL is not only part of the “up-skilling-agenda” of the European Union and other international agencies, but is also seen as an instrument for national social policy. Low-skilled workers in particular should have the opportunity to have their competences acquired in informal or other contexts recognised by a formal certificate or even a formal vocational qualification.

In the dual system, the relationship between learning and work – both as learning for work and as learning through work – is highly institutionalised and its organisation is the subject of institutionalised negotiations between actors from economy, politics and the education system. In contrast, RPL does not focus on the organisation of the relationship between learning and work, but on the outcomes of learning through work. Unlike the corporatist or collective VET system, it is an individualistic approach.

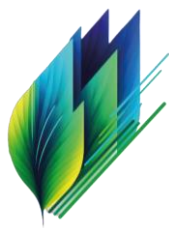
In my paper I will analyse, based on a document analysis, the ongoing frictions between the institutional logic of the VET system and the inherent logic of RPL.



With a systematic comparison between the institutional logic of VET system in Switzerland and the inherent logic of RPL, I will show that RPL is on the one hand very helpful for some target group in the Swiss labour market, but on the other hand is not a suitable instrument to pursue the associated socio-political goals. In order to contribute to the achievement of the social policy goals, RPL must be complemented by other instruments that are better suited to the life and work situation of the target group of low-skilled people. Given the institutional logic of VET-system in Switzerland, RPL is mainly of interest to the state and individuals, but not to employers. Nevertheless, in some vocations and sectors the RPL approach meets also their interests.

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Analysing Vocational education in Swedish folk high schools

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Abstract

Research framing

Vocational education has a long history at Swedish folk high schools, since the first schools were founded in 1868 (Landström, 2004; Lundh Nilsson, 2010). By then, the participants mainly were sons of farmers, who were trained to develop the work at the farm they were to inherit. Today, there are 156 Swedish folk high schools, mainly providing non-formal adult education in general, aesthetical, and vocational courses. There are many different vocational programmes, mainly filling gaps in the provision of vocational education in the formal school system. The schools are publicly funded but have a high degree of freedom to create their own courses. Almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the schools are owned by NGOs, and the rest are publicly owned by regional authorities. The NGO-owned schools could have an ideological profile, e.g., religious, or political. Furthermore, the folk high schools have a pedagogical profile that should include a high degree of participant influence, cooperation etc.

The aim of this study is to identify and discuss how vocational programmes at Swedish folk high schools can contribute to the participants' actual vocational competence, their formal competence and qualifications, and their relationship to potential employers.

The discussion is based on Ellström's (1992) model of how vocational competence is established through the relationships between actual and formal competence, and actual and formal qualification requirements at work and in the labour market. Conceptually, in the discussion we will also take into account both teachers' and students' sense making, i.e., vocational teachers' understanding of their mission as a teacher in the folk high school context (Andersson et al., 2013), and participants' motives for studying and the possible outcomes (Andersson & Karlsson, 2020; Nylander et al., 2020).

Methods

Interviews were conducted with teachers and participants from 11 vocational programmes at 9 folk high schools. The two categories of interviewees were interviewed separately, and we interviewed at least 1 teacher and 1 participant from 9 of the programmes. In the remaining 2 programmes we only interviewed 1 teacher, as we did not find participants who could participate in an interview. In two cases, a group of 2 teachers were interviewed, and in some cases 2 or 3 participants from the same programme were interviewed (individually or in a group interview). Interviews were conducted partly on site at the schools, partly at



a distance via Zoom software. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed, and the transcriptions were analysed qualitatively.

Results / Conclusions

The findings will show how the vocational programmes focus on the actual vocational competence, more or less situated in and connected to the broader aims of folk high schools in terms of *Bildung*. The focus on formal competence and qualifications varies significantly between courses. In general, it is somewhat less prominent, though there are specific vocational courses where qualifications are emphasized. The relationship to potential employers differs, depending on how established the programme and the vocation are. Some programmes are established and connected to a clearly defined vocations, such as cantor, while other established programmes, for e.g., leisure leaders, prepare for a broader and less clear labour market. New programmes could be closely connected to needs in an existing, local, labour market, e.g., a need of sawmill operators, or be developed in cooperation with an emerging and more unclear labour market of, e.g., game development.

Relevance to research field of work and learning

As mentioned, vocational education at folk high schools fills gaps in Swedish vocational education, primarily providing training for vocations not covered by the formal school system. Research on this part of the non-formal adult education provided by folk high schools is limited. Therefore, this study is presenting new and relevant knowledge concerning these programmes and their relationship to work and the labour market.

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Paper 80

The formulation of the policy of education based on a *scientific foundation and proven experience* at folk high schools in Sweden

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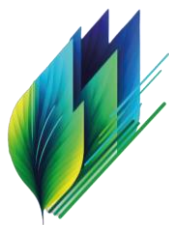
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Abstract

The idea of building professional practice on evidence has been debated internationally for decades in various societal sectors, not least in education (Eryaman & Schneider, 2017). Within education, a discourse gradually emerged about the integration of research and practice-based knowledge with the aim of, among other things, improving student learning. Aligning with such discourse, Sweden, as the first country, legislated in 2010 that education in the public school system must rest on a scientific foundation and proven experience (Rapp et al., 2017). To facilitate teachers' interpretation and implementation of this Education Act, educational authorities such as the Swedish National Agency for Education assist with operational support, i.e., with how research-based methods and routines can improve teaching. In sum, this policy is something all teachers within compulsory and upper secondary schools, as well as municipal adult education, have to adapt to. However, one form of adult education in Sweden, the folk high schools, is governed by a different legislation.

The folk high schools are instead based on the ideal of "free and voluntary" popular education (Hallqvist et al., 2020; Laginder et al., 2013). This means they can develop their courses independently of the Act that governs the rest of the Swedish school system. Such freedom provides opportunities to develop courses and possibilities to organize teaching differently. At the same time, the freedom might pose challenges to teachers when interpreting the teaching mission in the folk high school, particularly concerning central pedagogical concepts (Harlin, 2014). Although independent in a wider sense than the regular school system, folk high schools are still embedded in and thus influenced by general societal ideas as well as by discourses within education more broadly. For example, within specific folk high school courses, such as the youth recreation leader program preparing for work in the leisure sector with young people and children, the schools via the program's member organization have decided that the education must build on a scientific foundation and proven experience (Ruschkowski et al., 2019). Thus, these schools exert their freedom by governing themselves through policies closely aligned with key legislation that governs the regular school system.

In this paper, we specifically analyze the processes through which the policy of education based on a scientific foundation and proven experience is taken up and interpreted within the youth recreation leader program. How is the policy of education based on a scientific foundation and proven experience formulated



within the youth recreation leader program at folk high schools in Sweden? To carry out such an analysis we draw on curriculum theory as developed by Lindensjö and Lundgren (2014). They illustrated the movement of policy in interrelated arenas linking the national with the local: from policy formulation to policy transformation, to policy realization. This theoretical framework enables the identification of how national policies and their content are locally organized, elucidating the relations between them. To our end, the focus is strictly on the policy formulation arena which encompasses the ways policy is interpreted by different actors. The data to be analyzed consists of 33 policy documents divided into 3 types, totaling 2200 pages. They provide significant narratives from 1976 to 2017 that in various ways address the research question. The documents include the national curriculum for the youth recreation leader program; government bills and inquiries focusing on popular education or the folk high school; and finally reports by the Swedish National Board of Education alternatively the member organization Fritidsledarskolorna.

The preliminary results indicate that the initial formulations of education based on a scientific foundation are shaped in ways emphasizing Fritidsledarskolorna's various collaborations with higher education institutions and researchers. Later formulations instead emphasize teachers' use of research-based literature in classroom practice which indicates a shift in meaning. The result also indicates that the initial formulation of education based on proven experience focuses on teacher collaboration and teachers' further education.

This paper contributes knowledge to the field of work and learning by identifying the specific ways that vocational education based on a scientific foundation and proven experience at folk high schools in Sweden is interpreted in policy documents. Such knowledge informs which conditions of meaning are made possible through policy, which in turn shapes some of the possibilities for how teaching and learning might be organized in professional practice.

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Paper 81

Twitter data in substantial VET research: Discussing occupations, briefly but thoroughly

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Abstract

Recently, research on twitter data has become quite common, applications ranging from early warning tools for health threads ([epitweetr](#)) to real time political analysis ([sparta](#)). Despite being brief statements about current topics, tweets also allow for the reconstruction of popular discussions and the development of opinions on topics like occupations. We look into how the perception of occupations differs geographically and temporally [1]. We also look into the discussion of essential jobs in Germany during the pandemic to find out how these occupations were perceived and what changed so that essential occupations could change over time [2, 3]. This helps us understand how occupations are being seen by their incumbents and at least parts of society. While analyzing these data gives valuable and unprecedented insights, it is also important to assess the applicability and use of these data.

Methods / Methodology

Twitter data can be seen as a type of textual data that has come to researchers' attention in the last years [4]. These large bodies of textual data lead to the development of new analysing methods, helping us understand new trends in (continuous) Vocational Education and Training [5] and thus broaden our understanding of developments in learning and work. We show the development and application of such new methods with our analysis of twitter data.

In our analysis we combine different types of data to enrich and supplement each other: Twitter data can give us qualitative information on how occupations are being seen by sentiment analyses. Traditional survey data like BIBB/BAuA-Employment Surveys [most recent: 6] give us representative information on the structures of essential and non-essential occupations. While we show the application of proven methods (like sentiment analysis) from different disciplines (like data sciences, computer linguistics and sociology) we are also methodologically interested in the question how these types of data relate to each other. Social science data is specifically designed for answering research questions



like “How do essential occupations differ to non-essential occupations? Who is working in them? Are they correlated to specific tasks or qualifications?”. These data are objective, valid, reliable and representative [7: 94ff.]. Twitter data as social media data were not designed to answer research questions in the first place, but can still give us valuable insights into developments of and changes in opinions and perceptions. But are they comparably objective, valid and reliable? We tentatively answer these questions and search for criteria to assess the usefulness and applicability of social media data for labor market and VET research, taking their structure [8] and authenticity [9,10,11] as starting points.

Conclusions

We will show how sentiments of occupations differ across time and between regions [1]. We will show how discussions of essential occupations relate to the course of the COVID19-pandemic and a shift and valuation of essential jobs [3]. And beyond the proof of concept for the enrichment of data and enhancement of methods of analysis we will look into criteria for the assessment of quality and usefulness of different types of data for labor market and VET analyses.

Relevance to research field of work and learning

Our work assesses whether recent trends in data usage are applicable and helpful for researching work and learning. We show how novel methods from different disciplines can be put to substantial use but also clearly point out problems in using textual mass data like twitter data for these kinds of (and generally in) social science research.

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Paper 82

What do students do when they simulate: A study of VET student vocational learning

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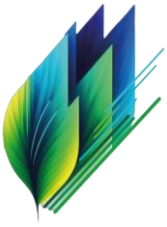
Abstract

The use of simulators as a method of supporting professional and vocational learning is growing in popularity within many different areas. There is extensive research concerning the outcomes of simulation training, concluding that it is an effective teaching method for individuals to train on specific tasks, apply knowledge, and develop their ability to work independently (e.g. Chernikova et al., 2020). In education, the use of simulators marks the emergence of a new VET teaching practice when it comes to teachers' work and how to organize for vocational learning (Ahn & Nyström, 2023). However, research on students' experiences and what they actually do when learning with simulators is scarce. The aim of this study is to explore VET students' vocational learning while they use simulation as a learning method by asking the following questions:

- What do the students do during the simulation training?
- What kind of actions and interactions emerge in simulation training?

The study draws upon a practice theory (Kemmis, 2009; Schatzi, 2001). Schatzki defines practice as “...embodied, materially mediated arrays of human activity centrally organised around shared practical understanding” (2001, p. 11). The practice consists of arrangements of entities that are humans, artifacts, organisms, and things, as well as organised activities. It means that a practice presupposes a certain arrangement of activities that hang together through sayings, doings (Schatzki, 2001) and relatings (Kemmis, 2009). In other words, the key aspects of practices are bodily activities in form of sayings and doings which are understandable and possible within a specific practice. Therefore, the material set-up is not merely tools or background in a practice rather an active participant that presupposes these activities.

This study was carried out within upper secondary vocational education in Sweden. The empirical material is based on ethnographic observations of two different vocational education programmes at two upper secondary schools in 2019–2022. The researchers followed one class of students (n=13) from the Natural Resource Use Programme (school A) and two classes from the Vehicle and Transport Programme, one at school A (n=13) and one at school B (n=20), from their first year of the programme. These programmes were chosen since they have used different types of simulations to teach vocational knowledge as a part of their curricula. Two types of high-fidelity simulators were used, simulator and virtual reality (VR) glasses. In total, the researchers followed the students (n=46) and their teachers (n =12) during the entire school day (around 90 hours) during which the

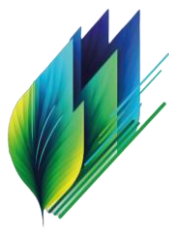


students had their vocational subjects. In addition to field notes, the researchers took photos and video recordings of students training. The thematic analysis is applied (Braun & Clark, 2006).

The result describes and explores three types of interactions: interaction with other students, with the teachers and with the simulator and its material set-up. The study shows that relationships with other students in the form of peer learning are important in order to both understand this particular teaching practice and specific exercises. The relationships with the teachers show that the teachers need to not only teach vocational skills but also help the students to navigate and understand the simulation as such. Furthermore, the simulator and its material set-up are not passive tools for student learning; instead, the study shows that the simulator actively engages as partners that guide and negotiate with the students. These different relationships show that the use of simulation as a method of vocational learning is a way to use resources more effectively since it is possible for students to train without using the real machine or having teachers constantly present. It also gives students the opportunity to self-regulate their own learning but also to support their fellow students.

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Continuing vocational education and training in the light of economic and technological change

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Abstract

Both the business cycle (BC) and technological change have a major impact on the skills requirements of the labour market (Eichhorst & Rinne, 2019). Continuing vocational education and training (CVET) helps workers to cope with these changes and ensures employability (Ebner & Ehlert, 2018). However, research on the relation between the BC and CVET is limited. So far, most research on CVET and the BC has focused only on firm-financed training, has been limited to major events such as the 2008/09 financial crisis or, the Covid-19 pandemic, and has neglected further influences, such as technological change (e.g. Bellmann et al., 2014; Bellmann et al., 2021; Boeren et al., 2020; Dietz & Zwick, 2020).

Human capital theory (Becker, 1962) suggests that, on the one hand, employees may invest more in CVET in times of recession to substitute for the lack of firm sponsorship, but, on the other hand, increased financial constraints may hinder employees investment in CVET. In addition to the BC, technological change and related changes in job task affect in employees' participation in CVET (e.g. Ehlert, 2020; Lukowski et al., 2021; Wotschack, 2020). As the BC and technological change are strongly interrelated (Petersen, 2017), we analyse, whether technological change moderates the relation between BC and CVET.

To this end, we create a new database using longitudinal data from the adult cohort (SC6) of the National Educational Panel Study (NEPS), enriched with both administrative data on BC indicators (e.g. unemployment rates; GDP) and indicators of technological change (e.g. EU-KLEMS). The BC indicators are merged with the NEPS-SC6 data three months prior to the employee's participation in CVET, as we assume that there is some time for planning between experiencing a change in the BC and starting CVET. As the dates of participating in CVET are not fully surveyed in the NEPS, we impute the "most common" CVET month from the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP) by statistical matching. In the case of no CVET the indicators are merged 15 months prior to the interview, as the CVET question covers a period of 12 months (plus a 3-month planning period). For the data linkage we use regional, annual, firm size or sectoral information.

For CVET, we can distinguish whether CVET is financed only by the employer or whether the employee contributes to it – to test for substitution. For our analysis



we use different fixed effects panel models that address additional methodological issues such as unobserved heterogeneity, reversed causality or asymmetric BC effects (Allison, 2019; Collischon & Eberl, 2020). Furthermore, interaction effects are used to determine whether indicators of technological change moderate the relation between the BC and CVET.

Preliminary results show similar influences of BC indicators on employee-financed and firm-financed CVET participation. In addition, GDP and unemployment rates have opposite relations with CVET participation i.e. GDP reduces CVET, while the unemployment rate increases it. These results suggest a negative effect of cyclical upswings and a positive effect of cyclical downturns on CVET. In addition, technology indicators and BC indicators interact with each other, either increasing or decreasing the influence of the BC on CVET.

As the last decade and current events have shown, the BC affects our daily lives as well as the labour and training markets. Moreover, the current transition processes including those due to technological change supposedly require training. The paper therefore is relevant to the field of work and learning because it is the first to examine the influence of the ups and downs of the BC on CVET over a long period of time, while taking the technological change into account. Understanding these processes could help to provide appropriate support for employees' skills development and for firms' training provision in times of crisis.

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Symposium

Right competence at the right time – but for whom? The transformation and expansion of higher vocational education

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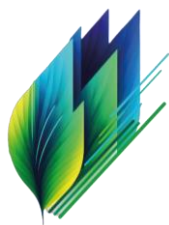
Chair:

Rebecca Ye, Stockholm University

Rationale

This symposium offers a forum to interrogate the development of higher vocational education (HVE). As an expanding and increasingly “popular” educational segment, HVE presents itself as a relevant case for shining a torch on methodological, theoretical and empirical advances within the research fields of vocational education, adult and workplace learning. Specifically, our symposium gathers papers focusing on the transformation and expansion that have taken place in Sweden. Swedish HVE is a marketized, project-based, publicly-funded form of education and training that takes place at the post-secondary level. The explicit aim of Swedish HVE is to equip training participants with the “right competence at the right time” in order for them to integrate quickly into work where there are local labour market shortages or needs. Due to long-term challenges posed by gender segregation in the labour market, immigration, ageing, and following recent public health and economic crises, government investment in this educational segment has soared.

However, despite this intensifying interest, research in this area is still nascent. The papers that will be presented in this symposium will offer new insights, drawing on mixed-methods analyses (e.g., interviews, register data) and will showcase theorising and empirical findings from both the employers’ as well as participants’ perspectives. The symposium will be chaired by Rebecca Ye, PI of a Swedish Research Council funded-project on the expansion of HVE. The papers will be commented on by Professor Bernd Käßplinger, Chair of Continuing Education, a distinguished scholar in the field of adult education and learning. While the papers focus on the Swedish case, overall, the topic is generative for a wider audience, and directly related to RWL’s sub-themes of vocational education and learning and economics of work and learning. Moreover, the symposium will also address researching work and learning in times of socioeconomic and political transformation and change.



Presentations / Papers

The Geography of Competence Supply: On Higher Vocational Education and its Locally Rooted Career Paths

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In the arena of labour market policy, lifelong learning and geographical mobility among skilled individuals have become policy priorities. In Sweden, significant investments have recently been made in post-secondary vocational education within the framework of Higher Vocational Education (*Yrkeshögskolan*). This form of public-private education has expanded rapidly due to its ability to train workers for vocations with an existing labour demand. However, the role of Swedish HVE in facilitating geographical mobility for individuals has not been examined. In this mixed-methods study, we analyse the geographical mobility among cohorts of Higher Vocational Education. We examine mobility of students between different functional labour market regions using register data from years 2005-2020, as well as interview data from participants in healthcare, economics, and media programmes. We find that as HVE expanded in Sweden, there was an increasing immobility in migration patterns for participants. Over time, HVE increasingly serves local populations. This immobility is accompanied by an inequality in HVE supply, as HVE has expanded most in the largest cities.

Employers' perspectives on engaging in Higher Vocational Education programmes

Johanna Köpsén¹

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The Swedish Higher Vocational Education was established in 2009. Since then, this educational system has grown both in size and in significance with an increasingly important role for the Swedish labour market. Within this system employers are positioned as key players with great power over the training. And as more and more employers collaborate locally with education providers to design and run Higher Vocational Education programmes, this form of education has become an increasingly important source of skills supply.

This paper presents a study examining employers' involvement in Higher Vocational Education and highlights the employers' perspectives on and experiences of cooperation with education providers to secure their skills supply. The study is based on interviews and examines how these collaborations can be organised, i.e., how responsibilities and tasks are distributed between employers and education providers and in what ways employers contribute to the training in practical terms. The study also examines how employers describe their motivations for engaging in Higher Vocational Education and what possible effects they have experienced in their business as a result of their involvement.

The interviewed employers are members of management boards for various programmes. They have at least three years of experience from collaboration with education providers and they have experience from both initiatives for programmes and programme start-up, as well as ongoing education and its results in the form of graduated students. The interviewed employer representatives are in different parts of the country, both in smaller towns and in larger cities and these locations



constitute different labour market contexts and have different local business climates. The interviewees also work for a mix of both private and public organisations, and they work with both private and public education providers. A variation relevant because private and public organisations are governed and run based on different principles.

Skill versus Merit? A pragmatic sociological analysis of competences in vocational educational research

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Building on pragmatic sociology, this paper analyses and offers a critique of how competences have been researched in the field of education. We first outline the boundaries between different conceptual frameworks on competence that, according to their scheme of interpretation, generate distinct problems. In particular, we formulate a critique of sociological and educational research for juxtaposing the competences of *skill* versus *merit* in relation to different kinds of educational pathways, where the former is seen to be a competence residing within vocational education, while the latter has been confined to academic tracks and into higher education. Although merit has been constructed, valorised, and problematised such that it has become an object of public debate, it is still deployed as an inherent feature of particular educational forms and trajectories.

We then embark on an empirical case study examination, giving attention to how common actors articulate, negotiate, and justify their actions in situations where they embark on Swedish higher vocational education as adults. The ambiguity around recognising rivalling values and conceptualisations of merit is heightened during their experiences of transitioning from training to work. Our analysis reveals that participants, in their pursuit of higher vocational education, (i) *adjust* their aspirations, (ii) *adapt* to what they believe the labour market requires of them and (iii) *assign* value to a pluralistic composition of non-academic ‘merit’. The value in paying attention to these accounts, facilitated through a particular institution, is that it opens up a space for us to examine the worth of what is/are often treated as adjacent to merit.

Through this analysis, we attempt to illustrate how the concurrent salience and invisibility in sub-fields of educational research establishes a particular kind of social reality which has implications for the way that knowledge is used to shape research “problems”, policy and public sentiments around skilling and ongoing debates about merit. A critique in the way in which we examine merit and skill in educational research is important, and is part of an important exercise for formulating meaningful ways to research what is valuable in learning and work for common actors. More importantly, it encourages greater reflexivity amongst researchers to question our own scholastic conventions.

8

*Learning for sustainability
and green transition*



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Abstract

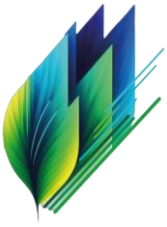
The more climate change becomes evident, the more important measures for adapting to its unavoidable consequences become. The implementation of climate adaptation measures requires skilled workers who have the relevant knowledge, skills and competencies. In the different sectors and occupations, both the extent to which they are affected by climate change impacts and the specific need to train on new skills required for the implementation of measures vary. But which occupations are particularly relevant for the implementation of climate adaptation measures? Moreover, what exactly are climate adaptation competencies? Which skills and knowledge does for example a roofer need in order to implement a solar green roof? These climate adaptation competencies need to be identified for relevant occupations.

This is what a joined project from UBA (Germany's Federal Environmental Agency) and BIBB (Germany's Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training) on climate adaptation and VET (<https://www.bibb.de/de/165177.php>) is aiming to find out.

In order to identify relevant sectors and occupations a model calculation based on the QuBe model (Zika et al. 2023; <https://www.bibb.de/de/11727.php>) was implemented. QuBe model like other large German surveys is using the German Classification of Occupations (BA 2021), which in contrast to ISCO groups e.g. occupations and occupational groups. The determination of the assumptions about climate adaptation measures to be implemented in the climate adaptation scenario is based on the “climate impact and risk analysis for Germany” (Kahlenborn et al. 2021).

For these relevant occupational groups, the labour market situation is examined. It becomes clear that the increasingly noticeable shortage of skilled workers will be further aggravated by the additional demand for skilled workers for the implementation of climate adaptation measures. Identifying future bottlenecks gives VET actors in politics and practice the opportunity to take countermeasures in time. This report would like to draw attention to the fact that the implementation of climate adaptation measures, regardless of how they are ultimately designed, can only take place if there are enough workers available with the required skills for the implementation.

Based on the results of the model calculation, the training occupations roofers, specialists for water supply technology and specialists for wastewater technology have been selected for further examination. The aim is to identify which concrete vocational competencies will be required in the context of climate adaptation in the future. As a first step, the existing training regulations will be examined by means of document analysis in order to identify the extent to which climate adaptation and climate adaptation competencies are already included and taken into account

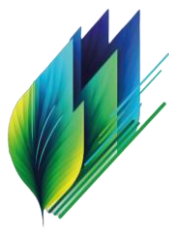


(current status). The document analysis is implemented by the BIBB division responsible for the moderation of the development of training regulations, which involves experts in vocational training practice appointed by employers and trade unions. Training regulations are formulated in a technically open and neutral manner and apply to all companies in Germany that provide training in this occupation, regardless of the size of the company or local circumstances. Furthermore, they merely represent the minimum standards for vocational education and training and thus do not comprehensively reflect individual education and training practices. Depending on the time of the last reorganisation process, training regulations may only partially anticipate professional requirements that lie further in the future. For these reasons, in addition to the document analysis of the training regulations, an exchange with experts in vocational training practice (by means of qualitative expert interviews) on the climate adaptation competencies that will be required in the future (target status) is planned. By comparing the current and the target status of the implementation of climate adaptation competences the project team aims to identify the competence gaps. In addition, ways must be found to integrate climate adaptation competencies into vocational education and training. This should be done at various points, such as in the reorganisation of training regulations, but also through further education and training.

Given the urgency of adapting to climate change, the importance of this task should be highlighted. For example, EU leaders (EU CO 1/23) called for bolder and more ambitious action to develop the skills needed for green and digital transformation through education, training, upskilling and retraining. This report aims to make a concrete contribution to pointing out future expected workforce shortages and competence requirements. This should help to provide the responsible actors in politics and practice with a knowledge base that enables them to act at an early stage.

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Sustainability in continuing vocational education and training – how to improve the reporting and data system in Germany

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Abstract

This article is about the improvement of reporting system on continuing vocational training in Germany, especially in the field of sustainability, which is getting more and more relevant. Obtaining detailed information and data on continuing vocational training in Germany makes it possible, so the aim, to identify weaknesses or potentials within the educational system and to take adequate steps drawing conclusions for the improvement of the continuing education situation. Better data also provides political decision-makers with an more suitable basis for managing continuing vocational education and training in Germany. It is therefore of fundamental importance that this information and data is included in the reporting on continuing education and training.

In 2020, UNESCO postulated: "The world needs education for sustainable development more than ever." Achieving more sustainability in all areas of life, work and education is currently at the top of the agenda. This generally means a triangle connection of ecological, social and economic concerns. The question is what do we know about these developments so far, which database is already available. And where in this context do we have a need of further improvements in Germany.

With 'sustainability' and 'continuing education', two terms are brought together, both of which are considered to be complex, not very distinct, heterogeneously regulated and difficult to grasp overall:

- Sustainability alone is usually differentiated in three dimensions, namely to be economically efficient, socially just, ecologically sustainable. Here the focus will be on the ecological component. This involves an ecological, conscious use of resources in the environmental, social and economic spheres (ibid.).
- There are also several definitions of continuing vocational training. Here, it is understood to be learning activities (formal, non-formal, informal) that are taken up following an initial phase of education and/or after or during a period of employment in order to maintain or improve the ability to act professionally (cf. Münchhausen et al. 2023, p. 17ff.).

The question is, what data and indicators on sustainability in continuing vocational education and training are actually available in Germany? What relevant, representative surveys exist? And how do these data and indicators flow into our continuing education reporting system?



On a theoretical level this article is connected with the Educational Governance Theories. It addresses the question of which data and indicators are relevant in order to map an adequate information base for the control and management of vocational education processes.

Methods / Methodology

The objectives and questions described were pursued within the framework of a detailed secondary statistical analysis. On the one hand, existing reporting systems in continuing vocational education and training in Germany were analyzed, such as the Data Report of the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB), the National Education Panel and the Vocational Education and Training Report of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). And further on more relevant surveys of the regular reporting system were included in the analysis: Company surveys, Individual surveys, Provider statistics, Education staff surveys, Official statistics.

(Expected) Results / Conclusions

This article summarizes the main reform ideas for the reporting or monitoring of continuing vocational education and training. The core recommendations include a) structuring the monitoring according to specific sub-areas of continuing vocational education and training, b) integrating different relevant data on the sustainability in this field, c) incorporating various data sources while clarifying divergent findings and d) closing gaps in content, including a presentation of the state of research for issues that cannot be represented by indicators. In the medium term, however, an adaptation of the data collection and the development of new data sources is considered indispensable.

Relevance to research field of work and learning

The used statistical data base itself deals with both, working and learning, and there the contribution is highly relevant to the field of working and learning. This information and data base flow into the reporting system about continuing vocational training, which is used to draw conclusions accordingly for further orientation and to make decisions.

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Paper 86

Learning and teaching for sustainability across spaces and contexts in an International Online Masters' program

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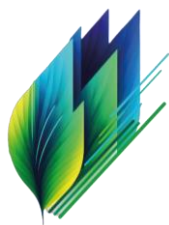
Abstract

Within the field of education for sustainability, there are multiple models detailing which competencies and capabilities we need to move towards a sustainable existence (cf Bianchi et al., 2022; Millican, 2022; Lessman & Rauschmayer, 2016; Wiek et al, 2016). Though models vary in the exact number and definition of competencies, they generally agree on the overall nature of what is needed to move towards sustainability and just transition (Ryder et al, 2021). From understanding how complex and intertwined such issues are and imagining potential ways forward, to embodying sustainable values and taking actions towards sustainable futures, there is a consensus in the research that we need to develop the ability to re-link to each other and to our world.

The Adult Learning and Global Change program is a unique collaborative program co-organised and taught by three partner universities from across three continents. The program is designed as a global classroom, where students enrolled across all three universities and each partner university teaches some of the programmes eight courses. Through this design, the program seeks to create a space for students to meet across contexts, learn together and from each other, develop cultural awareness, gain a nuanced understanding of globalisation, and re-frame their own professional practices.

This paper aims to showcase the pedagogical foundations of this program as they pertain to sustainability. The proposed presentation shares insights from our ongoing process of curriculum visioning and pedagogical development in and across our different geographical and institutional locations. In the collaborative spirit of this program, we frame our paper as a dialogue amongst representatives of the three participating universities in Sweden, Canada, and South Africa.

Methodology



A dialogic presentation format allows us, as researchers and teachers, to (re)articulate our own epistemological and pedagogical foundations and how these inform our teaching - both when designing course work and when we engage with students during the delivery of online courses. Just as crucially, the dialogical approach allows us to collaborate, coordinate and learn together. The constructive and cooperative qualities of dialogue and their relevance as methodology have been argued for and showcased both within adult education research (Formenti & Jorio, 2019; Formenti & West, 2018; Sawyer, 2021), and by sustainability researchers (Stoddard, 2021; Ishihara et al, 2021).

The topic under discussion is how we envision that our program is preparing our students to realise impact and become agents of change for sustainability and just transition, as well as how we view our role as educators in this. To structure our dialogue, we have agreed on a battery of questions for all collaborators to reflect on and answer. Reading each other's reflections and engaging with the responses allows us to both become aware of each other's situated, contextualised perspectives and understandings, and to identify potential needs for increased diversity or alignment across the programme.

Potential results and relevance to research field of work and learning

The dialogical structure of this paper allows us to both learn from each other and to co-create knowledge about our programme. More broadly, the paper provides an example of how dialogue can be used as a methodology of collaborative learning, when working together across geographical and institutional settings with a diverse student cohort. Through this, the paper also offers insights into how learning for sustainability can be engaged with in online settings and in higher education.

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Paper 87

VET, technical advancement and green transition in industry – a matter of pace

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Daniel Persson Thunqvist

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Abstract

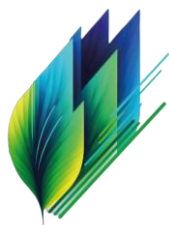
Green transition is high on the political agenda but a quite recent theme in VET research. Nevertheless, the rapid growth of eco-friendly and effective technologies will undoubtedly result in a need for new skills in the industrial work force, which is why the topic is sure to be on top of the agenda for all VET providers.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss higher vocational education and training (HVET) providers' experiences of challenges in providing the industry with competencies needed for technical advancement and green transition. HVET is viewed from its role as contributors to a green transition in industry through education and training that provide the industry with workers that have both technical and "green" skills.

The theoretical lens is provided by the emerging literature on learning and green skills development for a green transition in industry. A variety of green skills ranging from generic to special technical skills are needed in the industry (Pavlova, 2020; Rosenberg et al., 2018). A model presented by Rosenberg et al. (2020) will be used in the analysis. Their model illustrates that industrial companies' increasing need for "green" skills does not align with the VET system. The VET system finds it difficult to keep up the pace in a time of rapidly increasing technological advancements and there is an urgent need for workers' learning of technical and green skills in a green transition in the industry.

In our qualitative study, 20 semi-structured interviews were conducted with 22 representatives from HVET providers of which 13 were owned by one or more municipalities, 1 university, 6 private educational companies. 8 of the interviewees were education leaders meaning that they worked closely with companies to develop and run one or more HVET program and courses, 8 were principals or department managers and 6 interviewees had titles such as strategists, business developers, or were senior managers or owners of a VET company.

The main finding is that the need for workers with technical and green skills is vast in Swedish companies and that such skills are needed in the industry so it can upgrade technology and contribute to society's green transition in a timely manner. However, HVET-providers face a multitude of challenges to provide the industry with skilled workers that have the much needed technical and green skills. For various reasons that will be presented in the paper, it is difficult to attract and recruit students to technical HVET programs and courses. At the same time, it is



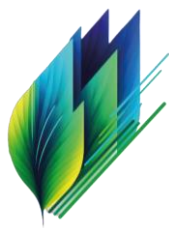
difficult for workers who are employed to get time off for up- and re-skilling their technical or green skills in HVET courses.

We conclude that HVET is one or two steps behind in the industry's race toward technical advancement and green transition. However, it is not only the HVET providers' responsibility to pick up the pace. To do so they need help from the companies that are searching for skilled industrial workers or looking for opportunities to up- and re-skill their workers, which suggests that both parties need to take collaborative responsibilities in a green transition in the industry.

This paper is relevant to the field of work and learning because it provides an empirical example of a need for more collaborative learning and transformative action between HVET-providers and industrial companies.

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Green Transformation: Organizational Change through Political Cleavages

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Abstract

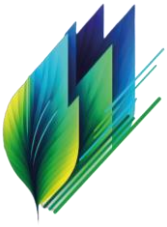
Green theory and Green politics exist all around the world, in the global north and the global south. Sharing the same values and principles despite vastly different environmental, political, and cultural ecospheres, Green parties have always struggled with their identity, with some believing it is solely an environmental party and others putting more emphasis on their social stances. This paper would study how political cleavages have influenced different Green Parties around the world, with emphasis on Die Grünen and the Green Party of Taiwan. Each of these parties rose in popularity due to environmental issues; both became more prominent in the electoral landscape due to their platforms on nuclear energy. And yet, each party took a firmer stance on social issues as well: Green Party of Taiwan became a strong voice for LGBTQIA+ rights, while Die Grünen took up the leftist causes of gender equity, foreign workers, and disadvantaged groups. External factors, such as the state of democracy in Taiwan and the fall of the Berlin Wall need also be considered; both have been key turning points for the Green parties in their respective countries, but the way the parties reacted and the outcomes were vastly different. Are cleavages driving organizational change of Green parties from environmental movements to social justice advocacy?

This paper seeks to study organizational change among Green parties, Green Party of Taiwan and Die Grünen in particular, through the lens of Lipset's political cleavages. The expected result is that Lipset's original cleavages were not as influential as the new cleavages defined by Ford and Jennings, as well as Inglehart's theory of post-materialism. Dobson and Barry will be studied for their writings on Green political theory, while Fell's extensive studies on Green Party of Taiwan will inform this research. Likewise, the work of Richardson and Rootes will be used to delve deeper into Western European Green politics.

The method to be followed will begin with documentary research, followed by interviews with political analysts as well as party leaders within the Green Party of Taiwan and Die Grünen. Of particular interest may be interviews with youth groups and women caucuses from both parties, as these groups are becoming stronger and gaining more traction, with Green Party's Annalena Baerbock now serving as Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany.

Author

Alison Lam is extensively involved in federal politics, serving on the Shadow Cabinet of the Green Party of Canada as the Critic of Intergovernmental Affairs, Women and Gender. Moreover, Alison works with the Global Greens, as a member of the Climate Working Group, the Global Greens Women's Network, the Democracy Network, the Biodiversity Working Group and is in the process of



launching a working group for Global Sex Work Advocacy. She was most recently a speaker at the plenary session for the 2023 Global Greens Congress in Korea, presenting a paper on the outcomes of COP15.

Alison has also published papers in French and English and spoken at conferences in Canada, the United States and Europe and she has given lectures at Schulich School of Business, Dalhousie University, St. Mary's University and Mount Saint Vincent University.

Alison is currently pursuing her PhD at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education, having recently received her MEd at the same. With an MA from Queen's University, an MBA from the Kellogg-Schulich Global Executive MBA Program, and three Bachelor degrees, Alison brings a unique perspective to her career, projects and endeavours.

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9

Policy and social inclusion



Adult learning and the world of work: 50 years of public policy in Sweden

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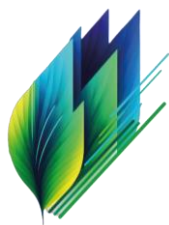
Abstract

Since the 1980s public policies on lifelong and adult learning has been driven by economic interests. With the exception of UNESCO, this position (Elfert, 2018), has been fuelled by the dominant supra national organisations such as the World Bank, OECD, European Union. This has resulted in something of a growth industry among scholars who critique the political project of lifelong learning with its focus on the world of work and employability, something that is seen as an assault on adult education's liberatory traditions. Tracing the underlying shifts in the political economy, the present policy direction of lifelong learning was criticized for its reliance on a neoliberal value system (English and Mayo, 2021; Hake, 2023). However, this criticism, valid as much of it is, fails to address the absolute fundamental role that the conditions of work play in the liberatory project of adult education. The same criticism can be launched against the UNESCO position, which in its effort to present an alternative to the economic framework, also tend to neglect the world of work.

Accordingly, the purpose of this paper is, using 50 years of Swedish public policy on adult education, to broaden the understanding of the role of work in the adult education discourse. This does not imply that the positions of global actors, primarily the OECD and UNESCO, are benign or best neglected. But in order to govern the impact and reach of the "planetspeak discourse of lifelong learning" (Fejes, 2006), a much stronger focus need to be granted to the national conditions within which new public policies are introduced, converted and enacted.

The study is informed by Brown's concepts of pressure points and trade-offs (Brown, 2001). Discussing future skills formation policies, Brown notes that these will be driven by how countries address critical "pressure points", particularly globalization, skills upgrading and social inclusion. The handling of these pressure points involves political struggle where the outcome will reflect dominant political economy and the strength of the various interest groups.

Our analyses are organized chronologically and follow the key Swedish adult education policies, starting with the 1968 municipal adult education reform and finishing with the 2022 agreement between the social partners, "Trygghetsöverenskommelsen", that opens up new possibilities for the education and training of the workforce. The study utilises a broad array of data. Government policies are examined using Swedish Government Official Reports, a series of reports of committees appointed and convened by the Government of Sweden for the analysis of issues in anticipation of a proposed legislation before the Parliament, as well as the actual Bill. Other documents to be reviewed come from



different stake holders, like trade unions, civil society organisations etc. Administrative statistics like financing of different adult education activities, study aid, participation data, as well as broader social welfare statistics are being assembled.

Preliminary findings reveal a constant link in Swedish policies, regardless of political economy, between the world of work and adult education initiatives. However, in contrast to what has been documented in the adult education literature, this connection tends to go far beyond training of workers as it also sits at the centre of equality strategies and the promotion of economic democracy. The extent to which this has been particularly visible seems, in accordance with Piketty (2022, p. 244), to have depended on forceful social mobilization that has been reinforced by collective movements that have affected the dominant power relationships. However, the analyses would suggest that despite periods of centre-right governments a broad view of the relationship between adult education and work has been present, something that speaks to the influence of broader institutional structures. The study provides some insights, not only into how to theorise the relationship between adult education and work, but provides directions for public policy on adult education more generally, particularly if the ambition is to shift the present trajectories.

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Paper 90

Mind the Gaps over Time - Change for the Better or the Worse for the low-qualified Workers in Europe?

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Abstract

The so-called ‘Matthew Effect’ (c. Bağcı2019, Boeren 2009, Krejčík & Grotlüschen2020) has been one of the best known and frequently mentioned principles in adult education in relation to studying social inequality. The “Matthew effect” is implying that the ones who have more formal education at earlier phases of life participate more in continuing education and adult learning in adulthood. The ‘long arm’ of initial education is often an important factor for adult learning, although continuing education and adult learning is certainly not always just a follow-up to initial education.

The paper explores by the means of quantitative research how the Matthew Effect has evolved over time in the 21st century. The main research question is: Have the gaps in the participation in adult education between people with low or high educational attainment narrowed or widened between 2007 and 2020? A minor research question is: Has especially the Covid-19 pandemic (c. Käßplinger & Lichte 2020) in 2020 resulted in an increase of inequality in relation to the access to adult education?

Methods / Methodology

Quantitative analysis based on European data from the European Adult Education Survey (AES) for 26 countries from 2007, 2011, 2016 and 2020 will be done in the paper. The contribution will also compare groups of countries and welfare regimes in Eastern, Northern, Southern and Western Europe (c. Markowitsch, Käßplinger & Hefler 2013).

Results / Conclusions

The results demonstrate some (relative) improvements in many European countries over time, although there is a certain ‘elevator effect’ observable. When considering the indicator time spent in adult education instead of participation in adult education, the Matthew effect has even reversed (c. Krejčík & Grotlüschen 2020), which means that disadvantaged people (e.g. illiterate or migrants) sometimes spent even more time than privileged people in adult education since special programs for target groups have an effect. The paper will finally also briefly raise the question of the need for a definition of a new indicator of social inequality in adult education research comparable to the GINI coefficient in relation to income.

Relevance to research field of work and learning

Studying inequality in relation to participation in adult education is one crucial element of work-related learning in adulthood (c. Desjardins, Rubenson & Milana 2006).



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Understanding Workplace Learning and College Access of Less-Educated Working Learners in the U.S.: Evidence from PIAAC

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Abstract

Postsecondary education has been increasingly critical in adult career development and social mobility, but the educational opportunities for workers look unequal (Carnevale et al., 2018; Jarvis, 2010). Research evidence supports that those adults without college degrees have economic and non-economic disadvantages. For example, in the U.S., working learners who intended to change careers expressed the need to reskill. However, only 4 out of 10 less educated workers (e.g., a high school diploma or less) gained access to the education and training they wanted to pursue (Vilsack, 2020). Namely, higher education participation rates are attributed to a dispersed sense of qualifications and professions of individuals (Ross-Gordon et al., 2017). As known by the Matthew effect, it is unsurprising that an adequate level of qualifications is required to continue learning while working, which makes it more challenging to seek opportunities and participate in workplace or work-related activities, particularly for the marginalized adult populations (Boeren, 2009).

Workplace learning, which occurs in forms of formal and informal learning contexts, is associated with diverse learning outcomes beyond job skill acquisition (Jarvis, 2010; Maurer et al., 2003) and potentially influences an individual's motivation, attitude, and willingness to pursue continuing education beyond the workplace (McGivney, 2001). Thus, we hypothesized that workplace learning could be a significant factor associated with educational attainment for working adults. Using the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), we examined the following research question: *How is workplace learning experience associated with the sub-baccalaureate or baccalaureate degree-seeking of working adults without a college degree?*

Conceptual Framework

Since the work of Cross (1991), conceptual understandings of various barriers to learning at the workplace have been advanced. Desjardins et al. (2006) identified the situational barriers contributing to nonparticipation in workplace learning as time constraints and cost-related concerns. Likewise, Patterson (2018) explained that situational factors such as multiple roles or issues that adults must handle daily and having dependents discourage adults' participation in formal learning. At the same time, challenges in arranging schedules, locating suitable courses, or



geographic proximity were documented as institutional barriers to adult learning opportunities outside of the formal education system (Rubenson & Desjardins, 2009; Patterson, 2018). At the policy level, Desjardins et al. (2006) pointed out that the degree of openness of the higher education system plays a significant role in ensuring and expanding equitable access to workplace or work-related learning for adult populations from diverse backgrounds.

Methods

The data used in this study were drawn from U.S. PIAAC collected in 2017, which included a nationally representative household sample of 3,660 adults between 16 and 74 years old. This study used publicly available data files, including respondents aged 20 to 65 who were working or obtained recent work experience at the time of the survey and those who were high school graduates or equivalent. As an analytic strategy, the study conducted a multinomial logistic regression analysis to examine the relationship between workplace learning and postsecondary access when individual characteristics and workplace conditions are controlled.

Results

On-the-job training (OJT) was significant in predicting sub-baccalaureate degree-seeking compared to those without college enrollment. Compared with working learners without OJT experience, those who received OJT were 45% more likely to pursue a certificate or associate degree after controlling variables for demographics, situational, and institutional barriers in the model. Similarly, working adults with OJT were 84% more likely to pursue a baccalaureate degree. The frequency of informal learning experiences was not significantly associated with both sub-baccalaureate and baccalaureate degree-seeking.

Relevance to Research Field of Work and Learning

Our finding on the positive association between workplace learning and postsecondary education access for less educated working adults adds empirical evidence on the different contributions of formal and informal learning at the workplace. As Korpi and Tahlin (2021) found, the workplace learning gap exists primarily in formal training, such as OJT, due to the needs of employers for job-dependent reasons. While informal learning at the workplace tends to be widely accessible, OJT experiences tend to be shaped by the employer perspective that ties specific goals and objectives to job skills and performance goals. With fewer formal learning opportunities for the less educated workforce, informal learning is a dominant source of lifelong learning, broadly available to anyone regardless of the level of education and socioeconomic status. While informal learning at the workplace is associated with learning transfer, adaptability, and problem-solving (Manuti et al., 2015), and it facilitates tacit knowledge acquisition (Le Clus, 2011), our study supports that informal learning may not fulfill the learning demands of the less educated workforce and encourages them to seek continuing education opportunities (Livingstone & Raykov, 2017). This study's findings indicate the potential contribution of formalized learning opportunities at the workplace to promote working learners' participation in continuing higher education, which could enhance educational attainment and reduce workplace learning and training gaps.



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Incentivising Skills Development through grant funding: The efficacy of a South African Sector Education and Training Authority to transfer funds

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Abstract

Introduction and research framing

Transforming skills development in South Africa is critical as its Black population has structurally been denied opportunities to access education and training by apartheid policies, legislation, and practices (Letseka, 2004:19). It was thus not unexpected that, soon after the dawn of democracy, this country introduced its Skills Development Strategy which aimed to introduce and implement new policies to facilitate skills development across the nation. Pivotal to this strategy was the introduction of the South African Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa, 1998), (henceforth the SD Act) and the Skills Development Levies Act (Republic of South Africa, 1999).

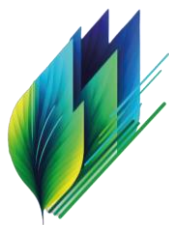
The SD Act aims, among others, to increase workplace productivity by encouraging investment in education and training in the labour market (Republic of South Africa, 1998). To ensure that skills development is adequately resourced, the Skills Development Levies Act (Republic of South Africa, 1999) was legislated. This Act makes it compulsory for companies with an annual payroll of R500 000 (initially R250 000) and more, to pay a skills levy of 1% of their payroll to fund skills development. While a small portion of the collected funds is transferred to the National Skills Fund, the main part is allocated to an industry specific Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) which encourage companies, in its sector, to claim back from the levies for employee skills training (James, 2009:2).

South Africa is not unique in its introduction of a compulsory tax scheme to drive, fund and implement training and skills development, on the contrary, this has been done by numerous countries (Whalley & Ziderman, 1990; Muller & Behringer, 2012; Lee & Davison, 2018; Palmer, 2020).

This paper aims to showcase the efficacy of the Metal and Engineering SETA grant claiming process from the employer's point of view with a specific focus on companies' experiences of the grant claiming process, the type of companies that apply for funding, and the nature of training interventions funds are requested.

Methodology

Methodologically, a qualitative of approach underpins this paper. Document analysis was used to gain an insight into the nature of companies that apply for skill training grants, then total amount of funds received by the SETA and the total distributed by the SETA. To gain a deeper understanding of the efficacy of the



SETA's distribution system, semi-structured interviews were used to ascertain how companies experience participating in the process of grant application and reclaiming levies for skills development.

Potential results and Relevance to research field of work and learning

This paper provides insight into the how companies are participating in the South African skills development levy grand system and reveals how they are experiencing the system. This paper contributes to research in the field of work and learning as it presents another model/ example of a compulsory levy system aimed at funding workplace skills development and provides insight into the efficacy of such an model.

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Paper 93

When adults learn from youth: Understanding the political implementation of human rights lessons from marginalized young citizens to drive policy and systemic change in Canada

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Abstract

During the past three decades since the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child was ratified, research in this field has focused on how, when, and where to facilitate youth participation in policy work and civic consultation (Lansdown, 2001; Yoshitaka et al, 2014; Zumbach, 2021); however, this canon of research has yet to examine the experience of the adult learner who is the agent holding the positional authority and social power to create systemic change. The Convention contains Articles which pertain to the right for youth to be included in decisions which affect their daily lives and the services they receive. Youth by the factor of their age alone, are citizens who are usually excluded from policy processes (Grover, 2004; Jacquez et al, 2012; Lecic & Zuker, 2019; Lundy, 2007). When youth are included, they can share the lived experiences of growing up in child protection services, experiencing education disruptions, or the inability to access mental health supports (Hart, 1992; Invernizzi, 2011; Kiersey & Hayes, 2010; Saunders, 2009) as they are the subject matter experts in these areas.

Previous research has noted the limitations of understanding the informal adult learning which occurs when youth are involved: “Even adults who are utterly sympathetic to the principle of enabling children to express their views may often feel uncomfortable with the ways, means and implications of putting this (type of learning) into practice.” (Lansdown, 2001). Informal learning theories to date explore ways in which continuing adult learning can be successful without rigid structure. My research explores the unique informal learning process which transpires when youth share with adults who can help them contribute to policy, social justice, and overall advancement of their human rights. By understanding what makes these learning experiences impactful for the adult learner, my research will add to the field of informal adult learning theory in an underexplored way, providing new insights about this unique learning relationship and developing a road map of what makes youth consultation for systemic change effective.

Methodology

My methodology will be a mixed method. The first participant group will include six to ten in-depth qualitative semi-structured participant interviews conducted in-person or virtually, depending on participant preference and location. Interviews will be approximately 60-90 minutes in duration and will be recorded and transcribed. Questions will be focused on exploring how adults are able to learn



from youth during this process. The second grouping of participants will consist of six to ten experts in youth engagement and government relations who have actively assisted in political youth consultations. They will take part in a quantitative Delphi-style survey to efficiently determine their consensus on my hypothesis and the findings of the interviews. My document review will consist of examining reports and Concluding Comments from the UNCRC. Canadian political documents will be reviewed, including but not limited to transcripts from the House of Commons, draft Bills, Committee transcripts and reports, and Senate proceedings and reports. I will be mindful of Indigenous persons who have been part of these processes and will follow The First Nations Principles of ownership, control, access, and possession over data collection. I have access to these adults through my professional networks. I will not pre-determine every participant, ensuring I allow for the potential of peer-recommended participants.

Expected results

I will answer the following questions that adult learning academics, policymakers, and youth services practitioners have yet to adequately explore: 1) Generally, what can we ascertain about how adults learn from youth? 2) Specifically, when does youth engagement aid policy development and impact systemic change? The dissemination of the results of my research will help spark dialogue for adult learning academics, policymakers, and youth practitioners who are working to advance systemic change globally.

Relevance to research file of work and learning

My research will make a significant contribution as it explores a new area of informal adult learning theory. My completed thesis will 1) further the diversity of perspectives within informal adult learning theory and 2) provoke thought and promote dialogue across Canada and internationally amongst policymakers and youth practitioners.

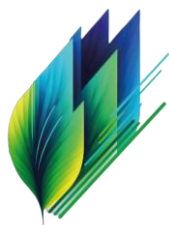
I will provide new findings for youth practitioners who are seeking effective options to support youth participation in systemic change.

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10

Research method



Surveys and Big Data: Closing the gap?

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Abstract

Identifying training trends and new training requirements on the employment market at an early point in time is crucial to put this information to use for VET research and regulatory work. For this purpose, we monitor and analyze structures and trends in individual occupations, fields of activity, industrial sectors, companies and continuing vocational training offerings. However, the rapid development of technologies challenges the response time for this.

Identifying such trends and researching VET training is currently answered with classical social science methods: We use survey studies to analyze the prestige and perception of trainings and jobs (for example “BIBB-BAuA-Employment Surveys”, [1, 2]). In addition, we have extensive data on advanced trainings, labor market monitoring, and training regulations. Several largely unstructured data sources with multiple big data-attributes (variety, velocity, veracity, volume) are also available: Job advertisements [3, 4], Social Media Data, etc. This unstructured data reverses the question-to-answer-relationship, and is not representative because a population is neither known nor definable. However, the mass of data opens up new possibilities for analysis, but are not readily included in data-science workflows.

Our substantial question for this paper is the reception and appreciation of occupations and trainings. This is important for the attractiveness of especially those occupations where employees are sought [5].

Methods / Methodology

We will show how we extend the traditional analysis of survey data to social media platforms, in particular Twitter. We are closing the gap in data in several ways: With the combination of different types of data we are able to answer questions faster and we enhance our understanding of the phenomena in training and on the labor market. We also extend the traditional methods of analysis. The inclusion of new types of data leads to the development of new techniques for handling and analyzing data beyond existing mixed-methods approaches [6].

We are interested in the perception of trainings and jobs. Since designing a survey to analyze this takes time, we want to use existing data from social media. Questions we want to answer with, e.g. twitter data are: “How do people talk about a particular profession or training?”, “Why did they choose one particular job?”,



“Which references on trainings are considered in social media, which are `going viral?’”, “How do people talk about vocational training in general?” etc.

Classic survey data usually only give us a limited, filtered and selective excerpt of the actual attitude towards jobs and their attractiveness. Linking sources like the German microcensus, the BIBB-BAuA employment survey or the NEPS we can find structural characteristics and employment histories. However, what is missing are the subjective statements for a specific network or peer group.

Twitter allows applying methods of Social Network Analysis (SNA) [7, 8]. With this we consider the analysis and impact of (1) follower-networks, (2) homophily networks, (3) temporal development of networks. However, SNA is widely applied to analyze Twitter data. Thus, our approach to analyze the impact of follower-networks in Twitter includes a quality check with other data. We will also analyze the ‘perception bias’, mainly due to the structure of social networks and in particular “on the level of homophily and its asymmetric nature, as well as on the size of minority group” [9: 1]. In a thought-complete network we see minority and majority groups which are arranged in a complex network structure. By providing a longitudinal analysis of twitter data, we can provide a quality control and show the current limitations and biases of our approach.

Conclusions

In this paper we will discuss how the gap between big data and traditional data can be closed. We exemplify our use of structured and unstructured data with the analysis of occupations’ attractiveness. This must be done in an interdisciplinary manner between social sciences and computer science. While velocity and volume of data will be shown to be no show-stoppers, the variety and veracity of data are still challenging. Besides, the FAIRification of data is key within the field of public outreach and social coordination of scientific research.

Substantially, our research shows that for nearly all occupations we find related tweets. However, their share is not related to the actual share of people working in this area. We present a longitudinal analysis and in particular analyze the sentiment analysis over time and compare this with other studies, e.g., on essential occupations [10].

Relevance to research field of work and learning

Looking at the attractiveness and perception of occupations we open up a different perspective on what could be done to lead more people to work in sought-for occupations. This can be directly applied to VET training regulations. Our approach also shows how using new types of data and new methods for analysis can enhance research on VET and the world of work.

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Abstract

During my doctoral research I took a performative ontological approach to tracing learning within workplaces. I explored how clinical, administrative, and executive professionals working in primary care workplaces learned to collaborate through a sociomaterial, relational lens. Applying a relational performative theoretical framework, I understood all actors, human and non-human, as entangled and intra-acting (Barad, 2003). Furthermore, I understood that through intra-action, all social and material actors have agency in this world of becoming (Hultin, 2019). In this paper I explore how this performative ontological framework provided challenges to data collection in an unexpected way, specifically in regards to member-checking, and the implications to future research about learning in the workplace.

Methods/Methodology

Multiple methods were used for data collection in my research. Data collection methods included one-hour semi-structured interviews with 15 participants followed by a discourse analysis of 15 publicly sourced documents, and, last, a one-hour member-checking discussion with the participants from the first semi-structured interviews. Member-checking proved to be a very rich form of data collection that provided further insights on concepts, themes, analysis and knowledge sharing opportunities, all which were co-produced through dialogue.

Instead of member-checking being a procedure that followed completed data collection and analysis, a procedure where participants were asked to clarify, elaborate, and confirm the details found in the data, member-checking became something more in my research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). My ontological framework meant that these conversations between the interviewer and the participant co-produced, or performed, new knowledge. Through dialogue, the participants contributed to additional data as they helped me to test assumptions, highlight relevant information, and ask further questions on the basis of my initial analysis.

Results

This performative nature of member-checking was intuitive to me as the researcher however, I was challenged to correctly define the concept in my research and describe what had actually unfolded during my data collection. I became curious to explore new ways to understand member-checking in context of my theoretical underpinnings.

Other qualitative researchers have discovered challenges when using member-checking in their data collection as well such as requests for revisions, withdrawals, power over researchers (LaCroix, 2023) and increasing validity by requesting reflections of members not only an identification of inaccuracies and clarifications



(Sabnis & Wolgemuth, 2023). Others have abandoned the term member-checking all together and instead choose to apply Diagrammatic Elicitation to empower participants to reflect on and understand the data in a more meaningful way (Sahakyan, 2023). Perhaps more closely aligned with my own experience, Poole (2021) extends the term member-checking itself to be referred to as dialogic member-checking where, through dialogue, the interviewer and the interviewee jointly construct meaning.

Applying member-checking while using a performative ontology has interesting implications and provides a new understanding of what it means to achieve rigor, credibility, and validity in qualitative research in regards to workplace learning. In this paper I further explore the dialogic exchange that was used in my data collection, how the performative nature of this exchange influenced my understanding of the data and co-created new analysis, and how I have wrestled with defining and describing member-checking in context of a performative ontology within my own research.

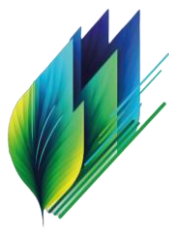
Relevance to Work and Learning

The significance of this contribution is to expand how and when researchers of work and learning apply member-checking in their qualitative research. This paper reveals a performative nature of member-checking that can be useful to articulate so that future research can continue to expand how we use the method of member-checking congruently with theoretical frameworks. As well, in the case of a performative ontological framework, the performative nature of member-checking added richness to data collected and analyzed, furthering my understanding of learning across primary care workplaces.

Keywords: member-checking; performative ontology; primary care; workplace learning

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Topics and Trajectories of Research on Workplace Learning: Bibliometrics and Topic Modeling

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Abstract

Workplace learning (WL) has traditionally been considered a critical factor for improving the capacities of workers and their organizations (Garavan et al., 2002). WL does not merely indicate learning at work but includes learning for and through work, and rather, its concept has expanded; it often plays a boundary-spanning role by enclosing relevant concepts and practices of learning and performance (Kim et al., 2010). In particular, WL has undergone substantial changes in response to evolving socio-technological environments (Fenwick, 2008; Hemmler et al., 2023). The convergence of today's digital technologies, personalized learning experiences, and context-driven applications has been decisive for the conceptual transitions of WL (Lemmetty & Collin, 2020).

Given its development and practical application of WL, this study aims to comprehensively examine the research trends in WL. The following research questions guided this study: (a) what authors, sources, and keywords have most appeared in WL literature, and to what extent do authors collaborate cross-nationally? and (b) what research topics have emerged, and how are they grouped or connected?

To that end, we employ bibliometric analysis and Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA), which is the most commonly used technique for topic modeling. This analytic approach primarily aims to uncover latent themes that help to understand the evolving discourse on WL. The bibliometric data are extracted from the Web of Science, and descriptive analysis and keyword co-occurrence network analysis are performed using the “bibliometrix” package (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). Additionally, the “topicmodels” package will be used for LDA-based topic modeling, allowing us to conduct a time-series analysis to identify emerging and waning topics by deriving cold and hot topics (Barde & Bainwad, 2017; Blei et al., 2003).

Anticipated outcomes provide a comprehensive portrayal of research trends in WL, offering valuable insights for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers. Through the identification of latent themes, this research has the potential to reveal previously overlooked areas of interest, enabling a more strategic allocation of



research resources. This, in turn, empowers researchers to make data-driven decisions, effectively guiding future scholarly endeavors.

In addition, this study holds practical implications for organizations. It offers crucial guidance for optimizing learning strategies, ultimately facilitating organizational performance and employee development. Moreover, the findings can shape policy decisions at the organizational level, guiding the most effective approaches to WL in specific fields. This research serves as a valuable tool for developing strategies that improve learning effectiveness within the organization, thereby maintaining a competitive advantage in the ever-evolving labor market.

When it comes to the methodological implications, this study meticulously examines research trends in WL by employing innovative techniques: bibliometrics and LDA-based topic modeling. The projected findings are poised to make a significant contribution to the field, offering invaluable insights for both academia and industry. The integration of advanced methodologies enables a comprehensive examination of latent themes and emerging trends.

In conclusion, the implications not only extend to academia but bridge research with policy and practice. Ultimately, this study can be a significant addition to the field of WL. By providing a holistic overview of research directions, this establishes a solid foundation for future endeavors, fostering continuous exploration and innovation in the field of adult learning.

Keywords: workplace learning, bibliometrics, topic modeling, research trends

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Paper 97

Machine Learning and Human Learning: a socio-cultural and material perspective on their relationship and the implications for researching working and learning

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Abstract

Over the last decade the concept of Machine Learning (ML) has become a central topic of research in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI). What is distinctive about the ‘deep learning’ generation of ML compared to previous generations of AI is that its algorithms are capable of learning in different ways – supervised, unsupervised etc. – from datasets (Alpaydin 2016). Currently, the main debates about ML focus on issues such as ‘ethics’, ‘cultural bias’ and the anthropomorphising of algorithms (Crawford 2021), which are extremely important issues.

The focus of this paper is, however, different. We maintain that the above debates leave in place the cognitive science assumptions underpinning ‘computationalism’ and ‘connectionism’: that learning involves a form of ‘processing’ (Childers et al. 2023), which informs, respectively, the view of members of the ‘good old AI’ community and the ML community. The prevailing influence of computationalism and connectionism has led both communities to pay scant attention to Hutchins’ work (1995) on ‘distributed cognition’ and ‘cultural ecosystems.’ Following Hutchins, the paper maintains that a) cognition has always been distributed between mind, technology and environment, and b) cultural practices have always facilitated that distribution process. Hutchins demonstrates the implications of his conceptual and *symmetrical* argument through empirical investigations of the distribution of cognition in occupational settings – in his terms, cultural ecosystems – comprising different forms of professional expertise. Hutchins offers therefore an alternative perspective on how working and learning in AI in general, but especially ML, could be researched, since ML further distributes and rearranges cognition between humans and machines. His concepts of distributed cognition and cultural ecosystems were, however, formulated before the emergence of ML. Consequently, the paper argues that it is necessary to supplement them with the work of Socio-Material and Cultural-historical Activity theorists, who have highlighted how algorithms can be deployed to in ML can a) ‘create reality’ (Orlikowski and Scott 2015) and retrieve and generate patterns in data and b) ‘heteromate’ work processes (Ekbja and Nardi 2017).

To pursue this supplementation of Hutchins, the paper develops a *socio-cultural* and *-material* perspective on the relationship between human (HL) + machine learning (ML) cultural ecosystems. Its focus therefore differs from work that has drawn on the above traditions to develop a post-humanist perspective on learning (Hasse, 2020). It first explains why computationalism and connectionism share an



information processing conception of learning before identifying a) the legacy of that conception in ‘surveillance’ AI (Zuboff, 2019) and ‘assistive’ assemblages being developed in domains such as architecture (Tamke et al., 2018) and b) the issues about HL+ML working and learning which the information processing conception completely misses. Next, it explains why Hutchins’ concepts of distributed cognition and cultural ecosystems a) shed light on the emerging HL+ML working and learning relationship in a way that eludes computationalism or connectionism, and b) when supplemented with insights from Socio-Material (Jaton 2020; Orlikowski and Scott 2015) and Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) (Ekbia and Nardi 2017), allow a more explicit account of the operation of algorithms in the emerging assistive cultural ecosystems. The outcome of this elaboration and extension of Hutchins’ work is a socio-cultural and -material *symmetrical* conception of the human+machine relationship based on firstly, the acknowledged affinities between Hutchins’ work and Actor Network Theory (Latour, 1993), and CHAT (Cole and Engeström, 1993) and secondly, similar methodological concerns between CHAT and ANT (Miettinen, 1999) as well as the acceptance in CHAT that the new generation of algorithms have been imbued with a capacity to exercise agency (Ekbia and Nardi, 2017). The paper concludes by outlining for the field of working and learning is a set of conjectures for researchers to consider if they choose to adopt our new socio-cultural and -material perspective on HL+ML working and learning relationships.

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Symposium

Material Dialectical Methodologies and Their Uses in Studies of Work and Learning in Times of Change

Contributors:

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Henning Salling Olesen, Roskilde University, Denmark

Presha Ramsarup, The University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

Chair:

Michael Bernhard, Goethe University, Germany

Rationale

Entitled “*Material Dialectical Methodologies and Their Uses in Studies of Work and Learning in Times of Change*”, in the symposium all of the three contributors begin from the premise that researching work and learning in times of change requires methodologies and corresponding substantive theorizations that are uniquely suited to deep and critical assessments of the nature and processes of change on the one hand, and which demonstrate compatibilities across methodology and substantive theorization on the other. With this in mind, the contributors each shall forefront their interpretation of Hegelian and/or Marxist material dialectical methodology/methodologies as well as the relationship of it/them with a specific mode of substantive theorization of work and learning dynamics. Methodological approaches stemming from Hegel and Marx are understood as offering a sophisticated, deeply social-relational conception of not only the psychic dimensions of social dynamics but also of political economy and history and will be claimed as uniquely suited to researchers of work and learning taking seriously this confluence of concerns. Notably, with some differences across their interpretations of an otherwise largely shared methodological tradition of dialectical thought, each contributor will focus on a distinctive substantive theoretical tradition of analysing work and learning (i.e., Cultural Historical Activity Theory; Psycho-Societal approach; a Critical Realism-inspired approach), and give examples of past and present empirical projects by way of illustration (i.e., manufacturing work in Canada; professional human services work in Norway, and environmental learning pathways in South Africa respectively).

Presentations / Papers

Material Dialectical methodology, a Philosophy of Internal-Relations and their Contribution to Studies of Manufacturing Work-based Learning in Canada

Our first contributor’s discussion/paper will largely focus on interpretations of material dialectical methodology with special attention to the work of American philosopher Bertell Ollman and his discussion of the distinction and relationships between a philosophy of internal-relations and a philosophy of external-relations understanding of human dynamics and history. Here we will learn about a re-framing of methodology as an “asymmetric” relationship of internal-relational



and external-relational approaches (both being required, but the former serving as a governing principle of the use of the latter). Explanation will then take up the question of how this type of dialectical methodological approach influenced by Ollman can be related to applications of Cultural Historical Activity Theory in the context of researching work and learning in times of change. Empirical examples of both private sector manufacturing workplaces in Canada will be used to illustrate the value of this combination of approaches.

The Material Dialectical Methodological Foundation of a Psychosocietal Approach with insights on Work and Learning amongst Nurses in Norway

Having been developed over decades by the second contributor, what is known as a Psychosocietal approach to researching work and learning and its foundation in material dialectical methodology will be the basis of our second presentation/paper. As will be discussed, the methodological principles of material dialectics here owe significantly to the thinking that draws on the Frankfurt School's reconstruction of Freudian and Marxist traditions, while the substantive theorization of work and learning is rooted in the hermeneutical approaches to consciousness and development connecting a theory of internalized "interaction forms" of psychiatrist Alfred Lorenzer with a method of scenic interpretation. Emphasized in the discussion of methodology is the dialectics of subject-object relations and different aspects of consciousness (including learning and defence mechanisms) within a thoroughly socialized subject. To illustrate the value of this combination of approaches, recent research on nursing in Norway will be provided.

Learning and work transitioning within sustainability transitions: a dialectical dance

Our last contributor will describe how Bhaskar's onto-axiological chain was utilised through a two-step analysis of nested cases of learning in transitioning occupations within the environmental sector in South Africa. Bhaskar argues that the 'dialectic is at the heart of every learning process' (Bhaskar 1993, 40), and that understanding the dialectical relationships integral to learning, change, and systems co-evolution necessitates a foundation of ideas that offer new ways of looking at the world. In the paper learning and work transitioning of individuals in a transitioning occupation is analysed. Furthermore, the contributor examines the transitioning environmental regulatory framework, the transitioning education and training system, further contextualised with the transitioning society. For this analysis a nuanced lens was needed that raised a dynamic web of interconnected learning tensions. Drawing on Bhaskar's (1993) dialectical argument the contributor contend that DCR (Dialectical Critical Realism) plays two important roles in this paper: firstly, it enables to argue that learning pathways are equally influenced by what is not there (thus helping to ascribe causality to something that is not present) and secondly, understanding these absences provides the openings for transformative praxis necessary for reconstituting and / or constituting environmental learning pathways. Working with absence helped the author to re-imagine 'holistic totality' in terms of what a system for seamless pathways for greening work would encompass and thus enables consideration of opportunities for transformative praxis of current learning pathway frameworks within the environmental sector.



Symposium

Practice architectures of researching work and learning in multiple contexts: Learning from an international collaboration in research on interprofessional learning for health care work

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Chair:

Annika Lindh Falk, Linköping University, Sweden

Rationale

Globally, learning to collaborate across health professions is seen as crucial to assure patient safety and to meet the changing demands of health care. Health Professions Education (HPE) is an important arena to provide upcoming health care professionals opportunities to learn and practice interprofessional collaborative health care. Comparative international research collaborative projects in IPE are rare but have been recommended as being of utmost importance for the growth and consolidation of the IPE research knowledge base. Engaging in such research is not straightforward. Research on professional education and learning in cross-cultural studies needs rigorous reflection on approach and modes of collaboration. The rationale of this symposium is to display the work and learning of the international project group in resolving the challenges encountered during the process and development of the project through the lens of practice architectures. The challenges concern the process of forming the idea for collaborative research, coalescing context-related ideas from the four different countries and sites and acknowledging the different knowledge and cultures playing out in the collaboration.

An international group of five researchers from Sweden, Norway, Australia, and New Zealand, all engaged in Health Professions Education, initiated a collaboration, when an idea for a common research project came to light during a conference in 2019. Some members of the group had previous connections in research and education, developed over several years, while others were new to each other. After a year of planning work, the final project was formed. The purpose of the research project is to identify how IPE emerges when embedded in clinical practice placements; one site in each country. The theoretical framework of practice



architectures (Kemmis, 2022) is applied in combination with a multiple case research design and focused ethnographic field studies of IPE at these four local sites. The research project commenced during the second half of 2023. The project is innovative, as it takes an international approach to a globally identified educational challenge.

Presentations / Papers

Learning from forming an idea for a collaborative research project

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How is it possible to study a common phenomenon across national, cultural, and local levels, while acknowledging the obvious diversity? The variation in national health care systems and educational systems results in differences in health professions education in general and, also how interprofessional education activities are implemented in educational and clinical practices. This presentation will discuss how these factors caused challenges to the design of the research project, how they were resolved along the way, and how these challenges can be understood in terms of the theoretical lens of Practice Architectures. The starting point for the research project was a seeding grant from the Swedish Research Council, for an Exploratory workshop to be held in late 2021. The purpose and conditions of such a grant were to develop a funding application for a full research project. The number of the applicants was restricted to six, which allowed for a close collaboration throughout the process. Besides the obvious challenges of navigating differences in time zones and academic years between northern and southern hemispheres, the COVID-19 pandemic made it impossible for the four research teams to travel to meet in person to conduct a workshop. To meet the requirements of the funder to deliver a full application, the group conducted monthly meetings online over a year, to plan for the research project. Through this process, the group realized the necessity of knowing and understanding the situated nature and contrasts between our individual contexts and implemented educational activities, designed to ensure interprofessional learning between health professions students. The forming of the collaborative idea in an application for funding therefore also needed to be framed as a learning process for the research team itself.

Learning from negotiating frameworks and methods

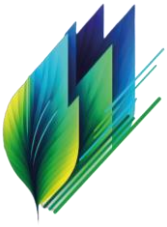
Julie Myers³, Johanna Dahlberg¹, Bente Norbye² & Eileen McKinlay³

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How is it possible to navigate the variation identified by the four collaborating partners on a national, cultural, and local level, to facilitate comparisons across their sites of interprofessional education? This presentation will concern the learning in the research team that has been gained through the process of translating the Theory of Practice Architectures into research practice. It became apparent that the choice of a common theoretical and methodological approach was paramount, acknowledging that educational phenomena and learning are always contextually bound and situated. The four research teams from four



different countries needed to establish a common approach to the case study research. In this phase, the work and learning in the research group focused on discussing the feasibility of the Theory of Practice Architectures (TPA) to enable international comparisons of individual interprofessional education case analyses. Kemmis' Theory of Practice Architectures (2022) views practice as a social phenomenon, that is relational and situated in the sense that it embraces multiple people and how they are affected by the practice. The theory gives opportunities to identify, analyze and compare how students' interprofessional "sayings, doings and relatings" at local sites are embedded and bundled together in the cultural-discursive, material-economic, and social-political dimensions of the complex practice of health care. The presentation will give examples of how these dimensions came into play as the group were planning the project, such as in relation to the complex requirements and processes for each partner to undertake applications for research ethics approvals. This showed a variation between the 4 countries in how methodological issues were explored from an ethical viewpoint, and how applications were amended to be approved. The paper will also give examples on how, all together, these dimensions of TPA have fed into the feasibility studies undertaken at each site to test how the case study methods may work.

Learning about our international research team as a practice

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This part of the symposium reflects on the benchmarking process we worked on to facilitate united and agreed processes as researchers. As the research collaboration develops and continues, we discover more diversity and similarity in our local conditions, and in our understandings of the theoretical and methodological framing of the research project. What have we learned from our collaboration so far, if we use TPA to view our "sayings, doings and relatings" in our research work as a practice? Is it even possible to do this in a team consisting of a group of researchers dispersed across the world? To calibrate the different knowledge and perspectives, in the effort of shaping a shared cultural-discursive dimension of our research practice, an international educational researcher was engaged as a critical friend to the project. This resulted in a series of workshops to facilitate the process. The presentation will give examples of this work process where, the researchers viewed two video clips in two different interprofessional learning settings. The videos were used to stimulate discussions around researcher observations. Different observations were then discussed to explore what could be seen and what could not be seen and how observations were understood and framed within the theoretical framework of Practice Architectures (Kemmis 2022). This process resulted in a better understanding of a common analytical process on a meta-level. In contrast to the practical discussions about how to go about observing students' interprofessional learning; this aspect reflects learning to know and understand each other as researchers with different experiences and methodological knowledge, and to create a culture for openness and collegial trust within the group. Directing the TPA towards our own research as a practice has contributed to the preparations for observations and how data can be generated and analysed across the different sites.



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Posters



Poster 1

A five-year learning journey on co-production – Four qualitative studies on doctoral students' evolving understanding of co-production

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Abstract

Doctoral studies are a demanding professional education aiming to develop independent researchers socialized into academia (Lovitts, 2008). To succeed with their studies, doctoral students need both internal support (from supervisors and faculty members) and external support (from personal relationships) (Sweitzer, 2009).

With the goal of enhancing service quality, co-production is characterized by the active involvement of the service users in the design, implementation and/or evaluation of the services they themselves will use (Alford, 2013). There has been a surge in interest for co-production over the past decade (Masterson et al., 2022), even if it is notable that co-production predominantly is discussed on a collective level, such as within organisations or in research studies.

Samskapa is a Swedish-British large-scale interactive research programme on co-production (Kjellström et al., 2019). Approximately 15 doctoral students have been enrolled. Their studies, many of them including interactive research approaches, concern co-production in the health- and social care sector.

Aim and relevance

The doctoral students closely collaborate with service users, and by following the doctoral students through their research projects, we have a unique opportunity to explore how their individual understanding of co-production evolves over time.

Methodology

Individual yearly interviews have been conducted since the year 2020 and data collection is ongoing until the Samskapa research programme ends in 2024. We employ different methods, techniques and analyses in the four studies. We use programme theory (Brix et al., 2020) in a cross-sectional study (Study 1) and in a qualitative comparative study (Study 2), and sensemaking theory (Weick, 1995) in a qualitative longitudinal study (Study 3) and value-configuration analysis (Fjeldstad et al., 2020) in a study comprising all five years (Study 4).



Preliminary results and ongoing analysis

In Study 1, the preliminary results indicate that the PhD students struggle with the definition of co-production, and how to interpret that in their own ongoing research. Others are struggling with measurements to capture co-production. It is also highlighted that co-production means different things for different persons, and that it is hard to know if you are “doing” co-production. Some PhD students think the organization in which they are performing their research has come further, while others think there is still a long way to go. In spring 2024, the analysis of the data has progressed, and the poster will present the final analysis of Study 1 and preliminary results from Study 3.

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Poster 2

Having coffee, learning Swedish – Migrant Experiences of Church Language Cafés

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Abstract

What makes church language cafés so popular in Sweden? This is a valid question since Sweden has one of the world's greatest comprehensive adult education programs free of charge, and the lowest interest for organized religion in the entire world (World Values Survey, 2023). The church language café is a greatly varied and longstanding teaching and learning activity organized without formal policy or syllabi. Guided by the phenomenological question: "What's the church language café experience like?" this paper explores these unique yet under-researched spaces of language learning, and its learner participants' experiences by using tools of hermeneutic lifeworld phenomenology. For new migrants everywhere, language is crucial for full participation in society and oftentimes becomes an oversimplified governmental matter. However, the municipality-run adult education in Sweden (MAE) has oftentimes proven inadequate, failing to provide access for all applicants and often criticized for not being able to minister to actual language needs of migrants, such as oral competency training. Responding to this, FBOs (Faith-Based Organizations), especially churches, have mobilized all over the country responding to different needs of migrants establishing in Sweden. At first glance, it could be assumed that church language café is just another place for practicing Swedish together with Swedes. This would simply make church language cafés spaces for education, community, and possibly a space for social/diaconal church work. However, a tentative analysis of the rich multifaceted material of this study reveals a great variety of participant meaning-making processes of these spaces suggesting different possibilities and restrictions of the space. Sharing the same interwoven lifeworld, living bodies of participants and volunteers interacting paint a complex picture of this inter-woven world of learning. This research aims to offer a nuanced image of the experiences of contemporary informal language learning for new migrants in Sweden. Using ethnographic methods, many hours have been spent in the field over a one-year period. Detailed ethnographic field notes, including informal talk, have been collected at seven different church language cafés in the same mid-sized town in the south of Sweden. Adding to the collected material are different artifacts such as pamphlets and teaching materials as well as transcripts of seven thematic in-depth interviews with different participants of varying origin, gender, and age. Hopefully, the analysis of this material can contribute with new perspectives to the ongoing debate on migration and language learning.



Poster 3

German CVET advertisement: Do we see a connection between Digitalization and Sustainability?

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Abstract

Skills needs for digitalization and sustainability can be analyzed among different stakeholders, namely educational institutions, employers, employees and financiers. In this context, continuing education advertisements complement data from curricula, job advertisements, and labor market surveys. In this paper we present a novel approach to analyze advertisements for continuing vocational education and training (CVET) in order to identify if skills and qualifications needed for digitalization and sustainability are currently considered, and if the so-called green economy is also important for CVETs.

Green Economy is an important topic, and sustainability is becoming increasingly relevant, even in vocational education [Be22]. Moreover, in the realm of digitization, the question arises: “Does industrial sustainability optimization and green innovation matter?”, see [Ha23].

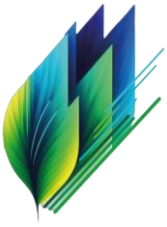
Methods / Methodology

Our first evaluation data was obtained from the data portal KURSNET of BA (see <https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/kursnet>). We retrieved data for initial and continuing vocational education and training, which leads to 23,460 (training), and 66.549 (re-training) results in February 2023. The proposed workflow consists of different steps [KKM20]. First, we retrieve the data. Second, we use text preprocessing and NLP methods. Then, we use pattern matching to extract entities to analyze and detect “green” ads and those related to digitalization.

We rely on the work of Binnewitt and Schnepf, who presented a solution to the question of to what extent training enterprises in the green economy use the attractiveness potential of ecological sustainability for their training advertisements and whether a change can be observed in recent years, see [BS22]. To support the detection of computing tools and software, we also consider word lists based on the Computer Science Ontology (CSO 3.2), which was introduced to cover CS-related publications [Sa20].

Results / Conclusions

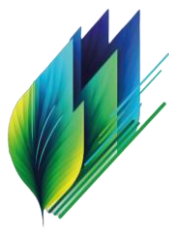
We can show that while most continuing education is concerned with computer science and digitalization (the lowest coverage is in the sector “Health” with 57%), the green economy is not a big topic in most advertisements. It is particularly interesting that while sustainability is a topic for specific tools and skills (low association), it is rarely used to “frame” and advertise courses and training (high association). We were able to show that training advertisements related to



sustainability are mostly related to Internet technologies, AI, and human-computer interaction. This may be due to the fact that concepts first have to gain enough attention to be used in contexts other than their original ones.

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Poster 4

Facilitating interprofessional learning communities to improve clinical supervision of health professional students in the workplace environment

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Abstract

There is an ever-increasing need to adapt and improve clinical supervision and the way clinical supervisor professional development is delivered to be transformed to enable optimum learning of health professional students on clinical placement. This has become even more important with the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic creating a significant disruption to the students' clinical placements. During this time some professional development for supervision moved online, but workforce shortages have restricted attendance. A professional development program has been created by The Melbourne Academic Centre for Health (MACH) to support clinical supervision development. An adapted collaboration inquiry approach within a community of practice was applied to enable the building and facilitating interprofessional professional learning communities. This approach was influenced by a pilot program - Professional Learning Communities in the post-graduate context, using online and face-to-face modalities with general practice clinical supervisors, which was enthusiastically embraced by the participants and showed promise in terms of changed supervisory practices [1].

The focus of this poster is to report on the implementation of a novel package of professional development for the hospital's clinical supervisors. We will discuss both findings of how conditions can be created for collaboration to improve clinical supervision, and the role of the facilitator to guide a collaboration inquiry approach to meet the aims of interprofessional learning groups.

Methods

The project Multiple sources of qualitative and quantitative data were collected including from interviews and recording of the Interprofessional Professional Learning Community (IPLC) meetings. The data was thematically analysed.

Results/Conclusions

The findings demonstrated that the features of collaboration inquiry approach for interprofessional learning communities can contribute to insights to both supervisory practice and student learning. The findings show how collaboration inquiry approach in interprofessional contexts can provide a platform for solutions and strategies enhance student learning; and provide an example of how to establish self-sustaining professional learning communities in the clinical context.



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Poster 5

Which norms and values do adult foreign-born vocational students encounter in Sweden during their workplace-based learning in elderly care?

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Abstract

In Sweden there exists a political strategy asserting that vocational education and training (VET) is the easiest and quickest route to entry into the labour market (Berglund & Henning Loeb, 2013). However, this notion is contradicted by the fact that VET possess their own more specialized vocabulary (Cummins, 2017). During their educational journey the VET students engage in workplace-based learning (WBL), where they observe and interact with new institutional cultures (Hegenbarth m. fl., 2015). Therefore, it becomes relevant to examine the norms and values observed and encountered by adult foreign-born VET students during their WBL experience in elderly care. The theoretical framework of situated learning is employed to both guide the study and analyze its findings.

Methods

During the autumn of 2023, 29 adult foreign-born students across five municipalities participated in seven focus group interviews. A content analysis (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004) was conducted with an abductive approach (Fejes & Thornberg, 2020). The study utilized the theory of situated learning alongside the concepts of norms and values to discern various patterns within the transcribed interviews.

Results

The analysis reveals that students observe different norms and values, some of which they incorporate into their conduct, such as professionalism and prioritizing the well-being of the caretakers. Conversely, they reject other norms and values that conflict with their own values, for example the staff's sometimes poor treatment of the caretaker. Furthermore, the students encounter norms that exclude them from the community of practice due to their foreign-born status, both co-workers and caretakers can be excluding in their behavior towards them. The students struggle to master the language and articulates that they need help to understand the specialized vocabulary prevalent in the community of practice.

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