Title:
Leadership within an International Community of Practice for PhD Students: Person-Centred Practice Research

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Session Title:
Educating for Person-Centredness: Leading Collaborative Research
Slot:
L 15: Sunday, 30 July 2017: 8:30 AM-9:45 AM
Scheduled Time:
8:50 AM

Preferred Presentation Format:
Symposium

Keywords:
PhD, learning and person-centredness

References:
FISCHER, G. & MARKUS ROHDE, M. AND WULF, V. 2007. Community-based learning: The core competency of residential, research-based universities. Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning, 2, 9-40.

LAHENIUS, K. 2012 Communities of practice supporting doctoral studies. *Journal of Education Management 1*0 (1) 29-38.

Shacham, M. and Cohen, Y. O 2009 Rethinking PhD learning incorporating communities of practice. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International* 46 (3) 279-292

Abstract Summary:
This presentation will discuss an international community of practice (CoP) for doctoral students that are united around the concept of person-centredness. The presentation highlights learning methods, processes and outcomes. Finally, the presentation will enable the audience to 'hear' the voices and 'see' the work of the CoP members.

Learning Activity:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
Participants will understand how the doctoral students understand the purpose of their Community of Practice.	Define CoP and its variants
Participants will understand more about what a person-centred Cop looks like and does.	Describe what the CoP members do to make the CoP meaningful and successful within their overall doctoral studies.

Abstract Text:

LEADERSHIP WITHIN AN INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FOR PhD STUDENTS: PERSON-CENTRED PRACTICE RESEARCH

Purpose: To tell the story of the evolution of the international CoP, share outcomes and outputs from the CoPBackground. Communities of Practice (CoPs) are formed by people who engage in social or collective learning in a shared area of interest; in this case, all the members were connected through PhDs at one university in Scotland and underpinned by values and research approaches consistent with person-centredness. The learning culture is an important factor affecting the quality of doctoral education (Lahenius 2012; Shacham and Cohen 2009) yet PhD students often report a dissonance between the expectations of being engaged with practicing researchers and a community of peers and other experts and their experiences. We will show how the CoP has developed through a collaboration between student learners and professoriate learners. Given the social learning underpinnings, particular attention is given to process review and to evaluation in the CoP among the growing international membership with members at different stages in their research and lifelong learning.

Methods: A participatory approach was used along with evaluation questions. Data was collated retrospectively over the last 2 years from the CoP Facebook page and concurrent data was collected from critically creative reflections across a number of the CoP members.

Results: The CoP members are committed to learning how to do their own research more authentically and to advancing our knowledge on person-centred practice and theory. Members help and support each other, and challenge each other in various ways. They build relationships that enable them to learn from each other and they care about each other and their relationships. The QMU CoP for PhD students appears to be evolving into a hybrid between a social learning community and a distributed virtual network crossing multiple countries and organizational boundaries (Fischer et al 2007).

Conclusion: A model of join professional and academic learning is emerging that has relevance for professional development and research capacity building in the topic of person-centredness and in the university. Although Wenger (2001) makes it clear that the technology itself is secondary to social and cultural aspects, as we evolve into a more geographically distributed

CoP, we have a greater need to understanding how technology affects social learning within the CoP and how we can use it more creatively.