

The Living Consensus: *Growing transformative learning environments*

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Abstract

This paper outlines a recent research project that investigates the impact of The Living Consensus conceptual framework on learning environments and the development of transferrable learning skills for youth (vocational learners under the age of 25). Literature that considers each of the five key teaching and learning strategies that sit within the framework is discussed. The potential impact of the five strategies working together to help develop transferrable working and learning skills for youth is examined through the use of case studies.

As a result of this investigation, it is recommended that teachers employ facilitative and collaborative teaching and learning strategies (such as the five discussed in this study) to support the development of positive learning environments and transferrable learning skills for youth.

The work shop that has been designed to disseminate these findings will provide examples of the five key teaching and learning strategies in practice and ask participants to select and adapt at least one of these strategies to their own teaching context.

Keywords

Transferrable learning skills, ethics agreement, shared leadership, reflective practice, project teams, cultural inquiry

Introduction and literature review

In response to recent government policy we are seeing more youth entering vocational learning institutions but to date little research has been conducted into teaching strategies for this group (Chan, 2013). Many youth experience difficulty transitioning to these vocational learning environments (Chan, 2013; Eraut, 2004; 2007). Some educators believe that if this transition phase is viewed from a 're-situation' perspective, rather than an physical and social adjustment period, more positive outcomes would be experienced by the learners (Eraut, 2004; 2007; Franken, 2012). Essentially, a re-situation perspective explicitly acknowledges the learners' skills and knowledge that she or he had gained in their previous working, learning or social contexts so that these can be affirmed, developed and utilised in the new learning environment (Chan, 2013; Eraut, 2004; 2007; Franken, 2012).

This concept of re-situation causes the teacher or facilitator to examine what learners bring with them to their new learning environments in terms of pre-existing experience, skills and knowledge. The facilitator can then build on these existing capabilities and tacit knowledge with the new learning that will take place during the programme of study (Eraut, 2004; 2007; Franken, 2012). The re-situation concept questions the value of non-student specific, pre-determined and rigidly structured curricula in favour of more flexible programmes of learning that accommodate each learner's existing skills, knowledge and experience (Eraut, 2004; 2007; Franken, 2012).

The newly developed Living Consensus conceptual framework (figure 1) endeavours to incorporate this re-situated learning concept by recognising and building on the learner's existing skills and knowledge. Furthermore the framework is aimed at helping to develop the 'transferrable learning skills' that learners arrive with and build on them not only during their programme of study but also in their future learning and working environments.

The Living Consensus framework proposes a support structure that can be implemented to help learners re-situate these skills while providing positive and supportive learning experiences. The following literature review will identify the theories that have informed The Living Consensus conceptual framework and the five key teaching and learning strategies that sit within it. The remainder of this paper will discuss the research project that took place to answer the following key questions:

- What are facilitator and learner perceptions of the influence that The Living Consensus framework has on developing transformative learning cultures for youth?
- What are facilitator and learner perceptions of the influence that The Living Consensus framework has on developing transferrable learning and workplace skills?

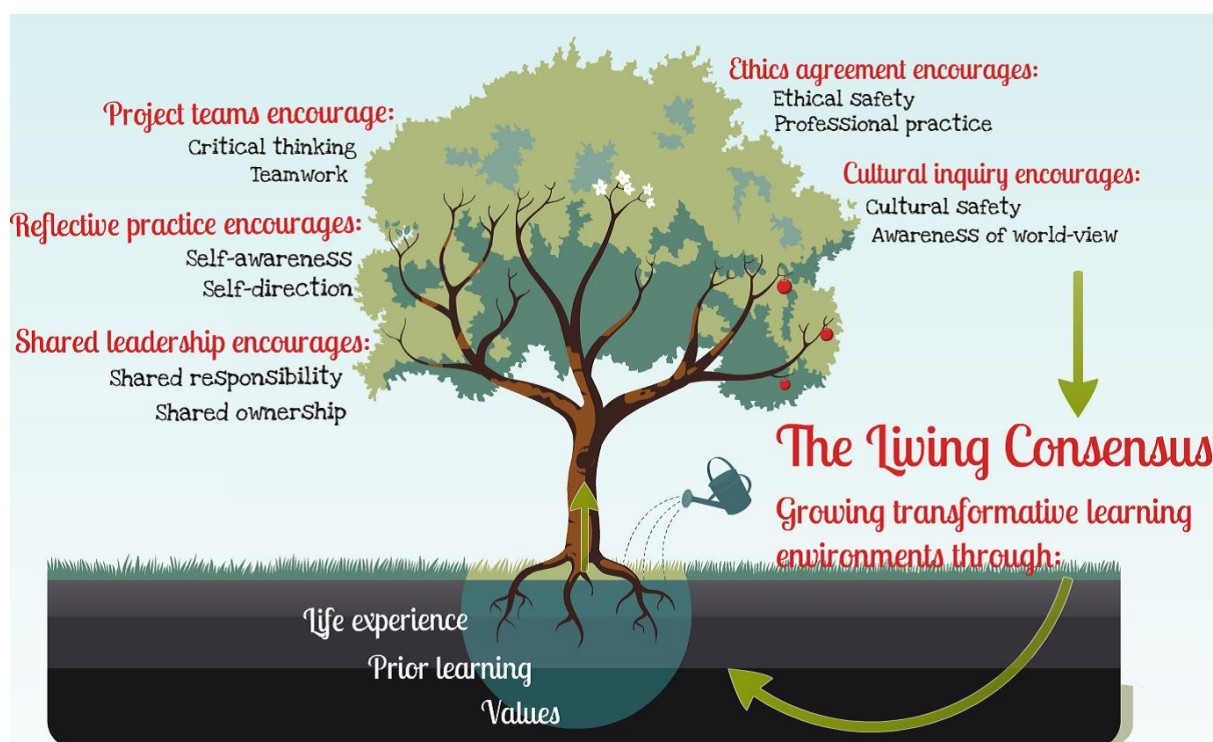


Figure 1. The Living Consensus conceptual framework

The five key teaching and learning strategies that form The Living Consensus

Ethics agreement

The ethical practice of any vocation must be learned at some stage in the learner's development so as to enable them to operate more successfully in the workplace after their graduation (Chan, 2011; 2013). Moreover, Chan describes the process of learning in apprenticeships as learning through "becoming" a professional in their chosen discipline. Part of becoming any type of professional includes the development of ethical practices that are closely aligned with the particular discipline. Hence, it is not surprising that there is a growing body of literature now pointing to a greater demand on teaching ethics alongside the development of professional practice in a range of fields (Achey-Kidwell, 2001; Gibney, 2011; Rogers, 2011; Wiggins, 2011). The methods of teaching ethics are varied, but many successful examples involve the use of learners using their values systems to argue, discuss and resolve various ethical issues (Achey-Kidwell, 2001; Rogers, 2011; Wiggins, 2011).

Achey-Kidwell (2001) posits an ethical development strategy when discussing a successful project that involves students working together to write proposals for their own code of ethics at Niagara University. The learners are involved in sharing, discussing and aligning their ethical viewpoints. The ethics development strategy that forms part of The Living Consensus framework is similar, involving an ethics agreement being developed by the learners. The development of this agreement is facilitated through continuous reflection and discussion on the desired ethical practices for the particular group of learners within the context of their discipline and their learning organisation. This gives the international learners, and the learners who have experienced a variety of workplace cultures, the opportunity to discuss and sort through the differing understandings of what ethical

practice looks like in a variety of contexts. The learners can reflect on this agreement on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis, first as small groups but then as a facilitated plenary. This strategy aims to develop ethically safe learning cultures and encourages the development of ethical practice that is transferrable to a future workplace. Through this process, ethical and reflective practice, critical thinking, and problem solving skills may be developed and strengthened. The degree to which this occurs within The Living Consensus framework was assessed when research participants answered the question:

- What are facilitator and learner perceptions about the influence of an on-going ethics agreement discussion on the development of a transformative learning culture and professional practice?

Shared leadership

Sharing leadership of the learning environment with learners has the potential to support the development of self-reflective practice, increased self-awareness, and the development of leadership skills (Begley, 2006; 2007; Branson, 2007; Crippen, 2012; Eriksen, 2009; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005; Gold, Evans, Earley, Halpin & Collarbone, 2003; Walumbwa, 2011). These combined skills help to develop autonomous learning capabilities for learning and working. Authentic leadership theory has been drawn on to develop the shared leadership strategy as part of The Living Consensus framework.

It is claimed that authentic leaders grow other leaders through an open-ended and visionary leadership style that incorporates inventive responses to shared issues (Begley, 2006; 2007; Branson, 2007; Crippen, 2012; Eriksen, 2009; Gardner et al. 2005; Walumbwa, Christensen and Hailey, 2011). The research sought to ascertain how successful these leadership strategies can be when applied to a learning context. This Shared leadership strategy framework sees teachers as authentic leaders who wish to share leadership responsibilities in order to develop leadership skills in the learners. Authentic leaders are said to develop people and build communities by using a moral and values-driven approach (Begley, 2006, 2007; Branson, 2007; Crippen, 2012; Eriksen, 2009; Walumbwa, et al., 2011; Gardner et al. 2005).

The shared leadership strategy that is facilitated within The Living Consensus framework uses the ethics agreement, as mentioned above, combined with further discussion on how facilitators and learners can effectively work and learn as a group. This discussion is based on the group's ideas about how they should behave according to their values systems and world views. Regular meetings are to be held with the learners to reflect on the effectiveness of these shared learning environments and the development of problem solving strategies (these meetings can be facilitated alongside the ethics agreement meetings). During these meetings the agreement is discussed and adjusted as people re-align components of the agreement to fit their values-systems and to overcome misunderstandings (often linked to differing cultural and values-based meanings). The leadership tasks of the facilitator, as an authentic leader, include facilitating "values, learning communities and shared leadership" within the learning environment (Gold et al., 2003 p.127).

Values alignment and sifting through the meaning that each learner places on aspects of the agreement because of their values system is critical to the success of the shared leadership strategy. Branson (2011) advocates the alignment of values with the development of organisations with a particular focus on the developmental needs of staff. In such an organisation, corporate and individual values and goals are closely linked (Branson, 2011; Walumbwa, et al., 2011). The shared leadership strategy, as part of The Living Consensus framework, aims to link individual goals with the goals of the curriculum and the goals of the group (class) in a similar way. Authentic leadership relies on leaders that have a strong sense of moral purpose and a commitment to their own values that allows them to put those values into practice (Stevenson, 2007).

For The Living Consensus framework to work to its full potential the facilitator of the shared leadership strategy must strive to model authentic leadership practice. In doing so, the facilitator can help learners work to their full potential by recognising their strengths and building on them to achieve shared goals (Begley, 2006; Crippen, 2012; Gardner et al., 2005). How this occurs in the practice of the facilitators and the learners who took part in the research was captured when the following question was answered:

- What are facilitator and learner perceptions about the influence of shared leadership on the development of a transformative learning culture and learners taking ownership and responsibility for their learning environment?

Reflective practice

The importance of including reflective practice within the learning environment is based upon the belief that it increases the learner's self-awareness which, in turn, increases self-direction, autonomous working and learning skills, and is critical to the development of authentic leadership skills (Begley, 2006; Branson, 2007; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Garnder et al., 2005; Nevgi, Virtanen & Hannele, 2006; Nunan, 1999; Vaughn, 2004). To support learners in the development of these skills a number of studies have been conducted across a variety of learning contexts using self-assessment and goal setting tools such as reflective e-portfolios or diaries, combined with work based learning opportunities and classroom experiences. When learning has been facilitated by competent teachers the majority of learners discussed in these studies have developed increased autonomy and strength their self-concept (Nevgi et al., 2006; Nunan, 1999).

Each of these reflective practice studies focus on the development of transferrable skills that are related to the learner's intended workplace or new profession. If we were to include leadership as one of these transferrable skills then, again, a commitment to the development of reflective practice and self-awareness would be required. Many studies point to the development of self-knowledge through self-inquiry and self-evaluation as essential to becoming an authentic leader (Begley, 2006; Branson, 2007; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Garnder et al., 2005).

Hence, reflective practice is encouraged as part of The Living Consensus framework through processes that encourage the learners to reflect on their individual progress and the progress of the entire class as a community. In particular, discipline-specific skills and knowledge development, and the development of transferrable learning skills, are the core areas to be reflected upon. Reflection can take place in self-reflective journals, during project team meetings, in the development of the ethics agreement, and as an integral part of the shared leadership meetings mentioned above. The value of the reflective practice strategy as part of the Living Consensus framework was gauged when data was gathered to answer the following question:

- What are facilitator and learner perceptions about the influence of an on-going reflective practice on the development of a transformative learning culture and self-awareness?

Project teams

The concept of project-based learning and social constructivist theories have been in practice since being promoted by Piaget (1969) and Vygotsky (1978). Many studies since this time have gone on to support the view that working in project teams on inquiry-based tasks can help to develop transferrable learning skills such as teamwork, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and co-constructive practices (Grant, 2002; Kohonen, 1992; Nevgi, et al., 2006; Rossett, Douglas & Frazee, 2003).

Instructing the inquiry process can be achieved while constructing and facilitating 'communities of inquiry' in both the online and face to face learning environments. Instruction from the facilitator may be more overt at the beginning of the programme, and become less so as learner autonomy increases (Akyol, Garrison & Ozden, 2009; Garrison, 2009; Garrison, Kanuka, & Hawes, 2004; Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). Building these learning communities has the potential to greatly extend critical thinking, autonomous learning and communication skills through collaboration with peers, teachers (as coaches) and, in some disciplines, workplace mentors (Grant, 2002; Nevgi, et al., 2006; Rossett et al., 2003).

The inquiry process is facilitated by the teacher but is achieved through the actions of the learners. This shifts a large part of the responsibility for the learning from the teacher to the student promoting the development of autonomous learning skills (Grant, 2002; Kohonen, 1992). While engaged in self-directed, inquiry-based learning experiences, students are encouraged to view themselves as increasingly competent and self-determined, and to assume more and more responsibility for their own learning (Kohonen, 1992).

As part of a The Living Consensus framework strategy, the learners are asked to self and peer-assess their progress in terms of discipline-specific skill/knowledge development and their ability to work as a team while participating in the projects through pre-set reflection tasks. This practice ensures that the opportunities to develop self-awareness and autonomous learning skills through team work are not lost to students who are primarily focused on course content. These opportunities are numerous as much of the learning that happens within The Living Consensus framework is project based. The degree to which transferrable learning skills are developed through the use of project team work was established when answers were gathered in response to the following question:

- What are facilitator and learner perceptions about the influence of team projects on the development of a transformative learning culture, critical thinking and problem solving skills, self-awareness and co-

constructive practices?

Cultural inquiry

Cultural inquiry is used within The Living Consensus framework to investigate each individual learner's culture and world view. The practice of cultural inquiry increases self-awareness in learners as well as an awareness of other world views. This strategy aims to build a culturally safe and inclusive learning environment where diversity is valued as a useful resource for learning.

To this end, The Living Consensus framework draws on Māori learning pedagogies to develop a culturally inclusive learning environment. When reviewing current educational literature, it becomes apparent that much of the work focuses on developing strategies to build lifelong learning skills, to scaffold learning, and to place the students back in the centre of the learning experience (Bruce 2012; Ferguson, 2008; Laws, Hamilton-Pearce; Werahiko & Wetini, 2009). It seems, therefore, that early Māori would have a lot to teach us about education as these practices can be seen in pre-European Māori teaching (Hemara, 2000).

A preferred Māori pedagogy is a concept known as Ako (Pere, 1994). This is a reciprocal process where teaching and learning experiences are shared by the teacher and student, who often switch roles. Ako also describes a holistic approach to learning (Bruce, 2012; Ferguson, 2008; Pere, 1994). Ako encompasses the relationships formed in the learning environment and recognises differences and individual learning styles but also uses the combined strength of the group as a resource (Bruce, 2012; Ferguson, 2008; Greenwood & Te Aika, 2010; Laws et al., 2009; Pere, 1994). The Living Consensus framework's cultural inquiry strategy draws on the concepts of reciprocal practice, supportive, collaborative and inclusive environments, and the recognition of cultural identity and self-awareness that all sit within Ako for the development of each and every learner (Bruce, 2012; Nevgi, et al., 2006; Rossett, et al., 2003; Salmon, 2002).

The concept of learners as teachers/facilitators is recognised as part of the cultural inquiry strategy which encourages all learners to recognise their cultural identities and own world views and then be able to share their beliefs, customs and values with the group. As part of this strategy, each learner is invited to bring an item that represents an aspect of their culture (for example: food, song, performance, video or similar) to describe and share with their class. The most important component of this exercise is when the student is able to explain how the aspect of their culture that they are sharing has influenced the way they think and/or behave. This practice can be limited to a 10 minute slot in each session, day or week and can be a revolving cycle depending on the structure of the course. The discussion on values and cultural understanding can be built on during the shared leadership meetings mentioned earlier. Recognising these differences and facilitating open discussion on this subject could become a powerful vehicle when reaching group agreements, resolving conflict, and developing self-awareness in individuals.

The extent to which cultural inquiry influences the learning environment and the development of transferrable learning skills was discussed when answering the following question was answered:

- What are facilitator and learner perceptions about the influence of cultural inquiry on the development of a culturally safe and inclusive learning environment, self-awareness and awareness of other world-views?

Literature summary

This review has considered a range of literature that can be used to support the development of transferrable learning skills in youth. Five key teaching and learning strategies have emerged with the potential to be highly effective. When these five strategies are integrated to form The Living Consensus framework they appear to overlap and complement one another. Cultural inquiry into one's own beliefs and world view can be developed through reflective practices while strengthening the learner's ability to honestly self-reflect. Increased self-awareness gained through these practices, supports the learner's engagement in shared leadership, ethics agreement discussions, and project team activities.

If these strategies are useful when implemented individually, as the literature suggests, what impact could they have when they are woven together as proposed in The Living Consensus framework? The research discussed in this paper has investigated the perceived benefit or otherwise of the Living Consensus framework in the development of transferrable working and learning skills for youth.

Research Design

The research was designed to provide suitable data to help answer the following key questions:

- What are facilitator and learner perceptions of the influence that The Living Consensus framework has on developing transformative learning cultures for youth?
- What are facilitator and learner perceptions of the influence that The Living Consensus framework has on developing transferrable learning and workplace skills?

The data that was required to answer these questions involved participants' thoughts, beliefs, values and feelings. Therefore the most appropriate epistemology for this study was constructionism. The constructionist paradigm considers reality to be determined by those who perceive it (Holstein & Gubrium, 2008; Lee, 2012). Constructionism takes the view that the meaning of knowledge is constructed socially as opposed to the constructivist position that sees meaning-making as an individual activity (Lee, 2012).

In the case of this particular study, the perceptions sought from each participant were inextricably intertwined with those that share the same learning experience. The facilitators and learners experienced the particular teaching and learning strategies implemented in their group and their perceptions of these strategies were developed through their shared involvement, reactions and discussion. Thus, it is highly likely that the participants influenced one another and the meanings made from this social experience promote constructionism as the preferred epistemological lens from which to view this research (Holstein & Gubrium, 2008; Lee, 2012).

Methodology

In order to gather the required constructionist data, an interpretivist approach has been used to gain the perceptions of learners and their facilitators. Interpretivism was a clear choice considering that this approach is said to help the researcher obtain knowledge of the social world that requires the interpretation of the perceptions, understandings and meanings that people connect with their actions and the actions of others (Burnett & Lingam 2012; O'Reilly, 2009).

Tertiary teachers from Polytechnics and Institutes of Technology (ITPs), and Private Training Establishments (PTEs), were invited to take part in this project. These teachers (facilitators) had been exposed to and had shown an interest in The Living Consensus framework and/or its associated strategies through previous workshops and training programmes. In the context and limitations of this particular research, it was decided to gather data from only two separate learning groups. Each of these learning groups was considered to be a case study.

This choice of case study methodology is appropriate as it will [investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context] (Yin, 1994, p.13). Using case study methodology in the research served a dual function; [the process of learning about the case and the product of that learning] (Stake, 2005, p.237). The first function of learning about the case explores, through the use of multiple data gathering strategies, the interpretations and meanings the teacher and the learners hold about the benefits or otherwise of applying The Living Consensus framework. The second function is for the researcher to reflect upon that learning through analysing and interpreting data to generate any new learning or understanding about the framework.

These perceptions were viewed as two separate case studies in order to consider the experiences of the participants in relation to their different contexts. Furthermore, it was deemed to be beneficial to quantify the types of experiences participants had in order to gauge the degree to which participants perceived their experiences to be either positive or negative. Arguably, this enables the researcher to gain as much data as possible despite the shortage of time allowed for this full completion of the research. Hence, a mix of qualitative and quantitative data were gathered, explored and analysed in order to help develop a valid interpretation of the participant perceptions.

Thus, two teachers were followed for six weeks as they worked with The Living Consensus framework by integrating the five key teaching and learning strategies into their teaching practice. Both of these participating facilitators were experienced teachers and so the five key teaching and learning strategies were provided as suggestions and examples, rather than as mandatory requirements, for how to implement these into their existing practice. The facilitators were encouraged to use an approach which they considered to be the best fit for their disciplines and their respective student cohorts. Both facilitators already employed components of The Living Consensus conceptual framework as part of their standard teaching practice. The difference in their teaching practice during the study was that the facilitators were being intentional about facilitating all five of the key teaching and learning strategies over the 6 week data gathering period.

The Data were gathered from the facilitators through one-on-one semi-structured interviews with the researcher. A journal was kept by the researcher to record the coaching sessions with each facilitator, especially to capture the issues that arose for the facilitators, the differences between the two facilitators' strategies and the degree to which learners influenced the facilitation of the strategies. Each learner was invited to complete a survey form and was interviewed by the researcher during focus group meetings. These meetings were recorded and transcribed.

Descriptions of the two case study groups

Case Study A

Facilitator A administers a Youth Guarantee's Early Childhood Education programme held within a Private Training Establishment (PTE). The age of these learners ranges between 15 – 18 years. There is a 'rolling enrolment' system in place meaning that the start and finish date of the programme could be different for each student. Students are finishing throughout the programme and new students are starting throughout the year. All 16 of Facilitator A's learners were identified as being female.

Case Study B

Facilitator B administers a second year Beauty Therapy programme held within a technical institute. All 16 learners start and finish on the same date. The age of the learners in this programme ranged from 18 – 33 years, with the majority being under 25 years. This cohort of learners was merged together from two separate year one cohorts. As a result, the learners had slightly differing ideas about some aspects of their professional practice across the two groups. All learners were female.

Research findings

An analysis of the data from the research show that the facilitators and the learners all considered their learning environments to be extremely positive. Most of the learners and both facilitators commented on the positive learning relationships that had been formed amongst the class group peers and with the facilitators. Some facilitator and learner comments attributed these outcomes directly to specific teaching and learning strategies that sit within The Living Consensus framework, in particular, the ethics agreement and the shared leadership strategies. Comments from the learners and the facilitators credit the shared understanding, the setting of expectations, and the shared responsibility for the learning environment as having a strong impact on the development of a positive learning environment.

These findings are similar to those described in studies that attribute the defining of expectations and the shared responsibility for learning to the successful management of troublesome learning behaviours and the development of positive learning environments (Anjala & Krishen, 2013; Appleby, 1990; Sierra, 2010). These studies provide evidence that a positive and productive learning environment can be developed by using some components of the strategies that make up The Living Consensus framework. Indeed, Anjala and Krishen's (2013) study even cited the development of some of the transferrable learning skills that were identified by facilitators and learners using The Living Consensus framework. However none of the studies used all of the five key teaching and learning strategies simultaneously and none mentioned the use of cultural inquiry.

Data from The Living Consensus study highlight the value of facilitating cultural inquiry within the learning environments that were studied. Facilitator A discussed positive experiences the learners had when researching their personal backgrounds and finding out where they were from and who they were connected to. Moreover, facilitator B gave an example of a positive outcome from the cultural inquiry aspect of The Living Consensus framework that involved a learner developing a method to ensure cultural safety for their clients. These outcomes support consideration being given to including the importance of learners being provided with an opportunity for developing awareness of their own world view and considering how this differs from the world views of others.

The results from The Living Consensus study show that the facilitator and learner perceptions of an environment facilitated with the use of the strategies that form The Living Consensus framework were noticeably positive. There were, however, additional contributing factors to which the learners from this study attributed their positive learning environment. These included the skills, experience and personalities of the teachers, excellent support staff, the self-paced nature of one programme, small class sizes, and the fact that [we

are all just good people].

The findings also suggest that most of the learners considered their programme to have had a significant influence on their understanding and development of transferable learning skills. In each case all but one of the learners rated their development of each of the named skills highly (7-10) on the scale provided. Comments from the focus group meetings, and semi structured interviews, linked transferable skill development directly to the five key teaching and learning strategies that form The Living Consensus framework. Furthermore, the facilitator comments also made very clear links from the teaching and learning strategies directly to the development of transferable learning skills.

Based upon these findings it can be suggested that The Living Consensus framework has had a significant impact on the development of transferable learning skills of the youth enrolled on the two programmes studied. Again, however, there are the other contributing factors discussed above that influence the development of transferable learning skills. Although it may not be possible to ever completely separate out these contributing factors from the teaching and learning strategies used, a number of studies show that facilitators simply being intentional about the development of transferable learning skills does have a positive impact (Bruce, 2012; Chandra, 2006; Lynch & Dembo, 2004; Nunan 1999). The Living Consensus provides a framework that can be integrated into existing curricula alongside the development of discipline specific skills and knowledge to help keep transferable skill development in the forefront for facilitators of youth learning environments.

Limitations

The Living Consensus study included a number of limitations. There are a number of additional factors that contribute to a learner's positive learning experiences. This includes, but is not limited to, the skill and experience of the facilitator. Both facilitators that took part in this study are very experienced teachers with excellent teaching practices which have been recognised through promotional processes and award nominations. Both teachers already employed components of The Living Consensus framework as part of their standard teaching practice prior to this study. This being so, it is difficult to ascertain how much of the positive ratings and comments from the learners are able to be attributed to the skill of the teacher and how much can be attributed to The Living Consensus framework. It may be that these factors can never be completely separated, however further study involving less experienced teachers across a broader range of contexts may provide some clarity.

Other limiting factors in this study were the small number of participants and each participant being a female (including both facilitators) thereby indicating a potential gender imbalance. In addition, the time period for this study was a factor given that the learners and facilitators were only followed for six weeks. This meant that the participating facilitators did not have the opportunity to fully implement some of the strategies. It was noted, however, that both of these facilitators expressed certainty that they would have gained further positive results in some areas if they had longer to implement the strategies.

Recommendations

While mindful of these limitations, a number of recommendations can be drawn from this research. First, the recommendations for teachers from this study are set around the approach taken to facilitating learning for youth. Both of the learning environments that were studied were perceived to be tangibly positive by the learners and facilitators. Their comments provided in this research highlight the facilitative and collaborative nature in which these programmes were led as prominent contributing factors.

To this end, a range of teaching and learning strategies that were designed to facilitate learning in this collaborative manner can be implemented by teachers to improve learning environments for youth. Such recommended teaching and learning strategies could include:

- Shared leadership which has emerged as the most powerful of all the strategies researched in the development of positive and transformative learning environments for youth. Both case studies have shown that when learners are given the opportunity to take ownership for their learning environment through well-facilitated shared leadership they can establish and maintain a harmonious environment that is conducive to student learning.
- Facilitating on-going discussion and agreement amongst learners on what constitutes ethical and

professional practice in the learners' discipline can be extremely useful to the learners' development as practitioners in any field. This teaching practice can also contribute to the development and maintenance of a positive learning environment particularly when practice-based learning occurs in a simulated environment such as the beauty therapy clinic discussed in Case Study B.

- Facilitating the cultural inquiry process can assist learners to develop increased self-awareness and an awareness of other world-views. These developments for learners also have implications for the growth of professional practice. An example of this was seen in Case Study B where a learner suggested that a question be added to the simulated clinics consultation forms to ensure cultural safety for clients.
- Facilitating learning using project teams is an approach that can engage learners in the inquiry processes while helping them to develop critical thinking, teamwork skills and self-awareness. Both case studies have shown that this approach can help maintain a positive learning environment as learners are actively engaged in the learning process. At the same time they are developing transferrable learning skills as they interact and share ownership of the projects with their peers.
- Incorporating reflective practice through goal setting, reflective journals and discussion can help learners to develop self-awareness and self-direction. An example of this occurred in Case Study A when one learner commented that she was applying her new goal setting and reflection skills to other areas of her life outside her programme of learning.

To gain additional value for teachers, these findings do require further research and it would be useful to collect the tools and strategies that have been developed and supported in practice to share amongst tertiary teachers. Such a study could generate not only new knowledge that could be used to enhance the learning experience for youth but also to develop a set of useable tools and strategies that facilitators could pick up and implement within their own teaching practice.

Conclusion

The findings from the study indicate that sharing leadership of the learning environment with learners helps develop positive learning behaviours and encourages learners to take ownership and responsibility. Shared leadership is achieved by being clear about intentions and developing shared expectations (Anjala & Krishen, 2013; Appleby, 1990; Sierra, 2010; Lesser, 2014; Weimer, 2014). Facilitator and learner comments from this study indicate that the shared leadership and ethics agreement strategies from The Living Consensus framework facilitate the development of transferrable learning skills alongside the development of professional practice.

It can also be concluded that each of the remaining three teaching and learning strategies that form The Living Consensus (project teams, reflective practice and cultural inquiry) aid the development of specific transferrable learning skills. Learner and facilitator comments from this study indicate these strategies support the development of self-awareness, awareness of other world views, team work, and critical thinking skills for learners. Facilitator comments show that these skills support the shared leadership process by further enhancing the group's ability to reach agreements and self-manage their learning environment.

Facilitator and learner perceptions gathered during this study strongly indicate that when these five key teaching and learning strategies are combined to form The Living Consensus framework they can be used to develop positive and transformative learning environments for youth. Other studies provide additional evidence that isolated strategies (similar to some that are contained in the framework) have proved useful in developing some of the transferrable learning skills mentioned in this study (Anjala & Krishen, 2013; Appleby, 1990; Bruce, 2012; Ferguson, 2008; Greenwood & Te Aika, 2010; Laws et al., 2009; Sierra, 2010).

The Living Consensus framework houses all of these strategies together with the explicit intention of developing a broad range of transferrable skills for learning and working. Comments from participants show that the five teaching and learning strategies, when implemented well, have the ability to positively alter the attitudes of youth toward education. This is evidence of The Living Consensus framework's potential to positively transform young lives through education.

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