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Exploring strategies for developing doctorateness: a diagnostic theory-based tool for supervisors’ self-evaluation

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Overview of presentation

- Our work with doctoral supervisors at Lund University
- Exploring strategies for supervision and doctoral education
- Four emerging strategies
- A tool to evaluate and develop supervision and doctoral education

Our work with doctoral supervisors at Lund University

- Training for doctoral supervisors is mandatory in Sweden since 2002
- Current activities at Lund University:
  - a 7.5-day study module (university-wide)
  - a 7.5-day study module (engineering)
  - a 2-day workshop (medicine)
- Grounded in SoTL
- Beginning in 2010/2011 (university-wide)
  - two more study modules for supervisors
  - a meta-program for doctoral students

Workshops and study modules for supervisors

- Participants:
  - 0 – 30 doctoral students supervised
  - come from engineering, science, medicine, economics, social sciences, arts, law, humanities or engineering
  - value the collegial discussions on supervision and doctoral student learning
Exploring strategies for supervision and doctoral education

• Discussions and assignments in workshops and programs on e.g:
  – doctoral student learning and intended learning outcomes
  – supervisor roles and strategies
  – practices and traditions for doctoral education
  – problems with student learning and progress

• => Doctoral education and supervision done in different ways, with different outcomes in mind, for different reasons

• Variation is used to develop supervisors’ and departments’ strategies and to generate knowledge

• As a tool for exploration we have used Ann Lee’s (2008) framework

Four emerging strategies

• The strategies have emerged from supervisors’ accounts and from theories of learning (e.g. Wenger 1998, Dall’Alba & Sandberg 2006)

• We find qualitative differences in how doctoral education and supervision is enacted that expand Lee’s framework:
  – Participation
  – Reflection on practice
  – Extended understanding for doctorateness
  – Strategic reflexiveness

Exploring strategies for supervision and doctoral education (cont’d)

Approaches to supervision (Lee, 2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional</th>
<th>Enculturation</th>
<th>Critical thinking</th>
<th>Emancipation</th>
<th>Relationship development</th>
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</table>

• From our discussions with supervisors:
  – Accounts of supervision strategies and intentions fit one or more of Lee’s categories
  – Experienced supervisors claim to change approach as their students progress, e.g. from functional to emancipation

Participation

• Participation – to take part of a social enterprise and to belong to a community

• The strategy of supervisor or department is to make the student take part in the academic practices and in an academic community, e.g. by:
  – giving tasks and instruction
  – discussing results and interpretations
  – suggesting reading in the field
  – giving feedback on written work
  – co-authoring
  – introducing the student to colleagues and groups
  – opening doors
  – encourage writing (or co-writing) of applications
  – encourage participation in conferences
  – arranging project meetings etc.
Participation (cont’d)

- The role of the supervisor can be
  - a more experienced colleague
  - a project leader, or
  - a manager

- The student’s role can be
  - a junior researcher/academic
  - an apprentice
  - an assistant, or
  - an employee

Reflection on practice

- To help the student to reflect on the practices he or she is engaged in
- Reflection in relation to skills, attitudes, artefacts, and the social platform associated with the doctorate
- Reflection on experiences within the social context of doctoral education

Examples:
- discussing actions, deadlines and milestones in relation to the thesis and dissertation;
- discussing and exemplifying what is understood to be good, or bad, research (or teaching, or conduct etc);
- helping the student find and correct inconsistencies within his or her work and to understand standards;
- explaining who is who within the field;
- discussing the meaning of academic practices (e.g. the seminar) and giving feedback on the student’s performance in such practices;
- discussing the goals and intended outcomes of the doctorate;
- discussing communication, roles, responsibilities, intentions, perceptions etc. within the supervisor-student relationship

- The supervisor needs to be not only a competent researcher but also a competent teacher of research

Extended understanding for doctorateness

- To help the student deepen his or her understanding of aspects of doctoral education important for developing doctorateness, e.g.
  - theory of science
  - academic writing
  - rhetoric
  - ethics
  - academic conduct and virtues
  - rights and regulations for doctoral education
  - funding
  - the organisation and politics of institutions
  - teaching and learning

Strategic reflexiveness

- To help the student identify goals in the close or distant future related to personal and professional development and to develop the student’s strategies in relation to these goals
- Reflexiveness means that the student develops strategies through negotiation of relevance and ambitions and understanding of self, and considers implications for professional and private life
- Here independence, self-efficacy, and life-long learning is in focus.
- A strong element of mentorship
A tool to evaluate and develop supervision

For supervisors to evaluate and develop:
- their supervision
- the context and practices for doctoral education

For developers of doctoral education:
- to help supervisors develop
- to develop doctoral education on departmental and institutional level
  - e.g. a university-wide meta-program for doctoral students


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Conception of supervision (after Lee, 2008)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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