Partnership through the lens of doctoral study

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Workshop outline

1. Dan and Catherine – 5 minute overview of their doctoral projects (10 mins)

2. Time for questions and observations from participants (10 mins)

3. Introduce methodological approach: *Situational Analysis* (5-10 mins)

4. In pairs or small groups – attempt a mapping exercise (15 mins)

5. Share maps with the rest of the group (10 mins)

6. Final opportunity for questions and observations (5-10 mins)
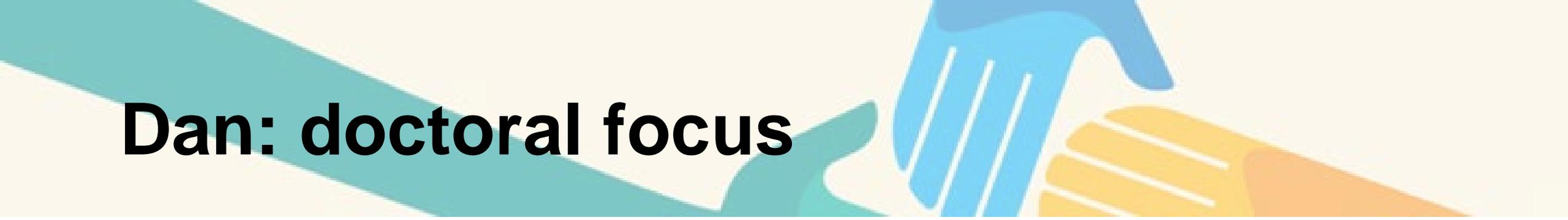
Dan: doctoral focus

- The aim is to conceptualise and discursively construct the student-university relationship within a UK-based institute that promotes the involvement of students in the institutions governance models and policies

  - What are the drivers behind how and where student voice fits within the hierarchy of a university?

  - Who wants to be involved in improving the collective teaching and learning experience and why?

  - Who ultimately makes the decisions and alters policy?

  - What are the challenges, barriers and tensions to a more democratic student - university relationship?

Problematising Student Voice

- Increased accountability within the UK has seen a **shift** to placing more emphasis on **enhancing learning** and increasing **learner engagement** (Little and Williams, 2010).

- Bovill et al. (2015) illustrates how students are also becoming involved in other ways beyond **student representation** and governance structures shaping their own learning through *co-creation, acting as **consultants***; working as **co-researchers** or as pedagogical **co-designers**.

- Changes to governance regimes in higher education open a whole array of questions as to the **actors** involved, their **relationship, roles, power** and **culture** Klemenčič (2014).

Thematic and Discourse analysis.

- The study aims to blend critical and post-structural approaches within an ethnographic case study.

- Adopting a Foucauldian perspective the concepts of discipline, surveillance and governmentality will be examined to help expose the problematic practices and the external power that has helped develop the discourse narratives at play.

- In addition Habermas' theory of knowing will be used to offer an insight into the individual that Foucault neglects (Stahl, 2004).

Catherine: doctoral focus

- How is 'partnership' experienced by students and staff when working together on higher education learning and teaching projects, and what implications are there for future practice?

  - How is partnership negotiated, shaped and conducted?
  - What influence does partnership working have on staff and students sense of personal and professional identity
  - How is staff-student partnership experienced in different disciplinary contexts?

Problematising Student-staff partnership

- A mode of student engagement, for educational enhancement
- Reframing student identity as 'active collaborators'
- Reframing staff identity as 'learners as well as teachers'
- Founded on mutual respect, reciprocity, shared responsibility

- Challenge arises: subversion of 'traditional hierarchies', and is partnership even able to subvert?

Situational Analysis (Adele Clarke, 2003)

- Builds upon Grounded Theory
- Uses situational maps and analyses
- Useful for multisite, multivariate, complex research situations
- Situates the researcher, through reflexivity, in the situation

"Situational analysis can deeply situate the research individually, collectively, social organizationally, symbolically, visually, and discursively."

Clarke, A. (2003) p.554

SA focuses on the researcher making three kinds of maps:

- **situational maps** (lay out elements of human/ non-human/ discursive/ historical/ symbolic/ cultural/ political/ other) *laid out in early design/ research phase

- **social worlds/ areas maps** (lay out all of the collective 'actors' and the arenas of commitment within which they are engaged in ongoing discourses and negotiations) *offers interpretations; post-structural assumptions; highlights contradictions, negotiations, fluidity, boundaries..

- **positional maps** (lay out major positions taken and not taken in the data – develop axes of variation and difference, focus, controversy)

Mapping exercise – 15 mins

- Firstly, any questions or observations?

- In pairs or groups, focus on the 'situational map' exercise

- Spend a few minutes discussing a partnership situation that you may be familiar with (could be a project, engagement programme)

- Using the pens and paper provided, have a go at mapping the elements you feel are present in the partnership situation

Mapping exercise – feeding back

- Each map is shared and discussed

- Any surprising or useful elements that emerged?

- Any problems, limitations, questions?

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