

Review of Stuckey (2009)

Formative Assignment

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The publication

Creative Expression as a Way of Knowing in Diabetes Adult Health Education

An Action Research Study

Heather L. Stuckey
Penn State University

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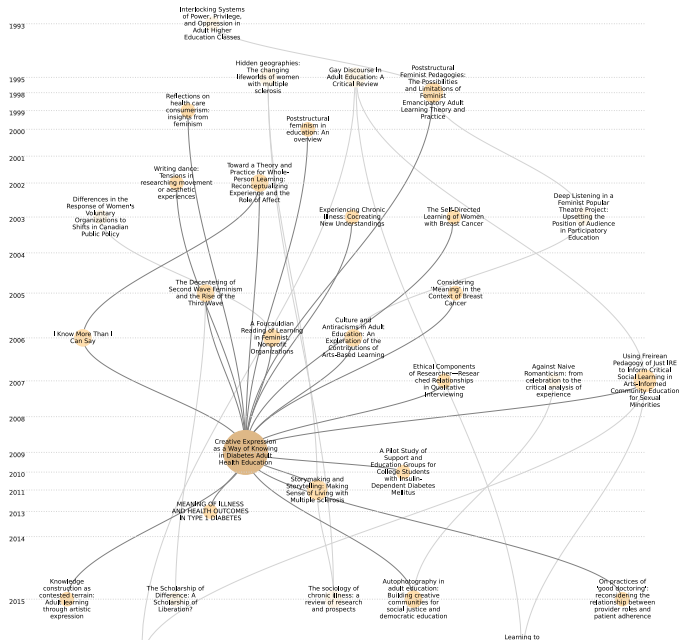
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L01 1/2

Has the study you've selected made an informed choice about, and employed, humanities and arts-informed methods appropriate to an ontological orientation and research question? Can you explain why/why not?

Starting from the position that people have a need to make sense of being ill, this is an arts-based study of eight women with insulin dependent diabetes that asks how they do this, and how creative expression might help them find greater meaning in their diabetes. Participants engaged in creating artwork, taking photographs related to their diabetes, and discussing metaphors and images to facilitate meaning-making. Data analysis involved triangulating their creative outputs, observations and transcriptions. Recurring themes were identified in the text data gathered and visual materials were examined for motifs that represented how they felt about their diabetes.



L01 2/2

Has the study you've selected made an informed choice about, and employed, humanities and arts-informed methods appropriate to an ontological orientation and research question? Can you explain why/why not?

Participants were regarded by the researcher as active contributors to knowledge making, taking a constructivist ontological stance. Theoretical foundations were clearly stated in the paper.

L02

Has the study you've selected demonstrated critical understanding of the epistemological advantages and disadvantages offered by humanities and arts-informed methods? Can you explain why/why not?

The authors were clear in identifying the domination of healthcare education by an attitude that compliance (with e.g. dietary instructions) is required because health professionals are “right”, yet the “identity of illness” carried by sufferers “cannot be understood from a rational medical perspective”. The historical, technical epistemological view is seen as inadequate in caring for diabetes patients and so attention to the affective domain required an approach to the study that accessed this. Visual and narrative media provided it.

L03

Have the researchers anticipated and addressed ethical and logistical issues that can arise in undertaking this kind of research? Can you elaborate?

Interestingly, although intending to have male and female participants, only women responded to the call. This provided an opportunity to situate the study within a feminist-post structuralist theoretical framework. What this means for the paper is that emphasis can be placed on the gendered nature of learning and meaning making in health care. "...knowledge is not limited to an educational text or medical diagnosis but is open to the engagement of the somatic, imaginative, intuitive, and creative."

L04

To what extent can the study you've selected contribute to debates surrounding the use of humanities and arts-informed methods in social science and health research and make informed contributions to them? What are the limitations/benefits of the proposed approach in relation to more 'traditional' qualitative/quantitative methods? (25 marks)

(addressed above)

The researcher is also a full participant in the research, and co-constructor of knowledge with the other seven women in the study. This is not to say that this paper is an example of participatory action research, but it does aim to have impact resulting in social change.



Questions?



References

Stuckey, Heather L. 2009. 'Creative expression as a way of knowing in diabetes adult health education: An action research study'. *Adult Education Quarterly* 60 (1): 46–64. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741713609334139>.

