

Global Collegiality through HERDSA Fellowships - Glimpses into Academic Journeys

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- To provide insights into the shared journey of three academics as they engaged in supportive and collaborative processes provided by the HERDSA Fellowship to develop as teaching scholars.
- To highlight how collaborative scholarly activities forge academic friendships, and encourage reflective practice, and professional development among HERDSA fellows.
- To discuss theoretical frameworks that underpin the concepts of academic identities, roles and professional learning.

Academic Identity (AI): Perspectives

1. AI is a function of community membership that is grounded in the interactions between the individual and two key communities, the discipline and the HE as an institution (Henkel, 2005)
2. Professional identities can involve “becoming” and “unbecoming” (Colley & James, 2005)
3. AI is determined by the individual and community of practice to which professionals belong (Archer, 2008)
4. A trait approach to AI could help to determine what essential attributes an academic may need, and community is seen as “the who, what, where, and when (Quigley, 2011, p. 24).

Factors contributing to the formation of AI

- Personal (Individual cognitive and emotional factors)
- Contextual (program and external work environment)
- Relational (connections/interactions with others)

• (Lieff, Baker, Mori, Egan-Lee, Chin & Reeves, 2012)

Professional Learning Communities

- “Developing PLC appears to hold considerable promise for capacity building, for sustainable improvement”, and for the construction of academic identity.
- “There is a broad international consensus that it suggest a group of people sharing and critically interrogating their practice in an ongoing, reflective, collaborative, inclusive, learning-oriented growth promoting way (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000), operating as collective enterprise (King & Newman, 2001).”

(Stoll, Bolam, McMahon & Thomas, 2006)

The research focus

- How does the HERDSA Fellowship scheme contribute to the development of global collegiality and professional development?

The research methodology

- Methodology: Qualitative Exploratory Case Study
- Instruments: Using Content Analysis of Documentation and Participant Observations
- Participants: Three female participant researchers from different backgrounds, living in Sarawak, Perth and Brisbane.

HERDSA fellowships

- The HERDSA fellowship scheme is a professional development fellowship scheme which underscores development and improvement of higher education teaching and learning.
- HERDSA fellowships are awarded to academics whose reflective portfolios have been assessed to have successfully addressed criteria demonstrating their contribution to student/staff learning and teaching and learning scholarship.
- The fellowship program allows members to become part of an active and international community of HERDSA Fellows engaged in supporting and encouraging quality educational practice in tertiary education institutions across the world.

- Ref-The HERDSA Fellowship: A Recognition and Development Scheme, n.d.



HERDSA Fellowship Objectives

1. To improve the quality of student learning and academic development outcomes;
2. To enhance the professionalism of teachers, academic developers and learning support advisors in higher education;
3. To provide a way for universities to recognize and reward good teachers, academic developers and learning support advisors;
4. To give individuals the means for making claims about their professional practice;
5. To provide opportunities for further professional development in cross-institutional groups

- While all the objectives validate the fellowship processes and attainments, objective five which accounts for the provision of professional development in cross-institutional groups, resonates the most as we reflect on our collective HERDSA fellowship journeys.
- We believe that the HERDSA fellowship and the developmental activities we completed in triads have allowed us to continue networking on research projects, and helped us form a tight-knit trio of supportive colleagues working across nations and states.

Academic Roles and Identities

- Academics have challenging roles that of educator, scholar, researcher and leader, and the roles assumed are attributed to three key influences: the individuals' own capabilities and talents; the environmental setting and support that is available; and the degree to which the individual commits to progressing their career (Debowski, 2012).
- Kogan, 2000 (as cited in Clarke, Hyde and Drennan, 2013) argues that the notion of professional identity is individual and social at the same time and that individuals continue to advance not only because of their subject expertise and moral and conceptual foundations, but also because of the array of roles they assume as determined by their institutions and academic communities.



Collaborative Narrative Enquiry

- We believe that academic identities are also shaped by collaborative interchanges and developmental reflective activities undertaken.
- As academics in senior leadership roles in our respective universities, who have moved from being solely discipline-focused to being academics engaged in the scholarship of teaching and learning and performing mentoring roles, this process provided a space for professional and personal growth.
- The collaborative, auto-ethnographical reflection was congruent and meaningful.

Constructivist Theory and Professional Development

- The pedagogical underpinnings of academic professional development aim to understand how academics engage in collaborating and working together to expand their knowledge base and assimilate new information to advance their professions.
- Academic professional development in this case is similar to a constructive approach of learning as the new knowledge or experience is gained through contextually meaningful experiences.

Conclusion

- Our presentation reflects on the complex dimensions of academic engagement concerning the interests and practices of academics as professionals working across nations and campuses, and highlighted how academic identities are shaped by attainments in teaching and research, and by professional collaboration in communities of practice.
- In the ever changing landscape of higher education, international and disciplinary engagements have become a measure of performance for professional development for career advancements in universities and for individual academics.

References

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