

Chapter 6

Work Integrated Learning and Learning Integrated Work: An Approach to Unite Theory and Practice to Praxis

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ABSTRACT

The difference between the professional competence conveyed during education and the competence demanded in working life is substantial and needs to be taken seriously. In this chapter where the case is nursing education, Work Integrated Learning (WIL) and Learning Integrated Work (LIW), are suggested as pedagogical approaches in Higher Education aiming to integrate scientific knowledge and with practical knowledge, and to provide an analytical perspective where students have the opportunity to develop metacognitive skills and praxis by learning through experiences during internship. One way to achieve this in vocational education is to learn from the knowledge and skills used when performing in practice. By integrating scientific and practical vocational knowledge, one promotes professionalization that is exhibited as Learning Integrated Work (LIW), i.e. the capability to perform the expected tasks and learn at work by using a critical and development-oriented attitude in daily work and actively participate in renewals of work assignments.

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INTRODUCTION

Professions who work with people have large elements of practical and concrete tasks. To learn in and through the workplace is about bringing together theory and practice. Both teacher education and nurse education face difficulties in getting theory and practice to be seen as a whole, praxis, usually called for the new workplace with a focus on non-material work, i.e. knowledge production and service work, and not on pure goods production (see Jessop, Fairclough & Wodak, 2008).

Workplace Rationalization

Workplace rationalization means that in the new workplace exists an ongoing power struggle on both intellectual as emotional production, which is not just about copyright, it is also about creativity and caring. The modern society's view of rationality can be related to goal-related documents, unlike value rationality (Kronman, 1983) or caring rationality (Jonasdottir, 1991). On the basis of this reasoning the question can be asked about the concept of praxis also can be a tool for learning in the workplace when the focus is on people and knowledge, i.e. knowledge production and service work.

Rationalization of Health Care

Today's health care have requirements to become more effective, and as medical and technological progress continues it can lead to fewer employees and less time for patient care. Student groups at universities and colleges place great demands on effective teachers. Lectures for large groups of students is an example of a rational learning. Rationality creeping up accordingly in both health and social care and in activities where knowledge production in different ways are in focus. Questions that can be asked is how much production rate can increase in health and in education? What about creativity? What about empathy? It is difficult

to maintain quality of care without empathy and what is quality of knowledge without reflection? The risk is to be alienated in view of the work that was chosen originally by interest.

Learning in Different Contexts

The distinction between workplaces as the domain of practice and Higher Education Institutions as the domain of knowledge production, theory and learning are no longer as clear-cut as they once might have seemed. Learning has escaped its traditionally understood setting in educational institutions and has been located in other sites, including workplaces. Work has crossed institutional boundaries and is increasingly counted as learning within the academy. It could be said that work has been translated into learning and learning translated into work. Harman (2014) terms relations between theory and practice as consisting of *partial connections*. Analytically, for years learning has been divided into formal learning that takes place in education as outcome of planned pedagogical activities in the classroom on the one hand, and informal learning that incidentally occur in leisure time and even at work on the other hand. It is a point of view that highlights learning as a phenomenon that is generally included in human activities in everyday life, at work, in education, at home or anywhere (Scheeres, Solomon, Boud & Rooney, 2010).

Aristotelian Praxis

In order to understand the meaning of praxis the Aristotelian concepts of episteme, techne and phronesis are useful. Episteme means to consider knowledge as theory that claims universality, i.e. scientific knowledge, techne is focusing vocational knowledge as performing target actions, phronesis is a process of moral reasoning and actions pursued to establish the "good" of a particular situation, often referred to as practical wisdom (reflected knowledge). Praxis embodies

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