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SHEDDING LIGHT ON TRANSFORMATIONAL ONLINE LEARNING USING FIVE PRACTICE BASED TENETS: ILLUMINATING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SELF

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Abstract

This practitioner-led research explores the lived subjective experience of undergraduate distance learning (DL). This research is distinct to understanding DL because consideration is given to person-centred understandings as opposed to a technologically driven focus. The emphasis of individual impact is timely and necessary as the academic and professional literature questions the ability of distance learning to develop deep and transformational learning. Using data from qualitative Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis, 5 practice-based tenets are proposed to develop transformational learning: attention, acceptance, accompaniment, adaptation and action. Together, the tenets show the process of transformation beginning as the participants turn their gaze inwards then embracing new ways of thinking and acting, with the accompaniment of others – especially tutors – providing stability whilst encouraging intellectual risk-taking. This focus on self-discovery presents opportunities to promote and integrate a curiosity-based curricular, content design and assessment that shifts the acceptance of knowledge as authored by others, to learners self-authoring their own understanding; thereby creating a future-facing approach for learning autonomy and more confident dissemination of ideas. The paper concludes by suggesting that new practice-world conversations about the integration of humanistic educational ideals can go hand-in-hand with advancements in technology.

Keywords: Distance Learning, Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis, Transformation.
