How can educational developers do research in practice?

Biography: Gitte Wichmann-Hansen, Associate Professors at Centre for Educational Development, Aarhus University, Denmark

Gitte Wichmann-Hansen has 20+ years of experience with educational development within Higher Education, and she has previously served as an ICED board member for eight years. Her research expertise is supervision, including Doctoral and Masters' thesis supervision and collegial supervision. She advises institutional leaders and academic developers across Scandinavia and Europe on supervision quality assurance and improvement strategies. She operates with a broad conceptualization of supervision, which is applied in this workshop. She has successfully implemented a model for research collaboration that has already fostered ten co-authored publications on educational practices with academic staff members across different disciplines. The model is introduced at the workshop among other things.

Biography: Mette Krogh Christensen, Associate Professors at Centre for Educational Development, Aarhus University, Denmark

Mette Krogh Christensen's passion is to explore and support how professionals (e.g., teachers, health professionals, sport coaches) learn and perform in specialized and context-specific practices. She has an academic background in the social sciences of sport and in adult pedagogy. Today, her expertise revolve around situational and social aspects of teaching and learning. In particular, she is engaged in exploring the process of developing and changing professional identities among academics in higher education. Finally, she is deputy chair of the Danish Network for Educational Development in Higher Education (2014-present) and chair of the Committee for Danish National Teaching Award (2020-present).

Aim

To provide participants with concrete ideas on how to conduct small-scale practice-based research on educational development work. After the workshop, participants will be able to:

- Identify key factors required to conduct successful small-scale practice research
- Choose from a range of concrete models for doing such research
- Transfer concrete models to one's own institutional and individual context

Content

Educational developers (EDs) are often caught in a dilemma between practice and research. On the one hand, our work takes place in the field of practice, and 'out there' we are expected to provide guidance and concrete advice that are directly applicable for faculties (Boud & Brew, 2013). On the other hand, we are expected to evidence-base our advice, and ideally to produce publishable research and document the effectiveness of our work (Weaver et al., 2014; Bamber & Stefani, 2016). However, it is often difficult to translate research into practice and vice versa. To add to the complexity, faculty members across the higher education sector are under an increased pressure to publish within their discipline as well as to demonstrate a scholarly approach in their teaching (Kim et al., 2021).

In response to these complex conditions, we offer a hands-on workshop on how to overcome some of the key challenges in doing and documenting research on practices within educational development. We particularly present two concrete models for how to translate educational development practices to (publishable) research:

The first model is labelled "Research Spot Light". It suggests that 4-6 hours per week over a 4–6-month period is enough for a small-scale practice-based research project to succeed. Thereby, educational developers with only limited time for research can investigate and evidence their own practice. The model is inspired by Layder (2012) and it refers to a double entendre: 1) it is a small-scale and reduced investigation inspired by acknowledged research methods, and 2) it turns the spotlight on one specific aspect of practice.

The second model is labelled "The TAP model" (Teach - Analyze – Publish). It is inspired by Weaver et al. (2013)'s Collaborative Scholarship Model in ED. It includes eight distinct stages from initiating contact with faculty members to addressing their needs, advising them on their practice and to finally co-publish an article. The model facilitates academic staff into the scholarship of teaching, and it addresses the dual pressure on academic staff to improve teaching practice and to produce research output.

Facilitation Plan

Content	Method	Minutes
Introduction	Short welcome	5
	Brief presentation of useful concepts of knowledge-based practice and practice-based knowledge	15
	Sharing of research experiences among participants (Mentimeter exercise)	25
Concrete models for creating synergy between research and practice	Presentation of "The Research Spot Light" model and "The TAP" model, respectively	40
	Questions and discussions in plenary	10
Coffee break		15

Hands-on application	Individual exercise: Participants fill out work sheets that allow for adaption of the models to participants' own practices and needs	15
	Peer-feedback by use of a questioning guide supported by the facilitators	25
	Plenary: Sharing of strategies for how to implement the individual plans and ideas developed during the workshop	20
Closing of the workshop	Think-pair-share of main learning points from the workshop?	10

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