UNIVERSITY OF WORCESTER

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

University of Worcester
City Campus (CHG010)
Friday 20th June 2014
09:30 – 16:00
Programme of Presenters

09:30  Opening Ceremony
Will Bowen-Jones - Head of Educational Development, University of Worcester

09:45  What is the Glue That Helps Midwifery Students Stick? A Phenomenological Study of the Influences on First Year Students’ Decisions to Continue Their Pre-Registration Midwifery Education.
Sarah Snow - Institute of Health and Society, University of Worcester

10:10  Exploring the Perceptions of Victims of Sexual Violence: The Impact of Participant, Victim and Perpetrator Gender on Rape Myth Endorsement
Laura Scurlock-Evans - Institute of Health and Society, University of Worcester

10:35  The research design of an-ongoing project measuring food knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and practices of rural women in a developing country
Amos Pofi - Institute of Health and Society, University of Worcester

11:00  Break

11:10  “It would be well-nigh impossible to describe all I have seen”: The League of the Empire's 'Interchange of Home and Dominion Teachers' scheme, 1907-1930
Jody Crutchley - Institute of Humanities & Creative Arts, University of Worcester

11:35  Elite and specialized interviewing in leadership research
Marie Stephenson - Institute of Education, University of Worcester

12:00  Can Teachers’ Professional Identity be the Platform for Education Change?
Eunice Kimaliro - Institute of Education, University of Worcester

12:25  Lunch Break and Poster Session
13:20  How do you like them apples? Investigating the effect of wildflowers in apple orchards on pollination and pest management
   **Megan McKerchar** - *Institute of Science and Environment, University of Worcester*

13:45  Re-evaluating the Oedipus complex in psychoanalytic literary criticism: A new approach to reading the Oedipal event in *Sons & Lovers* (1912)
   **Amelia Hook** - *Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies, University of Warwick*

14:10  *Break*

14:25  Internal Audit and Shared Services: It’s a kind of magic – making the invisible, visible!
   **Rob Milford** - *Worcester Business School, University of Worcester*

   **Rina Devilly** - *Warwick Business School, University of Warwick*

15:15  Happy endings: A personal account of surviving a children's literature PhD, and finding work afterwards
   **Kate Flynn** - *Institute of Humanities & Creative Arts, University of Worcester*

16:00  Closing - Post Graduate Society Meeting to follow shortly after.
What is the Glue That Helps Midwifery Students Stick? A Phenomenological Study of the Influences on First Year Students’ Decisions to Continue their Pre-Registration Midwifery Education

Sarah Snow

Institute of Health and Society, University of Worcester

The midwifery profession is critically dependent on a sustained and renewable workforce in order to respond effectively to the dynamic health needs of childbearing women and their families. Midwifery students who withdraw from their educational programmes before completion therefore represent a significant loss on many levels. For the student, the experience is one of frustration and disappointment; for the educational institution, financial penalties are incurred that may also impact on future commissioning of funded course places. The reasons for early student withdrawal are complex and therefore difficult to precisely identify. However, themes include unexpected life changes, financial difficulties and the stresses associated with clinical practice (Green and Baird, 2009; Urwin et al. 2010). The critical window for undergraduate students to consider leaving or actually leave appears to be within the first 12 months of their studies (Tinto, 1993). The research described here is a doctoral work in progress. The study is an exploration of the experience of first year midwifery students in managing the demands of their course and the factors that influence their decisions to continue. The reasons why students stay and are able to complete their pre-registration education are largely unknown. An understanding of this is likely to be more useful to practice and education than the reasons for withdrawal alone.

Methodology: The retention of midwifery students is highly complex and contextual, and likely to involve motivational, emotional and academic factors. Therefore, interpretative phenomenological analysis has been identified as the best methodological ‘fit’ as it has the potential to offer rich and detailed explanations of the phenomena that bring the lived experience of individuals to life (Thomson et al. 2011). The study is based on the experiences of one cohort of midwifery students during the first year of their degree programme at a local university and has 3 phases. During each phase, group and individual interviews with 6 students occur. Data is collected at the end of 4, 8 and 12 months of the students’ first year.

Results: Early data analysis reveals an interesting theme of powerful, individual motivation to succeed that appears to be enhanced if the student experiences tensions at home or in clinical practice. All findings from phase 1 of the study will be presented at conference.
Exploring the Perceptions of Victims of Sexual Violence: The Impact of Participant, Victim and Perpetrator Gender on Rape Myth Endorsement

Laura Scurlock-Evans & Bere Mahoney
Institute of Health and Society, University of Worcester

Rape myths (RMs) are prejudicial or false stereotypes about victims and perpetrators (Burt, 1980), which often act to minimise the impact of sexual violence, or shift blame from perpetrators to victims. Rape myth endorsement (RME) research indicates that RMs may have many serious and negative consequences, and may perpetuate the incidence of rape.

Method:
A quasi-experimental survey study conducted with an opportunistic sample of 382 men and women, exploring the impact of participant gender, victim gender, perpetrator gender and endorsement of social roles (whilst controlling for socially desirable responding) on level of RME.

Results:
In line with hypotheses, holding more traditional social roles and recording lower socially desirable responding were associated with higher levels of RME; RMs were endorsed to a greater extent by men compared to women. Contrary to expectations, RME was higher for those situations in which the perpetrator is male rather than female. The results indicated that RME was higher for male (rather than female) victims, although this narrowly failed to reach statistical significance. The findings also suggested that specific RMs (such as “Intoxicated men/women are usually willing to have sexual relations”) were endorsed to differing degrees, depending on victim and perpetrator gender.

Conclusion:
The findings of the research have implications for understanding reactions to victims and perpetrators of sexual violence, and will help to inform further research which aims to explore the impact of RME on victims’ reporting and disclosure decisions.
The research design of an on-going project measuring food knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and practices of rural women in a developing country

Amos Pofi

Institute of Health and Society, University of Worcester

This research paper discusses the research design of an on-going project measuring food knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and practices of rural women in a developing country. Micro-nutrient deficiency disorder prevalence in children under-fives has been a common problem in Kwatas rural village of Plateau State Nigeria, for more than the past two decades. Explanatory sequential mixed-methods design approach was employed to investigate the phenomena with the aim of reducing malnutrition in this village. A convenience sample of 120 women were utilised in phase one (quantitative) aspect of the study. The quantitative data provided a baseline to facilitate the formulation of a semi-structured questionnaire for the phase two (qualitative) aspect of the study. Chi-square and t-test were utilised to test knowledge (nominal data), attitude, beliefs and practices (ordinal data) of the women. A purposive sample of 12 participants from the previous sample (quantitative), one political representative on nutrition education at the local government level and a non-governmental staff of a nutrition and rehabilitation centre were collected for the phase two aspect of the study. Emerging themes consistent with discarding of colostrum-milk and inadequate total-breast feeding practices seems to be unfolding. Limitations of explanatory sequential mixed methods design are acknowledged.
“It would be well-nigh impossible to describe all I have seen”:
The League of the Empire's
Interchange of Home and Dominion Teachers' Scheme, 1907-1930
Jody Crutchley
Institute of Humanities & Creative Arts, University of Worcester

The aim of this presentation will be to present work in progress from the author’s investigations of the 'Interchange of Home and Dominion Teachers' scheme where, mostly female, British teachers between the ages of 21 and 45 were exchanged with teachers from the White Dominions for a period of twelve months (excluding travel time). Using archival material from the League of the Empire, this paper will consider the motivations and objectives of the scheme and its mechanics before focusing in the detail on the group of 850 British teachers who were involved in these earliest exchanges. Letters, newspaper article reflections and their surviving comments to the League will be used to draw out an idea of the impact of these years on the teachers, as well as their wider effect within British education, especially within elementary schools, where most of these teachers worked.

While previous work on educational trips within the empire has looked at other, shorter imperial tours, such as Frederick Ney's Canadian-based programme, or the Royal Empire Society pupil exchange schemes, the impact of this specific group of ambassadorial elementary teachers, especially in their return to British schools and in the teaching of empire curricula, has received very little scholarly attention comparatively. This paper will therefore use the evidence from the League of Empire's 'interchange' scheme to show that the idea of teachers as 'imperial agents' carried real weight within the realm of British education and empire curricula and even nearly led to the official adoption of the 'interchange' scheme by the Board of Education in 1926.
Qualitative methods are beginning to be used more frequently in leadership research, particularly at the intersection of leadership and ethics (Trevisño, Brown and Hartman, 2003; Storr, 2004). However, the typical leadership study is still heavily reliant upon the convenient use of a survey-based assessment tool (Hunters, Bedell-Avers and Mumford, 2007), and rarely produces meaningful, actionable, practicable and wholly relevant knowledge. Instead we are fed ‘time and context free generalisations’ (Gray, 2009, p165) mined from an unrepresentative, convenient populace. Few leadership scholars have attempted to sample elite or specialized individuals, those recognised as principled or ethical decision makers by their peers or experts (Woiceshyn, 2001, p320), fewer still have selected the in-depth interview as their method of choice.

‘Interviews with individual high-profile leaders are uncommon, because these individuals are less accessible to researchers as opposed to the media’ (Klenke, 2008, p139). Those who have written on the topic (Buchanan, Boddy, and McCaiman, 1988; Ostrander 1993; Delaney, 2007) report this as an exaggeration, gaining access can be achieved by simply following a set of tailored strategies. Although serendipity, social networking and personal circumstances are also significant (McDowell, 1998) they are not insurmountable. Interviewing elites is a useful method of data collection (Dexter, 2012) and can add value to the study of leadership by emphasising and promoting the role of context (Klenke, 2008). This paper examines the small, but rich literature and argues that by conducting such interviews with the same degree of rigour and concern for validity they offer the perfect opportunity to plumb the depths (Josselson, 2013) and complexities of the leadership experience, and as a result enlarge, not reduce the present scholarly picture.
In December 2010, the Government pledged their commitment to turning around the lives of 120,000 of the country’s most troubled families by the end of the parliament, setting out a clear vision as to what needed to change. While Government recognises that there is a huge human cost of failing to intervene effectively with troubled families, the financial costs are also important to understand and evaluate. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) report ‘The Cost of Troubled Families’ (DCLG, 2012) highlights that approximately £8 billion pounds per year is being spent on reacting to the problems of troubled families, and concludes that this is not sustainable and while not all of the costs can be averted in supporting families, projected financial benefits of investing a comparably small amount in family intervention services are compelling.

The project will espouse a post-structuralist theoretical framework, “deconstructing how bodies of ‘knowledge’ may interlink with the operation of power” (Tew, 2002, p.65). Power can be perceived as productive, in which it has the potential of bringing opportunities of individual and social change. A post-structural approach will enable the exploration of Government and Local Authority policies in respect of power relations, especially in ascertaining whether the projects delivery of emancipatory practice does actually empower its service users to turn their lives around. The project will adopt a multi-strategy research approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research, which will address the different issues within the project. The research project will build upon existing work with severe and multiple deprivations families (SMD) families, and will explore whether an increase in the understanding of the financial benefits for partners in transforming the lives of people with SMD improve the way mainstream budgets are invested in these services.
How Can Teachers’ Professional Identity be the Platform for Education Change?

Eunice Kimaliro

Institute of Education, University of Worcester

Since education plays an important part in national consciousness, it has often been a feature of political manifestos, advanced or exploited by the changing political tides. Commenting on the manner in which education changes are formulated and their limited effectiveness House (2000: p.14) argued that national leaders formulate educational policies primarily in response to national economic concerns - without sufficient understanding or appreciation of educational institutions. This overdrawn focus causes educational policies to be mismatched to practices. Could assumptions regarding the proper educational practices or outcomes be moderated by professional identity? If, as Evett 2003:p. 4 explains, a profession is

... an exclusive area of expertise and knowledge and the power to define the nature of the problems in the area as well as the control of access to potential solutions...

One would expect that an understanding of teaching as a profession would facilitate a platform for the relevance, effectiveness and amendments of educational practices to be developed and interrogated. But is this the case? Professional identity is a contextually derived construct with consequence to the professional and others within the professional’s landscape (Sachs 2005). This presentation will explore the construction of teachers’ professional identity in a given Kenyan context and show how that identity limits or expands teachers’ opportunity for contributing to educational change.

References

Fruit growers are highly dependent on the successful pollination of their crops. Although honeybees have been used to increase pollination, they are declining and less effective pollinators for apples. Wild bees are a more effective, efficient and resilient pollination service. An improved pollination service could increase fruit yield and quality. Additionally, unless orchards are treated with pesticides, fruit production is compromised by pests and diseases. Wildflower strips have been shown to enhance the abundance of pollinators and natural predators separately in apple and other crop systems. This project will pull these theories together to investigate the benefits of sowing wildflowers in apple orchards through an integrated community ecology approach.

This presentation will discuss the different methodologies used to measure changes in these communities between the wildflower and control treatments. It will also discuss how the methods will be used to investigate whether these community changes translate to enhanced pollination and pest management, and thus fruit quality and production. Baseline data from the first year of data collection will be presented.
Re-evaluating the Oedipus complex in psychoanalytic literary criticism: A new approach to reading the Oedipal event in Sons & Lovers (1912)
Amelia Hook

Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies, University of Warwick

It is the intention of this paper to discuss and apply recent developments in ‘medical’ psychoanalytic theory to literary criticism on the same topic of the past, present and future. For those unfamiliar with Freud’s work, the paper will begin with a brief introduction to the Oedipus complex as a psychological mechanism and will outline the objections that critics have made to its feasibility. We will then trace a specific line of development of the complex in the work of twentieth century ‘Post-Freudian’ theorist Jean Laplanche. His model of ‘General Seduction’ can be seen to provide answers to questions and contradictions that Freud himself often refused to recognise or redress. If Laplanche’s model is a suitable replacement for Freud’s theory of a spontaneously emerging infantile sexuality, then we must begin updating our conceptions of the cultural institutions influenced by Freudian psychology, such as literary criticism. The necessity and significance of such revisions will be demonstrated through a re-reading D. H. Lawrence’s notorious ‘mother-lust’ novel Sons and Lovers (1912) which positions Gertrude and not Paul as sexually perverse and degenerate. We will conclude by speculating whether it is possible to undo a backlog of over 100 years of psychoanalytic textual misinterpretation, and whether ultimately Freud’s theories may have done society more harm than good.
Internal Audit and Shared Services:
It’s a kind of magic – making the invisible, visible!
Rob Milford
Worcester Business School, University of Worcester

Shared services are growing in the local government context and by March 2014, 95% of all local authorities are sharing some aspects of their services. Shared services come in many forms and not all of them are human and can involve many different organisations.

My research is looking into the role the internal auditor can play in the shared service arena and in particular how they help with keeping the accountability clear and visible. The research is based on case studies over a six year period and from an internal researcher perspective.

Shared services have demonstrated that:
• they do evolve
• the local authorities do devolve controls into the shared services
• there can be multiple shared services in one organisation, leading to interdependencies and interference
• non-humans can be involved in their control

All this can result in accountability and responsibility disappearing into the black box of the shared service. Access to information and evidence for the internal auditor’s work can be restricted or incomplete. This can be exacerbated if there is more than one internal auditor with an interest in the shared service as access rights may be prohibitive to some.

This presentation looks at some of the key devices an internal auditor can use and how they can engage with the shared service from the start. It also provides a framework for the role the auditor should play at each phase of the shared service. Above all it shows how internal auditors can make the invisible, visible and auditable.
Global demographic shifts resulting from declining fertility rates and increasing life expectancy have contributed towards an ageing population in both developed and developing economies. Singapore is a prime example of a rapidly ageing population resulting in profound challenges that goes beyond demographics and extends to the political, economic and social spheres. In Singapore’s context of anticipated labour shortage and misalignment of skills and qualifications of older workers with the demands of the economy, this research is focused on the sustainability of its ageing workforce.

Against the background of recent changes in public policies in areas such as pension, legislation and provision of training programmes to upgrade skills and qualifications, the research aims to understand the issues related to labour mobility of older workers by understanding factors such as their motivation, education and capabilities that may support or impede their effort in extending their work lives. It also will then examine the current human resource practices that are in place and the ways in which these practices promote or hinder the employment and integration of older workers in the workplace.

Using a variety of capitalism frameworks, the research will endeavour to shed light on how career trajectory has changed in recent years in Singapore, drawing examples from the international context in order to analyse the impact from labour, capital and state's perspective. It is hoped that the research would illuminate significant trends and meaningful insights pertaining to the ageing workforce.
Happy endings: A personal account of surviving a children's literature PhD, and finding work afterwards

Kate Flynn
Institute of Humanities & Creative Arts, University of Worcester

This session will discuss the good, the bad and the ugly in relation to progressing through your PhD. This will also consider life after the PhD, as she will give her experience of publishing and getting research work outside of academia. Kate gained her BA Hons English Language and Literature from Mansfield College, University of Oxford. On completion of her degree, she secured a post as a marketing executive for the country’s largest newspaper publisher before embarking on a freelance career as a copywriter. Throughout this period she undertook voluntary work with a range of mental health charities and institutions. Her interest in psychological health eventually led her to retrain by studying a BSc in Applied Psychology at the University of Derby. During her studies she worked as a tutor for children with autism and as an Assistant Psychologist in an NHS community mental health team. After graduating with a first, she successfully applied for a University of Worcester studentship to fund her doctoral project, which she completed last year.
Post Conference Dinner

All presenters and attendees are invited to join us for a meal at Pizza Express, 3 College St, Worcester, WR1 2LU at 19:00. We will be going for drinks beforehand at The Postal Order, 18 Foregate St, Worcester, WR1 1DN after the conference until the meal, 10 minute walk from the restaurant. See map below.

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If you would like to get involved next year
please contact Rachael Shillitoe (r.shillitoe@worc.ac.uk)