

Nordic Development Research Conference 2021: Development, Learning and Education. Post-pandemic Considerations

Workshop: Social Change/Transformation through Learning.

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Aim of Workshop:

Conduct critical analysis and discussion of capacity development in different activities, including higher education, vocational training, civil society organizations and private sector. We want to include analyses of various learning techniques, with a focus on problem-based learning (PBL), but we invite participants to focus on other types of learning methods as well. This is an open workshop.

Description of workshop:

Development research has potential to contribute to social change and transformation through problem-based learning and research on different forms of social innovation in education and learning, entrepreneurship and sustainability – irrespective of whether learning is taking place as part of formal education systems, in regional and global networks or in projects focused e.g. on renewable energy, health, or other sectors. In this workshop, we explore how problem-based learning and social innovation in learning processes may challenge ‘traditional’ development perspectives. We invite papers analyzing social change through education and innovation, ‘capacity-development’ and knowledge

exchange/encounters, which challenges the ‘known’. Hence, we want to expand the discussion and analysis of capacity development beyond the narrow notion of ‘capacity building’.

COVID19 has opened up new spaces for education and learning, but even before the pandemic many new ways of developing knowledge have been emerging. The workshop aims to direct attention to varied spaces of learning at different levels of the educational system and encompassing learning both inside and outside classroom and other formal structures. Additionally, we also want to focus of ‘actors in learning’ to unfold the variety of different actors and (learning) tools used and envisaged by different stakeholders. Papers related to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals are relevant in this context, as is critical analysis of learning by and from development actors (for example NGOs and other civil society organizations), not traditionally parts of a school and/or learning environment.

We intend to link capacity development to innovation and problem based learning and the experiences from PBL in an international context. In line with this, we aim to look at ‘project design and inclusion of local knowledge, context and ownership’. In many innovation projects there can be a tendency for Northern partners to dominate the processes and decisions, which is why capacity development and knowledge exchange at multiple levels and in different forms is important. We want to discuss how capacity development and knowledge exchange can be redefined in a post-development discourse to avoid known dichotomies of ‘them and us’ and value based statements of ‘good’ development’ – in this case within capacity development and learning in general (PBL)