

Reviewer's report

Title: Evolving the theory and praxis of knowledge translation through social interaction: A social phenomenological study

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Reviewer: Jo Rycroft-Malone

Reviewer's report:

Getting to the heart of the processes inherent in knowledge translation is an important issue, and therefore this paper has the potential to make an interesting contribution. As it stands I think the potential contribution is not realised because the paper lacks a clear focus and detail/information on a number of critical issues is missing. The following offers some suggestions for revision.

- Major Compulsory Revisions (which the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. The paper would benefit from a much clearer articulation of focus. I wasn't entirely clear whether the paper was reporting on a research project that was intending to enable knowledge translation, report on the development of a new framework, report an evaluation or describe the application of a methodology to knowledge translation activity (or a combination of these). It would be helpful to have some clear research questions or project aims somewhere at the front of the paper that are clearly linked to the content in the remainder of it.
2. In the context of the above point the abstract needs to reflect the link between the stated aim, approach and conclusions.
3. Some points are made in the background section that need further clarity and/or substantiation. For example on page 6 you say 'while much research evidence is factual and technical in nature, a large portion of it relates to refining professional craftsmanship' – I'm not sure what you mean by this, and the point is not elaborated on. Additionally on page 7 a statement is made that 'academically orientated professionals inevitably' combine research (rcts) with know how – however, there is also evidence from the decision making literature (particularly in relation to nursing practice) that practitioners tend to rely on their craft knowledge and if unsure will consult with their colleagues rather than research evidence.
4. PARIHS and the KTA frameworks are referred to in the background section, but it is not clear how (if) they provided a theoretical underpinning to the work, or whether they are described in the context of their limitations and therefore the added advantage of the PAKT model. If these models did provide some theoretical underpinning to the work, it would be useful to know how they were used.
5. A number of different method/ologies are referred to throughout the paper (PAR, social phenomenology, interpretive research, social constructivism). Firstly

it would be helpful to have an explanation of how these methodologies complement each other within this project (and generally), and second a more detailed explanation of how they were applied to this project is needed. For example, a clearer explanation of how social phenomenology was practically/actually applied to explore participants' enactment of KT processes, would help the reader better understand the themes that emerged from data analysis.

6. Participant Action Research appears to be the dominant approach used in the project; however how it was used (apart from the use of action groups) is not described in the paper. A clearer description of methods is needed, including more detail about participants, how the action groups worked, who was involved, what data was incorporated/fed back etc. and over what time period.

7. It might be more helpful for the reader to construct the methodology section under research report headings i.e./e.g. design, sample, intervention, methods etc.

8. It is stated that the audio-recording of meetings was conducted purposively – understanding the criteria that were used for choosing which were selected would enhance perceptions of trustworthiness. Additionally having a clearer explanation of the role that the researchers' took within the PAR approach would enhance the rigour of the report. There is also no reporting of the field notes that were taken as part of the project and whether/how they were used to develop the four patterns described.

9. In relation to the report of the findings I wasn't clear whether the four patterns were themes that emerged from data analysis, or your interpretation on the codes/themes that emerged. So for example the language that is used to describe what emerged from analysis isn't necessarily consistent with the quotes illustrating the patterns. Was there a level of interpretation to get to the four patterns?

10. I was wondering whether some of the points being made in the discussion section were issues that were about the research process – for example details about the role of the facilitator – transformative leader could be part of a description about the action research process and how this role evolved over time.

11. I was interested in the point being made about how social interaction could enable participants to construct a context conducive to KT (p21) – given the current interest in context – it would be interesting to hear more about how you envisage this could happen.

12. I was also interested in the points being made about the modification of research findings (p23) – it raises a number of issues, that critics of a more interactionist approach to KT would enjoy – particularly the implications this has for outcomes. Unpacking this issue further would add strength to the points being made. You may already be aware, but the Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice has special issues each year, that touches on some of these issues.

- Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use

of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. In relation to PARIHS on page 7 – evidence also includes local information (see Rycroft-Malone et al 2004 Journal of Advanced Nursing)

- Discretionary Revisions (which are recommendations for improvement but which the author can choose to ignore)

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests