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Vignettes in Educational Research: Voice and Vision

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Abstract

This presentation summarises a narrative analysis model developed through doctoral research. The thesis entitled 'Perspectives and Professional Development: A Comparative Exploration of Policy and Practice Within a Shared-Vision of School Placement', explored the lived experiences and professional perspectives of 60 participants across the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) continuum. Central to the research was the use of vignettes as a narrative analysis tool and mode of presentation of findings which facilitates enhance accessibility, engagement, and authenticity in educational research. Vignettes can function as contextually rich, narrative-based depictions, constructed to preserve participant voice and nuance, enabling individuals to express their perspectives both personally and as members of professional communities. This approach facilitated the articulation of complex, sometimes contradictory, and evolving understandings of partnership in School Placement. The vignettes served not only as illustrative devices but also as analytical units, forming the chapters of a broader narrative that reflected the diversity and depth of participant experiences. The narrative analysis process involved synthesising data into case and unit vignettes, interpreted through a lens attentive to language, discourse, ethics, and contextual meaning-making. This enabled the identification of recurring themes and insights into how participants construct and communicate professional identity, values, and agency. The model emphasised the importance of participant voice in research, positioning participants as active contributors to meaning-making rather than passive subjects. By integrating narrative and vignette-based analysis, this model offers a compelling alternative to traditional qualitative approaches. It supports deeper engagement with the relational, ethical, and contextual dimensions of educational practice and policy.

Keywords: School Placement, Narrative Analysis, Vignettes, Partnership