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YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

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Participative Practice Teaching and Learning in Social Work Internship



***Tell me and I forget.
Teach me and I remember.
Involve me and I learn.***

Benjamin Franklin



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Presentation outline



PRESENTATION OUTLINE

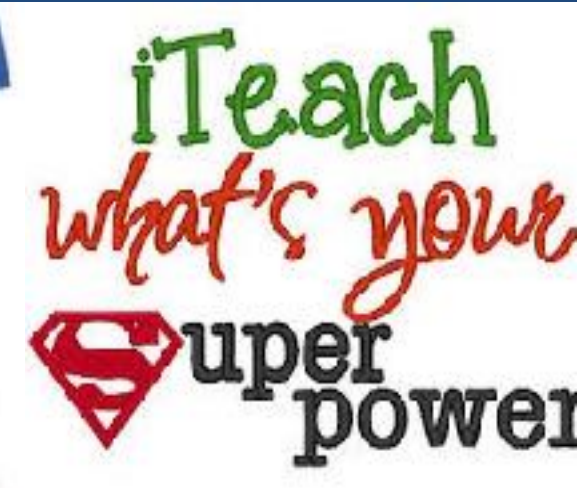
- Introduction
- Practice education in social work
- ‘Mind colonising’ practice education
- Participative practice teaching and learning
- The Moola poverty alleviation project
- Discussion of the Moola project as participative practice learning opportunity
- Participative assessment
- Theory-practice connections evident
- Conclusion



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INTRODUCTION





INTRODUCTION

- Inherent power imbalance paving the way for oppressive practices (colonisation of the mind)
- ‘Deficit approach’ to teaching
- ‘All-knowing expert’
- How can participative practice teaching and learning counter ‘colonisation of the mind’ in social work?



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PRACTICE EDUCATION IN SOCIAL WORK



PRACTICE EDUCATION

- A significant role in the development of competence of social work students
- Exposure to the 'real world' develop an understanding of the socio-economic-political context of social work practice
- Participative learning methodology

(Horgan, K. & O' Rourke, D.; Tsien, T. B. K., & Tsui, M..S.)



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'MIND COLONISING' PRACTICE EDUCATION



'MIND COLONISING'

- So called 'banking model' (Freire, 1921 – 1997)
- Colonisation of the mind - unspoken agreement between two parties
- Decolonising practice teaching - 'let go' of the power associated with the role and assume the role of the facilitator
- Students become part of their own learning



'MIND COLONISING'

- Powerless students - vulnerable and threatened by the assessment process
- Decolonised practice teaching - innovative ways of teaching and assessment





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PARTICIPATIVE PRACTICE TEACHING AND LEARNING



PARTICIPATIVE PRACTICE TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Opposite of the ‘banking system’ of education
- Actively involve students in their own learning process
- ‘What is being taught to what is being learned’
- Facilitator is the one who provides support and assistance to students

(Horgan, K. & O’Rourke, D.)



PARTICIPATIVE PRACTICE TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Safe environment where students can learn without being judged
- Promote student's self-awareness
- Assist them in understanding their world
- Be a mentor and not a judge
- Students develop confidence in the value of their own perceptions and experiences





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Funanani

EMBRACING CHILDREN CHANGING COMMUNITIES

MOOLA POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROJECT



MOOLA POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROJECT



MOOLA

Early Childhood
Development
Centre

Group work

Home visits

Reading classes

Volunteering

DISCUSSION

- Traditional approach to poverty relief
- Developmental approach to poverty alleviation
- Promoting socio-economic well being of service users
- Service users 'earn' Moolas (credits) for participation in activities in exchange for products in the Moola shop



STUDENT LEARNING

- Involvement in the process
- Negotiation skills
- Home visits
- Marketing skills
- Multi-disciplinary approach
- Fundraising and sourcing of donations
- Regular debriefing sessions
- Holistic approach



STUDENT VOICE

“The field supervisor assisted where she could but she had entrusted the student to be able to run the group as effective as they can, she gave the student the opportunity to learn and make own mistakes and was always present to assist with matters that were above the student’s control”

Fourth Year Student

AGENCY'S VOICE

- Stimulated by the creative ideas and new initiatives suggested by students
- Mutual learning experience
- Refresh their own practical skills and knowledge



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DISCUSSION OF THE MOOLA PROJECT AS PARTICIPATIVE PRACTICE LEARNING OPPORTUNITY



PARTICIPATIVE PRACTICE LEARNING

- Well defined objectives
- Access to a continuum of learning opportunities
- Experience real responsibility
- Collaboration beyond academic environment
- Outcomes of achievement
- Regular review and evaluation



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PARTICIPATIVE ASSESSMENT



PARTICIPATIVE ASSESSMENT

- Universities ‘grading’ assessment
- Power associated with assessment
- Process should be transparent
- As participatory as possible
- Assessment of the Moola project
- “Do not let students’ lives be dominated by assessed work, to the exclusion of the natural joy of learning” (Race, 2015:17)



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THEORY-PRACTICE CONNECTIONS EVIDENT IN THE MOOLA PROJECT



THEORY-PRACTICE CONNECTIONS

- Value of critical reflection
- Socio-economic development
- Strengths perspective
- Empowerment
- Promoting dignity and worth of people



STUDENT VOICE

“The Moola project is a powerful tool that taught students that projects can work from a rights-based approach without exploiting people but rather restoring their worth and dignity”

Fourth Year Student



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CONCLUSION



CONCLUSION

- Took responsibility for own learning while delivering a service to the community
- Partnership led to decrease in status and power disparity
- Interactive learning process
- Students were contributors and not simply recipients
- Field supervisor is a mentor, and not the judge



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Thank you

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