How do contextual issues influence social accountability in medical education?

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1. SUMMER/AUTUMN 2014 COLLECTION (PhD Research Project*)

The aims of this research study are:
- Investigate the progress towards socially accountable medical education in four medical schools in two countries
- To analyse and compare key contextual factors that influence the planning, implementation and outcomes of socially accountable medical education within these sites

The specific questions are:
- What are the key contextual factors that have impacted upon progress towards socially accountable medical education in these medical schools?
- What is the theoretical and historical background to socially accountable medical education and how has it been defined and evaluated in these settings?
- Could theory or conceptual frameworks be developed from this research that will be applicable to other contexts?

Methodology
- A prospective multiple case study design using qualitative research methods (semi-structured interviews, document analysis, Photo Voice and non-participant observation)

2. DESIGN IDEAS (Preparation for Confirmation#)

- Literature Review: Historical and conceptual development of social accountability in medical education and "Context" and "Analysing Context" in social research
- Development of a working conceptual framework/model based on Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Approach (See diagram 1)
- Consulting Experts to uncover which contextual factors are most pertinent to social accountability in medical education and are able to be captured in diverse settings

Diagram 1: Context and Medical Schools: A working model
Adapted from Bronfenbrenner 1979 in Thomas (2011) p.58

MACROSYSTEM
Political, Economic, Cultural, Social System

INDIVIDUAL/S
- Students
- Staff/Faculty
- Community members
- Clinicians
- Preceptors
- Cultural Mentors
- Others

MESOSYSTEM
The Health System
The Community

MICROSYSTEM
The Medical School

3. ROUGH SKETCHES (Early Results)

Literature Review:
- The global health workforce crisis has renewed focus on the outcomes of medical education through a professional and social movement for socially accountable medical education
- A socially accountable medical school aligns its activities to meet the needs of communities and the health care systems it serves (Training for Health Equity Network 2008 with reference to Boelen & Heck 1995).
- All medical schools are unique and external and internal factors influence how they train doctors.
- There is a need to understand how these contextual factors influence the social accountability aspirations and practices of medical schools.
- There are diverse definitions of context in the social research literature.
- Methods to analyse context in case study research are informed by disciplinary and methodological approaches

Consultation Session:
- 2011 Australian and New Zealand Association of Health Professional Educators (ANZAPHE) conference (see diagram 2)
- 15 conference attendees representing diverse professions, Schools and countries participated at the session
- Macro, Meso and Micro level contextual factors were readily identified
- Individuals' influences were also noted
- There contextual issues may vary between newer medical schools and more established schools
- Another consultation session will be held at the Poster Reception of the PHC Research Conference (see panel four)

5. INSPIRATION (References)


Photo & Dream Catcher: Dr Rebecca Evans, 2011 ANZAPHE Conference, used with permission.

6. BOUQUETS & AGENT (Thanks & contact details)
- THEnet Evaluation and Research Groups
- JCU OT students at Koolkuna Pre-Prep (dream catcher idea)
- Participants at 2011 ANZAPHE Conference, 29/06 Alice Springs

PHC Research Conference, Brisbane, 12-15/06/11
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*Commenced PhD: 1/03/11
# Confirmation seminar: 25/08/11