The socio-material nature of careers work: An exploration of knowledge co-creation amongst career practitioners

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1. Research background

- Knowledge co-creation is a main source of innovation and adaptability to change in organisations.
- Careers are changing. Career practitioners now need to prepare individuals for frequent career transitions rather than a ‘career for life’.
- Governments have emphasised the important role of information access and effective knowledge management in the context of career decision-making.
- Knowledge co-creation can facilitate the adaptation of workers to more precarious career landscapes, as well as to the requirements of the post-industrial Knowledge society.
- Career services and career practitioners support jobseekers to navigate the changing career landscape. By co-creating knowledge, career practitioners shape the future workforce.

2. Key themes

- Knowledge management (KM)
  - SECI Model (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1996): transformations of knowledge
  - Theory of expansive learning (Engeström, 1999): organisational problem-solving

- Communities of Practice (CoPs)
  - Wenger’s CoP theory (2004): self-organising communities around shared interests and experiences

- Learning communities
  - Stoll et al. (2006) and Scardamalia and Bereiter (2010): success conditions for knowledge co-creation

3. Research design

Research question: How do career practitioners co-create career knowledge?

- 10 semi-structured online interviews with career practitioners at Skills Development Scotland

Complementary research methods considered:
- case studies, observations, artefact analysis, photo/document elicitation, focus groups

4. Main findings

Knowledge is co-created through an assemblage of information and socialisation practices.

- Knowledge co-creation practices:
  - Information-seeking, Information sharing, Contextualisation work, Asking for help

- Technologies
  - Emulate established forms of working and create new co-creation affordances
  - Can also serve as barriers to knowledge co-creation

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References


