

Abstract to NSA conference 2022, Iceland

Session: Institutional Ethnography

Author: Kamilla Petschnig

Abstract title: Approaching institutional ethnography – work-in-progress reflections on how to do an institutional ethnography having prior experiences in the research field

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Abstract—Institutional ethnography (IE) speaks of the importance of taking a 'standpoint', in which the researcher begins an inquiry of the everyday worlds of people's lives (Smith, 2005). In investigating what happens in the clinical praxis in the Danish health system, when nursing students are a part of cross-sectoral patient journeys, I take on IE as a method of inquiry. The project investigates how nursing students utilize their competencies to act, and in a supervised position are allowed, or not allowed, to be part of the cross-sectoral patient care experience. As a researcher, I aim to take the student's standpoint to understand the problematic of learning to work across organizational boundaries.

However, as a researcher with years of experience as a nurse and teacher of nursing, my experience within both the health system and education of nursing students as research areas brings me both advantages and challenges according to the IE method of inquiry. In this paper, I ask if it is possible to stand aside nursing students already having a good insight in some of the major categories and thereby discourses in the arenas of cross-sectoral health care and education of nurses.

Through reflections on the complexity in these two fields of both challenges of the cross-sectoral arena and education of nursing students, this paper seeks to understand the researchers' opportunities to take a standpoint of people in a field s/he is already familiar with – from a different standpoint. Drawing on Dorothy Smith (1992) and Donna Haraway (1988) I discuss whether I can experience what the students are experiencing 'just' by taking their standpoint? Taking account of the researcher's experience, I reflect on impacts of having an insight in the field of investigation and how it affects the opportunities to take and explore the standpoint of people's everyday world.