

NTNU as an innovative co-teaching practice

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1. Abstract

The Department of Education and Lifelong Learning at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) is a knowledge environment for research, education and communication in the social sciences. The department contributes with research-based knowledge on childhood and adolescence, school, education and working life in a lifelong perspective. The department's fields of study and research are education, adult learning, counselling science, educational development and child research. We have over a long time acknowledge the important of including knowledge by experience in both research and teaching. Also, the University as such has a general and recognized focus on supporting and including lived experience in promoting wellbeing and mental and physical health.

This has led to that the university have had, and still have close collaboration with National Center for Experienced Knowledge and also KBT Occupational College. The underlying premise is to ensure equal participation in research and education and also securing human rights and including lived experience as an equal source of knowledge. Co-teaching is one way of developing a more lived experience-oriented education. In the Erasmus+ project SEKEHE we're experimenting with two courses.

The two courses (1) 'Relational Welfare and Well-being' was co-created between two university teachers and three experts by experience having different forms of lived experience. As a team they decided on the structure, goals and content of the course. They worked towards an integration of academic, professional and experiential knowledge. There were seminar based classes that all classes were co-taught by an expert by experience and a teacher. (2) The course on 'Leading Relational Welfare and co-creation' integrated where two experts by experience was involved in planning and teaching. The most learningful and important topic was how to integrate lived experience with the theory on the curriculum and skills training for the students.

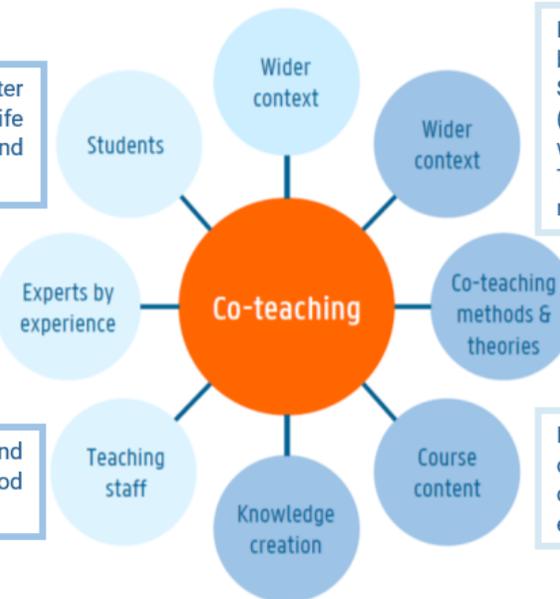
2. Summary

NTNU envisions co-teaching as a means to enhance collaboration between experts by experience (hired individuals and academics with lived experiences) and academics to promote more useful and equal knowledge and practice development.. This practice is grounded in collaborative, dialogical and participatory theories.

Students find that co-teaching activities help them better understand theory, apply it in practice, grasp real-life complexities and enhance their overall understanding and reflexivity.

Experts by experience feel valued and believe they can influence teaching activities and student development.

Teaching staff believes that students are more engaged and have a better grasp of complex topics. They have a good collaboration with experts by experience.



NTNU in general doesn't have a specific vision on co-teaching, but NTNU WellFare; Nordic Research Centre for Wellbeing and Social Sustainability aims to integrate experiential knowledge (personal challenges and professional insights gained from working with affected individuals) with academic knowledge. This co-teaching framework is based on social justice, mattering, capabilities and co-creation theories.

Courses are co-created using storytelling, interactive group work, brief lectures, debates and other collaborative methods.

Experiential knowledge is embedded into the teaching content. At the start of the semester, courses are collaboratively planned, including literature, sessions and exams.

Theoretical and practical knowledge is created. Experiential knowledge also changes mindsets and attitudes.

3. Clarification of Key Elements

3.1. Wider context // Actors involved in coteaching

What is the vision and policy on co teaching knowledge in your organization?

Our vision is to use co-teaching as a way of increase collaboration between experts by experience and academics to promote more useful and equal knowledge and practice development.

How do you monitor the way the co teaching activities also might influence the organization?

Reflection notes, focus groups...

Which theoretical framework underpins the co teaching activities?

Collaborative and dialogical theory, participatory theories and didactics for community.

Who is considered an 'expert by experience' in your organization?

Both people hired for teaching based on expert by experience, but also academics that are open with their lived experience.

Do teaching staff and experts by experience receive a training in co teaching?

Based on our experiences, we are co-developing a course now. We are also looking at how to work closer with KBT.

3.2. Students

How do students experience the co teaching activities?

Experience the co-teaching activities in the following: understand theory better, understand how theories can be applied in practice, understand living complexities better, increase the levels of understanding and reflexivity.

What methods do you use to monitor student experiences?

Focus group and written reflection notes.

Is there attention paid towards students with experiential knowledge on the taught topics? How?

Yes, they have been paid by hours.

3.3. Experts by experience

What are the experiences of the experts by experience on the co teaching activities?

Feel they have an impact on the professional development of students; feeling that they matter; important to share their experiences (good and bad) from both services, life and education.

What are the experiences of experts by experience regarding their relationship with the co teacher?

Feel that they are taken seriously and feel that they can have an impact on teaching, teaching activities and good collaboration.

How do you currently monitor these experiences?

Reflecting notes and meetings.

How are involved experts by experience paid/acknowledged for their work?

Paid by hours.

3.4. Teaching staff

What are the experiences of the teaching staff on the co teaching activities?

Feel that the theories and values in teaching are being more critically discussed with students; see that students learn more and understand more the complexities, roles and theories in practice – more engaged students.

What are the experiences of the teaching staff regarding their relationship with the expert by experience?

Good collaboration, they have great ideas on both teaching activities and content.

How do you currently monitor these experiences?

Reflection notes and meetings.

3.5. Wider context // Focus on co-teaching

What is the vision and policy on co-teaching knowledge in your organization?

NTNU is a big university without any explicit vision on co-teaching. However, NTNU WellFare: Nordic Research Centre for Wellbeing and Social Sustainability that participates in SEKEHE has a vision on always include lived experience (both service users', citizens' and professional knowledge) as equal to scientific knowledge in co-teaching in our courses.

What 'counts' as experiential knowledge in your organization?

Experiential knowledge is both lived experience on struggling with different living issues (mental health, social exclusion, poverty etc), and also experiential knowledge that professionals have on working with citizens struggling with such problems and experience on working in the systems.

Which theoretical framework underpins the co-teaching activities?

The theoretical framework that underpins are; social justice, mattering, capabilities, co-creation theory.

Who is considered an 'expert by experience' in your organization?

People that co-teach with the university staff from a citizens and professionals perspective.

Do teaching staff and experts by experience receive a training in co-teaching?

Not yet. This is under planning.

How do you monitor the way the co-teaching activities also might influence the organization?

There are at the moment no monitoring. This will be discussed now.

3.6. Co-teaching methods and theories

How do the teaching activities take shape?

They are co-created.

Which teaching methods (e.g. lecture, storytelling, interactive group work,...) do you use in the co-teaching activities?

Storytelling, interactive group work, small lectures, debates...

How do you monitor and evaluate these methods?

Having reference students that provide feedback twice per semester.

3.7. Course content

How is experiential knowledge embedded in the content of the teaching activities?

It is always imbedded in the content in the teaching – how can we co-teach with citizens and professionals in our courses is always discussed when planning the courses.

How do you co-create the content of the teaching activities?

We meet in the beginning of the semester when we plan the courses and plan literature, sessions and exams together.

To what extent is the expert by experience involved in deciding learning goals?

Haven't being involved yet, but are now involved in re-doing the leaning goals next year.

How do you monitor the content creation of the teaching activities?

The monitoring is by asking the citizens and professionals during the process and having reference students to give feedback.

3.8. Knowledge creation

Which (type of) knowledge is created through the teaching activities?

Theoretical and practical knowledge also how to change mindset and attitudes.

How could we monitor this?

Co-creating a monitor tool.