Improvement of Learning Interventions and Learning Communities at the University of Applied Sciences Windesheim

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Abstract: *Background and aims.* The purpose of this article is to examine which parties are all involved in the learning process of students at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences, Social Work, Almere, the Netherlands. In particular, our interest is in the interventions that each of these parties deploy in this learning process of students. The motivation for this thought exercise is to examine how to increase the cognitive and social-emotional success of first-year students. *Methods.* The focus of this article is on research among students and teachers at the University of Applied Sciences, Social Work in Windesheim, on sense of belonging, pedagogical skills and other interventions for successful student learning through learning communities. This focus was achieved by combining internal empirical research with a literature review. *Results.* Teaching students knowledge and skills is a process that involves many parties. First and foremost are the teachers and the organization behind them. Second are the classmates with whom the student acquires the knowledge and skills. Finally, there are the student's educators from the extended family, who ideally are the student's supporters and advocates. Our own research shows that a significant number of students (most are first or second generation immigrants) with an immigrant background do not feel a sense of belonging to the Windesheim University of Applied Sciences, Social Work, and the learning community. In addition, a notable research finding is that teachers still need to learn to better apply the pedagogical skills needed for student learning communities to flourish. The literature review also shows that a number of well-known student success interventions are missing from the learning communities we have piloted. These include learning circles, 17th century learning methods such as those of Rembrandt van Rijn, living labs and hackathons, etc. *Conclusions.* The empirical research and literature review show that interventions should distinguish between the different parties involved in the learning process and the organizational level: a) the organization as a whole, b) the learning community, c) teachers and facilitators, c) fellow students, and d) extended families. In addition, a distinction must be made between Western and non-Western learning interventions. Our research also shows that the impact of COVID-19 and its lockdowns on students and teachers should not be underestimated.

Keywords: Learning Interventions, Sense of Belonging, Learning Community, Pedagogical Skills, Teachers, Students, Universities of Applied Sciences, COVID-19, Education

1. Introduction

Three studies on sense of belonging, pedagogical skills and learning communities were conducted at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences in 2022 [1-3]. The prelude to these three studies at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences is a theoretical framework on sense of belonging and attachment in students [1]. In addition, this study addressed sense of belonging in teachers. This theoretical model underpinned the empirical part of the study among students and teachers. Our research was conducted in the period following the two COVID-19 lockdowns of student teaching by teachers, which resulted in an immense amount of online teaching.

Lockdowns can be understood as a disruption of togetherness and sense of belonging. First, because students

learn a lot from each other by talking about lessons before and after class and by working together in learning communities. Secondly, because teachers only communicate with students online during a lockdown, all human contact between teachers and students is through a computer screen. Any interaction between verbal and non-verbal communication is missing online. The following question is addressed in the empirical part of our study [2]: do students feel that they belong to the Windesheim University of Applied Sciences and the learning community of Social Work? Indeed, previous research shows that sense of belonging contributes immensely to learning success (cognitive and social-emotional). Our second empirical study [3] looks at the pedagogical skills teachers use in learning communities, where students spend much of their learning time. These pedagogical skills are one of the foundations on which the sense of belonging is built. In summary, students' sense of belonging to a learning community is not magic, but is supported by the concrete pedagogical skills of their teachers and possibly even by the way the whole University of Applied Sciences communicates with its students.

This article on "Improvement of learning interventions and learning communities at the University of Applied Sciences Windesheim" has the following structure. First, the theoretical model underlying this study is presented. The second part examines the impact of lockdowns on education, discussing separately the impact on students and teachers. This COVID-19 pandemic is so systemically disruptive to the education system that it will be dealt with separately. If this study were to be conducted now, it would have to address COVID-19 pulmonary disorders and complaints and their impact on students and teachers. The dropout rate is likely to be substantial.

"Doctors at an Amsterdam children's hospital believe there are 300 to 400 children in the Netherlands with long-term health problems caused by the coronavirus, reports the Parool (an Amsterdam newspaper). At the Emma Kinderziekenhuis, part of the Amsterdam UMC teaching hospital, doctors believe the disease has had a huge impact on a small group of young people. The hospital, which has set up a special clinic for these children, has observed various problems that seem to have been triggered by the virus [4]".

"After reviewing the electronic health records of thousands of children who received a COVID test in 2020-2021, researchers found that 9.1% of children had a positive test result. Of these children, 41.9% had persistent COVID symptoms, also known as post-acute sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 (PASC). Common PASC symptoms, assessed 1-6 months after COVID, included loss of taste or smell, heart inflammation, and cough and cold symptoms. In comparison, 38.2% of children who did not test positive for COVID had similar symptoms. The differences between the two groups suggest a 3.7% prevalence of PASC in pediatric patients.

Children with PASC were more likely to be younger, have a severe case of COVID, and have underlying medical conditions. Like adults, some children experienced chest pain, fatigue, and chills. However, they were less likely to have neurological symptoms, such as headaches, numbness, brain fog or memory loss, which were more common in adults. Other pediatric symptoms included hair loss, rashes, diarrhea, and respiratory symptoms."

Third, the results of the student survey are presented briefly and concisely [2]. The same is done for the teacher survey [3]. Based on these results, the theoretical model we presented is critically examined once again. This gives us the opportunity to make suggestions for an improved theoretical model. This revised theoretical model addresses all parties responsible for the learning process of social work students at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences. In addition, an outline of the interventions that each of these parties uses to promote learning success (cognitive and socioemotional) in learning communities is provided.

2. Results of the Original Theoretical Model

Our original theoretical model [1] emphasizes students' interest in sense of belonging. Sense of Belonging to Windesheim University of Applied Sciences (Social Work) and its learning communities leads to cognitive and socioemotional academic success. Our original model is based on the assumption that teachers must also feel that they belong to Windesheim University of Applied Sciences. Their managers are responsible for this. In our article presenting the research on students' sense of belonging, we argue that "sense of belonging" will be more effective if managers and directors ensure that teachers at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences experience a sense of belonging. This means that managers and directors directly and indirectly show their teachers and non-teaching staff that they are part of the Windesheim University of Applied Sciences and that they are cared for (this should not be limited to income and position within the organization). But that's not all. We believe that fellow students and the extended family also make a significant contribution. The social learning climate of sense of belonging includes learning together and talking about the curriculum. This is facilitated when the social relationships between students are one of "YOU belong to ME and I belong to YOU". The same is true for the extended family as well. The more the extended family explicitly and implicitly shows that their children are part of Windesheim University as students, the more the children feel they belong. These insights have been worked out in the following model [1], which has been adapted for this article.

The assumption that sense of belonging is a highway to learning success for students and teachers is not a foregone conclusion. One of the main reasons for this debate is to be found in the differences between collectivist and individualist cultures. At Windesheim University of Applied Sciences, students come mainly from countries other than the Netherlands, with a significant proportion of non-Western students. The teachers, on the other hand, are predominantly Western and Dutch. A sense of othering among students can

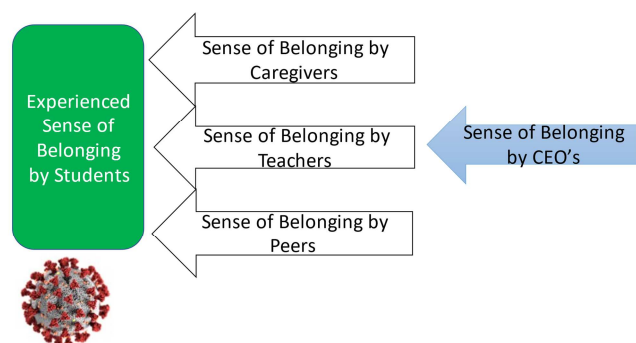result from the lack of representative reflection among student teachers.

Figure 1. Sense of Belonging and COVID-19.

In addition, our first article [1] in this series contains a separate section on the sense of belonging in the Western and non-Western worlds. In the non-Western world, the concept of "sense of belonging" must be interpreted in terms of collectivism. In collectivism, young people are taught to respect elders (read teachers) and to put the group (read other students) first, with individual needs being secondary to those of the group. As an anecdote, one could argue that in the non-Western world, a child's success in school is attributed to the efforts of the extended family and not to the child's intelligence. In contrast, in the Western world (that of the teachers), autonomy and independence are hailed as the highest good imaginable. In this context, sense of belonging is a "construct" for achieving learning success. Our assumption is that these two worlds - the collectivism of the students and the individualism of the teachers - are on a collision course. This clash - also in the promotion of sense of belonging - results from the fact that students see their teachers as people from a completely different world than their own. In short, people with completely different values and customs. Although it cannot be denied that each person, student or teacher, appreciates that the organization promotes in words and deeds that they belong and that the organization is willing to take care of them as a good family should.

Moreover, the influence of the extended family is missing from the scientific literature on sense of belonging [5]. At a minimum, this influence consists of encouraging the student in the following ways: a) Motivation: "Look at me, I have to work hard for low pay, so do your best in school because you will earn more", b) Own education: in the United States, African Americans have their own schools to survive the American racist society, and c) Tutoring: arranging learning support in one's extended family or on weekends and tutoring schools that try to address the educational disadvantage of immigrants and refugees.

3. Effects of COVID-19 on (First Year) Students and Teachers

Before addressing sense of belonging and pedagogical skills to promote sense of belonging in learning communities, it is useful to take a critical look at the impact of COVID-19 on education.

Figure 2. Online Learning (source: https://ap.lc/Kd4RA).

Many articles, pamphlets, and books on science education frame COVID-19 primarily as a pandemic of online classes or no classes at all. This picture is beginning to shift as it becomes clear that online teaching has even more drawbacks. The question is whether this "original" frame is correct. There is little evidence to suggest otherwise. This "little" evidence comes from New Zealand [6]. Recently in the Netherlands it was found that primary school children suffered a learning delay of about 3 months due to the first COVID-19 closure, confirming the above framework. A meta-analysis can be seen as a confirmation of the Dutch research on learning deficits due to COVID-19 lockdowns [7].

"We find a substantial overall learning deficit (Cohen's $d = -0.14$, 95% confidence interval -0.17 to -0.10), which arose early in the pandemic and persists over time. Learning deficits are particularly large among children from low socio-economic backgrounds. They are also larger in math's than in reading and in middle-income countries relative to high-income countries. There is a lack of evidence on learning progress during the pandemic in low-income countries [7]."

There is little quantification of what this means for students in higher education [8]. An American and Dutch study provides the following results for students' online learning of multicultural competencies. The results are:

"We investigated the effectiveness of Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL). This is one of the first studies to use a quasi-experimental design using a control group to test the effectiveness of COIL. Both quantitative (survey) and qualitative data (reflection reports, focus group interviews) were used to examine the effectiveness of COIL. COIL significantly increases intercultural competence in terms of cultural intelligence. This increase was not observed for students who were already exposed to international experiences [8]."

Our research [2] & [3] is based on the assumption that lockdowns have had a devastating effect on social contacts between students, between students and their teachers, and between teachers. The results of this assumption are presented in this section for students and their teachers at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences, Social Work. The thesis is that education without physical social contacts is an

impossibility. Learning at a university of applied sciences is more than listening to online lectures, reading books and articles. Learning is also learning how to process the educational material. This happens in contact with teachers and fellow students. COVID-19 as a pandemic can be seen as a "natural" experiment to gather arguments for or against this thesis.

Incidentally, a second issue that comes up in research on COVID-19 in education is the physical and mental impact of COVID-19 on students and teachers. A quote about the concerns of the Dutch education unions is shown below.

"Care and income protection for teachers with COVID are not adequately regulated. The AVS (Algemene Vereniging Schoolleiders) and the teachers' unions believe that a collective disability scheme and other compensation measures are needed for employees who have suffered from COVID for a long time. They have written a tough letter to the ministers of Education, Culture and Welfare (OC&W) and Social Affairs and Employment (SZW) on the subject. The unions point out that education workers were (and are) more exposed to the safety risks associated with COVID than workers in other sectors. At the time of the corona crisis, the vast majority of the workforce was able to work from home or in compliance with corona measures such as keeping their distance. This was not the case, or to a much lesser extent, for workers in critical occupations, including education. Education provided emergency shelter and education to exceptional groups during the lockdowns and reopened fully when restrictive measures were still in place in the rest of society. Education was not provided with protective equipment, nor was it prioritized for vaccination. It was also wrongly assumed that children would not transmit the virus. Isolation proved practically unworkable, and air quality and ventilation in many schools and institutions were not up to standard. In short, teachers were working en masse under conditions and standards that did not apply to the rest of society. The mandatory opening in May 2021 even took place at a time when the vaccination of people under 40 had not yet taken place. The education unions believe that the above circumstances are a cause for further action.

So far, more than 1,700 education workers with lung disease have reported to a hotline."

"COVID-19 [7] can cause lung complications such as pneumonia and, in the most severe cases, acute respiratory distress syndrome, or ARDS (acute respiratory distress syndrome). Sepsis, another possible complication of COVID-19, can also cause lasting harm to the lungs and other organs. Newer coronavirus variants may also cause more airway disease, such as bronchitis, that may be severe enough to warrant hospitalization."

An overwhelming majority are believed to have contracted the infection at work. Over a third of this group are under 40 years of age."

Figure 3. Source https://ap.lc/iiXDv.

3.1. First Years Students of the University of Applied Sciences Windesheim, Social Work

As mentioned above, we conducted research among a representative sample of first-year social work students at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences. COVID-19 experiences were also collected on them for the reasons mentioned above. In that research article [2], the following conclusions are drawn.

"Many first year students of Social Work Windesheim have personally experienced COVID-19 (91.7%). 45.8% of students have had COVID-19 themselves and 75% have been quarantined. The effect of COVID-19 on well-being, social contacts and leisure time is greater for male than for female students. National Dutch research of the GGD region Utrecht among adolescents in the Netherlands confirms our results. An important additional yield is the effect of COVID-19 on the estimated study points of Social Work first year students. That effect is 27,3%. This survey also found that during the COVID-19 period, 40,9% of Social Work first year students could have used help well."

Table 1. Type of COVID-19 experiences.

Answer category	Number of students / percentage
I have had corona	11 (45,8%)
I have been in quarantine	18 (75,0%)
Someone important to me had Corona	17 (70,8%)
Someone important to me has been in the hospital	5 (20,8%)
Someone important to me died of corona	4 (16,7%)
Someone important to me died of something other than corona	6 (25,0%)
I've been in the hospital because of something other than corona	1 (04,2%)
Less work or income for (one of) my parents	6 (25,0%)
None of the above categories	2 (08,3%)

3.2. Teachers at Social Work University of Applied Sciences Windesheim

Teachers' experiences with COVID-19 are discussed based on a representative sample [3] of social work teachers (full-time and part-time).

"15 out of 17 teachers (88%) had experiences with COVID-19.

These COVID-19 experiences have consequences (impact) on social contacts and leisure time. Over two-fifths of teachers said they missed company from others (undoubtedly including colleagues) and did not feel more connected to others. Second, COVID-19 has had a disruptive effect on performance at school (59%), life in general (47%), and dealing with emotions and stress (42%). In short, it can be said that COVID-19 and its associated lockdowns have had a substantial impact on teachers' business and personal prosperity."

Furthermore, the effects of COVID-19 on social contacts, leisure time and general well-being for Social Work teachers were depicted. See tables 2 and 3 [3].

Table 2. Social contacts and Leisure.

Social Contacts and Leisure	% agree
I feel I get along well with people around me (No. 1)	94
I can find company when I want to (No. 8)	89
I don't feel alone (No. 3)	83
I miss having company (No. 2)	42
I feel disconnected from others (No. 7)	42
I feel I belong to a group of friends (No. 4)	24
I no longer have a strong bond with anyone (No. 5)	12
I feel nobody wants to deal with me (No. 6)	6

Table 3. Impact of COVID-19 on general well-being.

Impact of COVID-19 on general well-being	% Negative
Your school performance (No. 6)	59
Your life in general (No. 1)	47
How well you feel (e.g. how you handle emotions and stress) (No. 3)	42
The relationship with your family (No. 4)	36
Your health (No. 2)	36
Relationship with your friends (No. 5)	36

From these outcomes it can be seen that a significant proportion of Social Work teachers miss having company, feel disconnected from others, and don't feel that they belong to a group of friends. Furthermore, for nearly three-fifths of teachers, COVID-19 has had an impact on their school performance, life in general and how they deal with emotions.

3.3. Conclusions

It was pointed out at the beginning of this chapter that the Dutch government treated education in a step-motherly way during COVID-19. In many sectors outside education and health, employees were allowed to work from home. As a result, employees outside of education and health care were better protected from the effects of COVID-19. 88% of teachers had experience with COVID-19. Our research at the Windesheim University of Applied Sciences, Social Work, shows that COVID-19 had a negative impact on the work of almost 60% of the teachers. Teachers now report that after the COVID-19 lockdowns, their students no longer ask questions in lectures because they forgot to do so during the lockdowns.

Regardless of the above, we suspect that the Dutch government and higher education institutions overlooked students during COVID-19. The main reason could be: "education must continue anyway, if not face to face, then online". Perhaps a major reason for not considering students' interests is the fact that their student unions and advocacy organizations are not as well equipped as those of teachers. So we hear less from them.

Only psychology and psychiatry have drawn attention to the ups and downs of students as a direct result of COVID-19. On January 26, 2023, NRC-Handelsblad[1] (Nienke Ipenburg and Ginny Mooij) comes out with a sharp criticism of the Dutch government's COVID-19 education policy.

"The fable of the infectiousness of children lingered here for a long time. After the first school closure in 2020, everyone seemed to agree that education should be affected as little as possible by the pandemic. Almost all educational organizations met almost weekly with the then Minister of Education Slob to discuss policy.

Despite growing concerns about the spread of the virus in schools, school leaders did not object when various precautionary measures were extended or lifted. Although they were aware of the poor indoor climate in many schools, they did not exert enough pressure to do something about it quickly."

Psychology and psychiatry have produced the following general picture for young people in the Netherlands. A special study was conducted in the Netherlands on COVID-19 sufferers compared to a matched control group. See citation below.

"76 422 participants (mean age 53·7 years [SD 12·9], 46 329 [60·8%] were female) completed a total of 883 973 questionnaires. Of these, 4231 (5·5%) participants had COVID-19 and were matched to 8462 controls. Persistent symptoms in COVID-19-positive participants at 90–150 days after COVID-19 compared with before COVID-19 and compared with matched controls included chest pain, difficulties with breathing, pain when breathing, painful muscles, ageusia or anosmia, tingling extremities, lump in throat, feeling hot and cold alternately, heavy arms or legs, and general tiredness. In 12·7% of patients, these symptoms could be attributed to COVID-19, as 381 (21·4%) of 1782 COVID-19-positive participants versus 361 (8·7%) of 4130 COVID-19-negative controls had at least one of these core symptoms substantially increased to at least moderate severity at 90–150 days after COVID-19 diagnosis or

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1 https://ap.lc/Pbsor

matched timepoint [9].”

4. Belonging of Students Social Work

Many of the students of social work at the University of Windesheim come (originally) from countries other than the Netherlands. For students from immigrant backgrounds in OECD countries in 2018 (38 countries in total), the OECD provides the following figures.

“Across OECD countries, the percentage of students (15 years and older) with an immigrant background reached 23.8% in 2018, close to the EU average of 22.6%. On average across OECD countries, there was a 5% increase between 2009 and 2018. The countries that experienced the greatest increase in the percentage of students with an immigrant background over this period were mostly located in Europe, such as Austria, Germany, Luxembourg, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom – all above a 10% increase [11].”

Sense of Belonging, as mentioned earlier, is the key to student success. First-year students arrive at a university of applied sciences, so to speak, unprepared for a learning environment. This is not to say that they do not have the appropriate prior education. What is known is that they come from different types of educational programs that use completely different learning and teaching methods. These range from hands-on learning to classroom teaching. In short, students are not a homogeneous group, not in terms of personal characteristics, not in terms of origin, and not in terms of learning background.

4.1. Immigrant and Native Students

According to the OECD [11], in addition to the above-mentioned differences between groups of students, there are also differences in educational outcomes that are a direct result of being an immigrant or not. The OECD states: This is due to a lack of "sense of belonging" among first and second generation immigrant students. They feel less connected to educational institutions than native students.

“Students with a greater sense of belonging at school appear less likely to be unsatisfied with their lives, be absent and drop-out of school, and engage in risky and anti-social behaviors. PISA 2018 asked students to report feelings of their sense of belonging at school. Students were considered to feel like they belong at school when they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I feel like I belong at school”, and disagreed or strongly disagreed with “I feel like an outsider (or left out of things) at school”. On average across OECD countries, first-generation immigrant students were less likely to report a sense of belonging at school than native students. In most countries, the gap between student groups was widest when taking into account first-generation immigrant students and native students, and lowest when considering native students from mixed heritage and students with both native-born parents. In particular, on average across OECD countries, first-generation immigrant students were 9 percentage points less likely to report feeling like they belonged at school than native students (and 12 percentage points across EU countries) [11].”
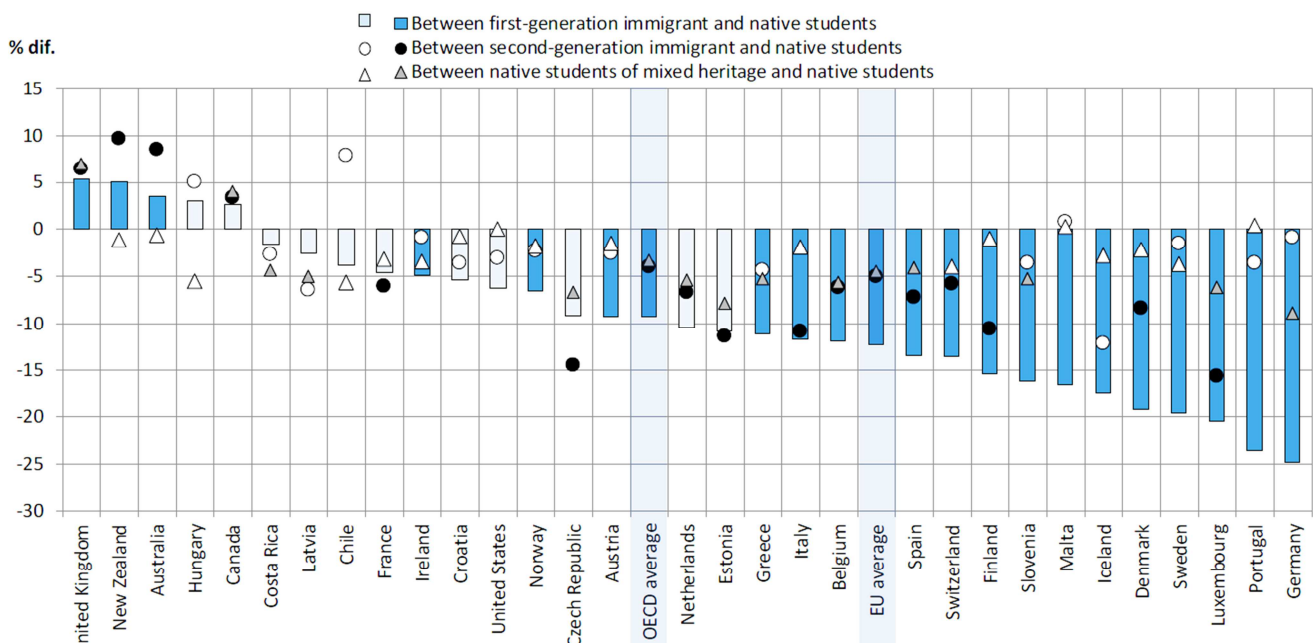

Figure 4. *Difference in sense of belonging at school, by immigrant group[2].*

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2 Source: OECD (2018 [10]), PISA 2018 Database, http://www.oecd.org/pisa/data/2018database/ (accessed on 17 May 2021).

"On average across OECD countries [11], the difference between early and late arrivals (before and after 12 years) reporting a sense of belonging at school was 11 percentage points (and 13 percentage points on average across EU countries). The difference of reported sense of belonging between late and early arrivals was particularly wide in Finland (31 percentage points), Austria (26 percentage points), Denmark (21 percentage points), Sweden (18 percentage points), Belgium (18 percentage points) and Spain (18 percentage points)."

Ensuring that students and their learning community feel a sense of belonging at Windesheim University is a powerful tool for bringing students and teachers closer together. Academic research shows that belonging fosters academic success. Panorama Education puts it this way:

"Sense of Belonging can include feelings of understanding, respect, connectedness, membership, or mattering. Sense of belonging is influenced by the classroom and school culture as well as by individual actions taken by adults in the school[3]."

4.2. Own Research Results on Student Sense of Belonging at Social Work, Windesheim, University of Applied Sciences, Almere

The OECD questionnaire [10: A] [10: B] on sense of belonging consists of six questions. These questions are: a) I feel like an outsider (or excluded) in college, b) I make friends easily in college, c) I feel at home in college, d) I feel uncomfortable and out of place in this college, e) Other students seem to like me, and f) I feel lonely in college. These questions were used in the student research on sense of belonging in social work at the Windesheim University of Applied Sciences, Almere. These questions are part of the regular PISA measurements [10: B]. PISA uses a broader concept than "sense of belonging". The second PISA concept is "student participation".

Our article on social work students' sense of belonging at the University of Applied Sciences in Windesheim, Almere, the Netherlands, found the following [3]:

"Sense of belonging was measured by means of the OECD questionnaire on sense of belonging [10]. The average results of belonging among first-year Social Work students is 11.3 (SD = 2,23 and CI = 95%). Per respondent a score of 6 is the maximum and the score of 24 the minimum. The impact of sense of belonging is 29,4 (0 = maximum negative impact and 100 maximum positive impact).

A substantial number of first-year Social Work Windesheim students experienced no sense of belonging. Sense of Belonging shows no difference between female and male students and the different age groups.

Parents furthermore support their children (freshmen) in the absence of sense of belonging at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences, Social Work. Unsafe behavior (shutting out and making fun) is hardly ever mentioned.

First-year social work students with high sense of belonging scores experience more support from the learning community than students with low sense of belonging scores: 'high' sense of belonging = 13.0 total support learning community and 'low' sense of belonging is 7.8 total support learning community.

Social work students profiles consist mainly of sometimes positively and negatively experienced emotions. Positively experienced emotions dominate the negatively experienced emotions. The exception to the rule is the negative emotions anxiety and sadness which are relatively common. Our interpretation based on the above results is that possibly the negatively experienced emotions still need to be worked on in order to realize a more optimal sense of belonging [3]."

5. Learning Communities and Pedagogical Skills

Insights and conversations with other people are indispensable for processing and reflecting on learning tasks. This is also true for students [12]. What exactly does it mean to process the curriculum? First of all, processing involves several parties, the person himself, her/ his fellow students, the teacher, the learning context (learning communities and general lectures on the subject) and the home/ neighborhood environment. In short, this involves all the supporting parties around an individual student.

For the individual student, on the other hand, issues such as learning style, type of motivation (see self-determination theory), decision making, and learning noise [13] are usually addressed. These issues are not addressed in this article. In other words, only the social psychology of learning is discussed in this article.

"Another major finding of our study is the importance of peers. Even for those who share good relationships with staff, as the international students do, a lack of peer connections decreases their chances to perform well academically. Learning does not stop after classes. All that remains unclear during lectures, such as understanding new concepts or assignments, is often discussed with peers after classes. These exchanges with peers foster more thorough and personalized learning and understanding of concepts that complement their individual and classroom learning. Peer connections is therefore essential to continue the cycle between in and outside of class learning. A lack of peer involvement, regardless of students' background, could consequently disrupt this cycle and hinder academic achievement [12]."

Second, the processing of learning involves the interventions of those involved in learning, such as teachers, peers, and extended family members. The assumption in higher education is that students need to acquire new knowledge and skills. This mastery refers primarily to learning the ability to process "new" theoretical and practical learning. Every citizen needs this skill throughout his or her life.

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3 https://www.panoramaed.com/blog/student-sense-of-belonging

5.1. Parties in Support of Students

Party 1 are the teachers. Teachers use the following format to transfer new knowledge and skills to students: a) content, b) procedures (mode of transfer and proper stacking of knowledge and skills), and c) human relations (formal and informal social contacts and learning communities). To carry out this transfer, teachers can use existing teaching materials (articles, books, films, exhibits, practical exercises and ways of testing learning). In addition, teachers are equipped with pedagogical skills. What these are and whether they are used by the teachers of Social Work at the Windesheim University of Applied Sciences is explained below.

The guidelines in this transfer of knowledge and skills are the credits to be earned (also called ECTS: European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System. These credits are the result of an activity completed with a satisfactory result, such as an examination, an internship or a project report. This does not mean that we assume that the processing of what has been learned consists only of performing and consuming. At the level of higher education, these credits are a translation of the competence profile, which is a derivative of the professional profile. In social work, the question is: what should a social worker be able to do? Teachers are also expected to be helpful in teaching all those skills that fall under the heading of "developing a vision" of what has been learned, learning to reflect and analyze, and learning to apply the knowledge and skills in different practice contexts. In addition, teachers are expected to have pedagogical teaching skills and knowledge of and experience with student group dynamics. Pedagogical teaching skills are skills that teachers need to impart knowledge and skills to students. Group dynamics skills relate to the functioning of a group of students. The beginning of any group should be to formulate and enforce rules of behavior together. This includes learning how to treat each other respectfully and making sure that no one takes all the speaking time.

Party 2 are the fellow students. It was indicated earlier that contacts between students are necessary for success in studies. In this regard, Mohamedhoesein [12] distinguishes between formal and informal contacts among students.

"Students' involvement in formal interactions with peers and teachers is the basis for need support and positive perceptions of control. The more students study together or participate in classroom discussions, the higher their chances are of experiencing need support and academic control. This finding confirms the idea that formal interactions, as in classroom contexts, contribute to students' academic integration and persistence. Moreover, when the formal aspect of peer interactions was reduced, making it more informal, positive effects on academic control diminished and became insignificant. This observation implies that friendly informal relationships alone are not sufficient to experience academic control; it may add to students feeling comfortable among friends in and outside the classroom, but as long as they are not involved in study-related conversations, chances are slim of improving academic control. However, close and friendly relationships with peers are seen as beneficial by as it prevents students from dropping out [12]."

Being a fellow student is a daunting task. It involves not only an active student life (informal social contacts), but also organized introductions to academia (formal social contacts). Simply put, the latter means that students learn to feel at home in the academic world. According to Mohamedhoesein [12], this includes a sense of competence and academic control.

Given that many of the students are non-Western, the question is whether caution is warranted with Western notions of need-based support and academic control. These concepts come from a world of ideas of individualism, autonomy and independence. Whereas the non-Western world of ideas is guided by holism, interdependence, connectedness, and being part of the whole [14]. Furthermore, nieces and cousins are known to be the girlfriends and friends of non-Western immigrants. In short, it is quite different from what Western student life presents to us as a metaphor for informal contacts. What this means for non-Western students at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences is discussed in more detail in the next chapter under the heading "Learning Communities".

Party 3 are Extended family and neighbourhood coaches.

In examining Party 3's efforts in more detail, it draws heavily on Sara Rezai's work [17] on extended family and neighborhood support for college and university students. Separately, this consideration includes Steinmetz's work on an extended family school [18]. Rezai [17] distinguishes three types of support from the extended family and neighborhood (including the street) to the student. These types of support are informational (help with homework, videos, studying for a test, homework, and interviews), emotional (encouragement, showing interest, and conveying family messages), and instrumental (money, a quiet place to study, etc.). Steinmetz [16] points out that educators can be taught collectivist and individual parenting. In short, a translation is made between collective (holistic) learning and individual learning. The emphasis here is on the differences in norms and values between collectivist and individualist cultures.

5.2. The Results of the Research on the Use of Pedagogical Skills in Learning Communities [3]

"Before addressing pedagogical skills, it seems useful to consider whether teachers observe disruptive student behavior in classes, lectures, project work groups and learning communities. Two conclusions can be drawn from the Anova analyses: a) teachers perceive a lot of disruptive student behavior, and b) there is a good number of teachers who do not perceive any of this.

Pedagogical Skills

The eight pedagogical skills all consist of multiple questions. Those questions were processed with Anova (two factor without replication). The results are significant. This applies to the ranking of the pedagogical concepts, from very important to not important. Furthermore, the Anova results show that teachers do not apply pedagogical skills very well, if at all. All results are shown in the following tables (tables 4

and 5). Some questions are shown for each pedagogical skill.

Table 4. Pedagogical skills ranked by importance.

Kind of pedagogical skill	Questionnaires
How often do you use the following approaches to assign final (semester/ term) grades in the grade you teach? ($\bar{X}$ = 3,44; σ = 1,36).	I compare students' performance to that of other students in the course (15 NO = 93,7%). I consider student achievement level in regard to standard criteria, irrespective of performance of other students in the course (13 NO = 81,2%). I consider students' individual improvement in performance since the beginning of the semester/term (11 NO = 68,7%).
How often do you use the followings methods of assessing the students learning? ($\bar{X}$ = 2,81; σ = 0,83).	I collect data from classroom assignments or homework (16 NO = 100%). I have individual students answer questions in front of the class (13 NO = 81,2%). I let students judge their own progress (10 NO = 62,5%).
How often do each of the following activities happen in your classes throughout the school year?" ($\bar{X}$ = 2,63; σ = 1,50).	Students hold a debate and argue for a particular point of view which may not be their own (13 negative = 81,3%; not positive or negative = 1 (6,3%). I give different work to the students that have difficulties learning and/or to those who can advance faster (10 negative = 62,5%; not negative or positive 4 = 25%). Students work in groups based upon their abilities (10 negative (62,5%) and 3 not negative or positive = 18,8%).
Did you have the opportunity of dealing with the following topics during your in- and pre-service training and professional development? ($\bar{X}$ = 2,56; σ = 1,21)	Classroom management (10 negative = 62,5%). Child development (10 negative = 56,3%). Developing social and emotional skills in children (9 negative = 56,3%).
How often does this happen in your lessons? ($\bar{X}$ = 2,50; σ = 1,26).	Students discuss materials from a textbook (14 negative = 87,5%). Students present something to the rest of the class (12 negative = 75%). A whole class discussion takes place in which I participate (6 negative = 37,5%).
In your teaching, to what extent can you do the following? ($\bar{X}$ = 1,94; σ = 1,44).	Motivate students who show low interest in school work (7 negative = 43,8%). Get students to follow classroom rules (7 negative = 43,7%). Control disruptive behavior in the classroom (5 negative = 31,2%).
Were any of the following subjects included in either your teacher education or subsequent professional development? ($\bar{X}$ = 1,63; σ = 1,09).	How to involve parents in the educational process (13 NO = 81,3%). How to deal with difficult students (class obstructions, breaking rules, lack of attention, etc.) (6 NO = 37,5%). How to manage a classroom (4 NO = 25%).
How often do you assign the following activities to your students? ($\bar{X}$ = 0,88; σ = 0,89).	Preparing and giving a talk/presentation together (8 negative = 50%). Conducting a longer project (over several weeks) in teams such as writing a document, inventing something, etc. (5 negative = 31,3%). Doing some short task (10 minutes to 2 hours) in teams such as exercises or problems (1 negative = 6,3%).

Table 5. Teachers ranked according to their negative contribution to belonging by first-year Windesheim Social Work students.

Teacher No.	Average (NO)	Standaard deviation (NO)
No. 06	3,25	1,04
No. 05	3,25	1,49
No. 13	3,00	1,20
No. 09	3,00	1,51
No. 12	2,88	1,64
No. 10	2,75	1,49
No. 15	2,38	0,47
No. 08	2,25	1,28
No. 04	2,25	1,67
No. 07	2,13	1,46
No. 11	2,13	1,55
No. 16	1,88	0,83
No. 03	1,88	1,55
No. 02	1,75	0,71
No. 14	1,25	1,04
No. 01	0,75	0,89

Table 4 shows that Social Work Windesheim still needs to make considerable efforts to make the learning communities function well. This applies to top-down work in a learning community (e.g., by making teachers' interventions align with students' curricula) and also bottom-up (e.g., by encouraging students' natural habitus of talking to each other about the lesson material). Furthermore, Table 5 shows that there are teachers who apply these pedagogical skills and those who do not.

Social-Emotional Wellbeing

The OECD questionnaire also measures teachers' promotion of students' socio-emotional well-being. The key question is: "In which way, if any, have the development of students (social and emotional skills) been promoted in your school?" Answers are yes and no.

According to the two-factor analysis without replication, the questions on social-emotional well-being and teachers' contribution to it can be ranked from 13% NO to 25% NO. In short, according to this OECD questionnaire, "teachers are committed to the social-emotional well-being of their students."

6. Reflections on the Sense of Belonging and on Pedagogical Skills

This section explores in more detail the interventions of all parties that promote the success of social work students at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences Almere. The transfer of knowledge and skills requires a tailored intake of what students already possess. This includes previous education, proficiency in Dutch and English, and fluency in mathematics. But that's not all. All students also have experience of working in groups. Since much of the learning

at Windesheim takes place in groups of students, also called learning communities, it is important to find out what this experience is.

"Characteristics of a Professional Learning Community are: a) Shared Values and Vision, b) Collective Responsibility, c) Reflective Professional inquiry (including Reflexive Dialogue), d) Collaboration (Feelings of interdependence are central to such collaboration: a goal of better teaching practices would be considered unachievable without collaboration, linking collaborative activity and achievement of shared purpose) and d) Group, as well as Individual, learning is promoted (Professional self Renewal is a communal rather than solitary happening) [22]."

In addition, it is important to monitor the student's progress on a regular basis. Monitoring refers to the success of the student, the success of the learning community, and the efforts of the teachers. Success here is linked to cognitive and social-emotional "performance" of students. Our suggestion is to discuss these results every three months in a learning community using the 360-degree feedback method. The expectation is that this discussion will provide concrete tools for the student and his/her learning community with associated teachers.

Table 6. *Creating a sense of belonging in a learning community requires several types of interventions from all parties involved with the student.*

Parties	Types of Interventions
Party 1: Teachers	Teachers learning circles (reflection, learning, planning and action, and return to reflection)
Formal and informal professional contacts	Peer support according to the model master, journeyman and apprentice (Rembrandt van Rijn)
Lectures and online learning	Technical & Pedagogical teaching skills
Learning communities	Sense of Belonging and pedagogical skills
Living Labs and hackathons	Living labs focus on working together to find innovative solutions to complex social issues in a short time frame.
Party 2: Fellow student	Learning circles to become familiar with group dynamics (small groups), learning to learn, informal and formal contacts (learning to socialize).
Informal contacts	Fellow students are the initiators. Exchange norms, values & conventions.
Formal contacts	Student ambassadors and peer support (according to the model of Rembrandt van Rijn). Learning circles: learning to digest a curriculum
Learning communities	Sense of Belonging and pedagogical skills
Living Labs and hackathons	Living labs focus on working together to find innovative solutions to complex social issues (learning to work)
Party 3: Extended Family and neighbourhood coaches	Learning circles with the following purposes: Information about education and school system Optimizing support Regular feedback on the educational and social outcomes of the children

For each party, the interventions are briefly described below. Practical, evidence-based interventions are used as much as possible.
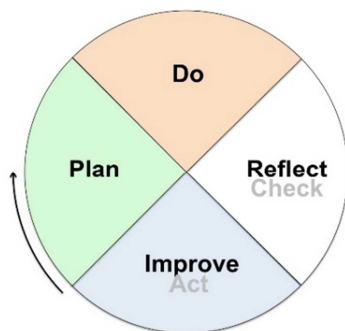
Party 1: Teachers. Learning circles.

Figure 5. *Plan, Do, Reflect, Improve.*

The teacher learning circle can be used to make the transfer of curriculum content more accessible. The use of learning circles utilizes the cycle of plan, do, reflect, and improve. Here is another explanation of exactly what a learning circle is:

"A learning circle is a group of individuals with a common interest who meet regularly to learn from each other and from others about a self-identified topic and in a format that the group has decided upon. Learning Circles are flexible, peer-led learning experiences. Learning circles are based on the idea that every member has something to contribute and that each member has something to learn.

Learning circles are intended to lead to action and change. Learning goals and how to achieve them are agreed upon by the group members. Learning circles meet on a regular basis, but the number of meetings, length, and frequency of meetings are determined by the group.

Learning circles are usually led by a group leader or facilitator. This leader may be or may not be an expert on the topic of the circle. The leader can be someone from inside or outside the circle. The leader's role is to facilitate the discussion, not to determine the set the agenda, or steer the discussion to a predetermined outcome. Outside Experts can be invited to address the group as teachers and students [19]."

Party 1: Teachers. Formal and informal professional contacts. Teachers can learn much from each other. Much can be learned from peer supervision of learning and work situations where an extra pair of eyes provides a fresh perspective. The famous 17th century painter Rembrandt van Rijn worked with a teaching model of 1 Master, 3 Journeyman's, and 3 Apprentices per Journeyman, in short, a team of 13 people who were with each other day and night. The classification of Master, Journeyman, and Apprentice is often a measure of the level of experience (knowledge and skills) of the respective teachers. We would like to use this model in higher education. This model focuses on learning to learn, learning to work, and learning to live.

Party 1: Teachers. Lectures and online learning. Albrahim [18], in his article on online teaching skills and competencies, points out that Internet-based learning (e-learning, virtual, hybrid and online) is often contrasted with "old-fashioned" cognitive learning, without defining old-fashioned. What is clear is that learning via the Internet requires a wealth of technical skills combined with pedagogical skills.

"Faculty members who decide to teach online courses are apt to carry out roles and responsibilities other than merely providing instruction. The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) has developed five sets of standards for learning, teaching and leading in the digital age. The ISTE standards for teachers, which depicts the exemplar teaching with technology. These standards affirm that instructors should (a) facilitate and inspire student learning and creativity, (b) design and develop digital-age learning experiences and assessments, (c) model digital-age work and learning, (d) promote and model digital citizenship and responsibility, and (e) engage in professional growth and leadership.

There are eight categories of online teacher roles in practice [20]: (a) pedagogical, (b) social, (c) evaluative, (d) administrative, (e) technological, (f) personal, (g) advisory, and (h) research. In short, this view holds that instructional designer, course developer, content specialist, tutor, organizer, facilitator, and professional are secondary roles within the pedagogical role [20]."

Party 1: Teachers and Learning Communities. Social Work at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences creates a social environment in which groups of 7-12 students learn. These groups are called learning communities. The dynamics of the group are crucial in a learning community. These dynamics consist of different components such as etiquette and attendance rules, interaction rules (such as talking with a talking stick, Socratic debates, presentations, etc.), learning rules (working in groups, doing assignments together, etc.), and finally evaluating each other through 360-degree feedback models. To realize this dynamic, Social Work Windesheim works with teachers' pedagogical skills.

Earlier in this article, attention was given to pedagogical skills (see 5.2, table 4). The measurement of these pedagogical skills is based on the work of the OECD [21] & [3]. The OECD [21] distinguishes between the observance and enforcement of behavioral rules (such as being present and behaving respectfully in the learning community) and teachers' pedagogical skills (such as students hold a debate and argue for a particular point of view which may not be their own, I give different work to the students that have difficulties learning and/or to those who can advance faster and students work in groups based upon their abilities). The questionnaires designed by the OECD for the (pedagogical) skills teachers use in Learning Communities are based on the work of Professor Dr. Louise Stoll [22] & [23].

Party 1: Teachers and Sense of Belonging. It is useful here to indicate which psychological concepts "sense of belonging" is associated with and why. Our previous study [3] did not take this into account. It focused more on the OECD questionnaire. The foundations of "sense of reward" are anchored in the psychological need for human motivation [24]. A total of 5 theoretical models [24] are distinguished, which could be the "anchors" of the "sense of belonging". Those models are briefly described below.

1) *Identity-Proximity*: Understanding One's Identity Through Proximity With the "Other". The other is our mirror. Only through her/him can we learn. It is through this other that we can experience a sense of belonging and similarity. "Identity proximity" is further the understanding of one's identity through the need to belong, which is fulfilled through connection and relationship with the proximate "other".

2) *Emotion-Sharing* – Reciprocal Connectedness. "It is theorized that the need to belong involves the psychological experience of social connectedness gained through emotional sharing. The sense of belonging develops from childhood to adulthood through camaraderie, attachment, and connectedness. In short, the need to belong is satisfied through shared emotions and mutual connection [24]".

3) *Supportive-Proximity* – Emotional Support From Others. "The appraisal of stressful situations should elicit a sense of belonging (or the need to reach out for emotional support) beyond significant others in order to reappraise the stressor based on the emotional support one receives from those close enough to offer support. The need to belong can thus be understood as a need oriented toward emotional support from proximal others [24]."

4) *Similarity of Self and Others* – Social Identity. "Thus, the need to belong is created through a cognitive process where one's self-worth is dependent on a similarity of *Self* and *Others*' as represented by a group-membership [24]."

5) *Environmental-Satisfaction* – Interactions and Experiences. "Thus, belongingness based on "environmental-satisfaction" is interconnected to how one centers or attaches oneself with the overall satisfaction of an experience within their environment [24]."

In a nutshell, the following narrative presents the 5 psychological theories whose existence is not entirely certain.

"In the 'Breakfast club', the five strangers interacted with each other in detention. At first, they presented themselves to each other socially as someone they hoped the others would find acceptable. However, as detention went along, they received a togetherness, a belongingness where each of the five found themselves to have less of a need to socially self-represent in an idealized way. Rather, they found the courage to express their emotions, to show the others who they really were; as fellow human beings with a burning need for belongingness and to be accepted based on their real self, of who they really are, and not a socially presented self. It is this realization motivating Brian's declaration of the group as the "The Breakfast Club [24]."

Design for Sense of Belonging

It feels cold and chilly when the skills teachers use in

learning communities are nothing more than a translation of group and environmental dynamics. The blood that flows through the "veins" of the learning community feeds the sense of "you belong and we care". The opposite of sense of belonging is sense of otherness. The following powerful developmental text on "sense of belonging" describes both concepts [25].

"Sense of Belonging is being accepted and invited to participate; being part of something and having the opportunity to show up as yourself. More than that, it means being able to raise issues and confront harsh truths as a full member of a community.

A sense of otherness, on the other hand, results from treating people who belong to another group in a different way from those who belong to your own group. In effect, they are then labeled as being inferior to your group. [25]."

Sense of Othering tends to be at its worst in institutional racism, such as ethnic profiling and algorithms that select on the basis of skin color and/or ethnicity. These are often government-sanctioned practices, but sense of othering can also occur "under the table," in other words, less visibly. An example that people of color regularly experience can be characterized with the adage, "if looks could kill". Sense of Othering requires timely signaling in ourselves and others. Not accepting the opinion of another or a group of others is an example of this. Examples are the anti-vaxxers during COVID-19 and whether or not to allow immigrants into Western countries. Sense of Othering occurs everywhere, in the private world, in education, in health care, at work, in neighborhood communities, in politics, and in the media.

Moreover, sense of belonging is layered. These interactive layers are you, your identities, and the groups you belong to. Sense of Belonging should not be generalized. If you belong to a group of students, it does not mean that you see each of them equally often.

Sense of belonging is created by moments of belonging. This is a process-like way of looking at sense of belonging [25]. The stages of the process are: a) invitation (formal or informal, explicit or implicit. "It gives you a hint of what is possible"), b) entering (a gate, threshold, or welcome ritual), c) participating (there are many ways of doing this), d) code switching (nuanced moments of moving between aspects of identity), e) contributing (this can be a Holy Grail. Here the rule is the more you belong the more you contribute, and the more you contribute the more you belong), f) Flowing (feeling the rhythm and dance of the group and your role within it), g) Dissenting (no community moves forward if it doesn't know how to deal with conflict and disagreement), h) Repairing (hurts happen. How you recover from them is a profound indicator of belonging), and I) Diverting and Existing ("what feelings should exist for those who leave and those who stay behind).

Party 1: Teachers and Living Labs/ Hackathons. Experimentation is necessary. There are many reasons for this. One reason may be that the daily schedule of teachers and students is not productive, or that a design, such as a learning community, needs further exploration. Experimentation can

be done through living labs and hackathons.

"They are popping up like mushrooms: 'living labs.' They are often presented as a contemporary initiative in which citizens, knowledge institutions, businesses, and governments can collaborate to find innovative solutions to the complex social issues of our time, such as climate change and social inequality. The promise of Living Labs is therefore ambitious [26]."

"Formulating a good goal and challenge to work on is critical to the success of the hackathon. It creates enthusiastic participants who make sure during the hackathon that they come up with solutions that really benefit you. It often helps to reward them with a follow-up track or a nice prize at the end of the hackathon[4]. This stimulates intrinsic motivation and allows you to bring out the best in the contestants."

Party 2: Fellow student. Learning circles and small group dynamics and learning to socialize (informal and formal).

Figure 6. *Learning Circle of students.*

At Windesheim University of Applied Sciences (Social Work), we want to use learning circles with students to learn more about small group dynamics and socializing in groups.

Group dynamics. "Teachers and students experience it every day in learning communities: the atmosphere in the group is important. The "chemistry" between students and their interactions with teachers determines the atmosphere and, in turn, student well-being, learning, and achievement. One group works, another does not. There are groups where there is laughter, cooperation, and learning. There are also groups where there is unrest, bullying, and little learning. What makes the group work or not? Something about group dynamics is often the answer, without being able to put our finger on it.

Learning Circles shape more than just the classroom — they shape the whole student experience. Just as the image of a circle evokes inclusion, the Learning Circle model emphasizes that learning is for everyone. 'Peer 2 Peer' University (P2PU), a not-for-profit organization, pioneered Learning Circles in the U.S. and internationally with the intention creating and sustaining learning communities in public spaces around the world[5]."

In learning circles of students there are only peers. It is

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4 https://hackathonopmaat.nl/hackathon-betekenis/
5
https://www.onderwijskennis.nl/kennisbank/de-roep-van-de-groep-groepsdynamiek-welbevinden-en-leren

known that students learn a lot from each other. They also learn from each other how to socialize in society. Socialization is according to Wikipedia[6]: "The compelling process by which a person is taught, consciously and unconsciously, the values, norms, and other cultural characteristics of his or her group through internalization."

"Steven Kolber [27] said that Biesta [28] notes three primary purposes of education: qualification, socialisation and subjectification. Qualification represents the 'rite of passage' of completing schooling and receiving a socially acceptable form of knowledge and an ability to 'do something' in a codified manner. Socialisation is preparing students to be a part of the world, as social beings, part of the fully social tapestry of our society. Subjectification is the manner that students can exist as a subject, and secure freedom within those boundaries."

Students use both informal and formal contacts in the learning process. Formal contacts mainly refer to activities that take place in the context of studying, while informal contacts are friendships, catching up and doing something fun together. Informal contacts help to strengthen relationships between students.

Students can also use the Rembrandt van Rijn model: 1 master, 3 journeymen, and three apprentices per journeyman. This works when older students, such as bachelor's students, are used as masters and second and third year students are used as journeymen to coach and support first year students (apprentices). The areas of coaching and mentoring are: learning to learn, learning to work, and learning to live.

Party 2: Fellow-students, learning communities, sense of belonging and pedagogical skills, living labs and hackathons. It was emphasized earlier in this article that in learning, the fellow student is indispensable. It is precisely through the fellow student that learning is grounded. With that fellow student, the student can discuss the meaning of the subject matter, discuss the how and why of an assignment, and practice reflection. Reflection involves various skills, such as noticing that fellow students have different opinions and views, and that differences of opinion come with different emotions. These differences but also similarities teach students there is not one way to Rome but several.

Students in Windesheim, Social Work, Almere learn in learning communities. These are groups of 7-12 students. The composition of the groups should be considered, especially for first year students. Options are: a) a representative reflection of all students, and b) a division according to previous education (advantage is that then whole groups can get extra language and math lessons), etc.

Learning communities (living labs and hackathons) are supported in part by the principles of sense of belonging [26] and the pedagogical skills associated with a learning community. Regarding sense of belonging, it has been suggested earlier in this text that it involves a number of process steps, such as inviting, entering (space and entrance), code switching, participating and contributing, flowing,

dissenting and repairing, and diverging/exiting.

But that's not all. Sense of Belonging [25] should also pay attention to the space itself (colors, shape, etc.), the roles of all members of the learning community, the type of events (breakfast, lunch, and dinner meetings), rituals (starting the group, the group's first successes, etc.), the type of clothing (this can be used to show what the group stands for), ways of communicating (e.g., Parking issues for problem sessions), and schedules and rhythms (many of the rhythms we know are a reflection of the organization and not our biorhythms as humans).

Earlier in the teacher section, we discussed interventions called pedagogical skills. These pedagogical skills are a human elaboration of what is also called group dynamics. It starts with celebrating the beginning of the group. The first successful joint projects can also be celebrated, etc. Secondly, the social rules that make the group function well, such as attendance, treating each other with respect, not criticizing each other, and not taking up all the time. Finally, it includes all the interventions through which what is learned is put into practice, such as debates, socratic conversations, and doing assignments. Our proposal is that students learn what pedagogical skills they are entitled to.

Party 3: Extended Family and neighbourhood coaches. Educators from different extended families [30] can be brought together in learning circles with the following goals: a) Providing information about education and school system (not all educators understand exactly how a University of Applied Sciences works. What does a University of Applied Sciences do and what doesn't? For example, a University of Applied Sciences teaches but does not nurture the student), b) Optimizing support (this is much needed because students rarely inform their educators about their academic progress and social-emotional development. This denies them the support of their extended family), en c) Organize regular feedback on students' educational and social outcomes (this is especially true if the feedback meeting is attended by both educators and students. This increases the likelihood of a higher return on investment because multiple viewpoints are addressed). These learning circles are best organized according to the composition of the differences groups in the learning communities so that educators can also support each other.

Consideration could also be given to having educators bring their own children to learning community meetings. For example, if a student is a family caregiver for his or her mother, perhaps other educators could offer their services to relieve the student. Also, through this learning circle, it may be easier to arrange support with other educators from the many extended families. Support is provided in (practical) coursework and in the social-emotional development of the student.

7. Discussion

Educators Believe Education Helps Kids Get Ahead [30]. These educators expect that if their children go to school, they

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6 https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socialisatie_(sociale_wetenschappen)

will be happy, get a job, earn a decent income, and stay healthy. Until property and wealth inequality for all people on earth approaches zero, nothing will come of these expectations of success for their children. Property, according to Piketty [31], is the ownership of land, houses, businesses, people, and services and goods produced by people. This property is passed down from generation to generation and is also known as proprietary ownership. This property inequality is also used to explain opportunity-inequality in education, the labor market, society and neighborhood.

However, this article focuses on another mechanism that is responsible for opportunity-inequality. This mechanism is a lack of belonging and lack of pedagogical skills that teachers use in learning communities. The "victims" of this are students who come from recent or older immigrant populations. The explanation is that they are not familiar with Dutch cultural norms, values and customs. There is a stalemate. The teachers are white and the students are of color. As a result, these teachers lack the natural knowledge and skills associated with educational and social-emotional interventions for non-Western students. Interventions that make them belong to the learning community and make them cognitively, socially, and emotionally successful.

Chapter 6 of this article discusses all of the possible interventions that can positively influence the cognitive and social-emotional success of students in higher education. This chapter does not distinguish between Western and non-Western interventions [2]. Perhaps the Design for Belonging movement [25] is a good exception to the rule. After all, this movement comes from the United States, where the sense of othering plays a striking role in the tendency to see Afro-Americans as inferior to white Americans (mostly of European origin).

The question now is: are there general principles that should be considered when designing non-Western learning interventions in learning institutions in Western countries? Once this is known, it may be possible for Western teachers to bridge the gap between non-Western and Western interventions. After all, the client of many Universities of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands is originally a non-Western student.

To address this problem, we can use Google[7] to pose the following questions: a) How does collectivism affect group performance, b) What is collectivism in-group?, and c) What is Institutional Collectivism? These questions are answered as follows.

"In the workplace, collectivist cultures focus on the good of the team and the company over those of the individual. In such a setting, everyone's looking out for each other's best interest. The values of acceptance, sense of belonging and being a team player are deemed advantageous when working in a collectivist culture."

"In-Group Collectivism[8]: The degree to which individuals express (and should express) pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families."

"Performance Orientation[9]: The degree to which a collective encourages and rewards (and should encourage and reward) group members for performance improvement and excellence."

"Institutional Collectivism: The degree to which organizational and societal institutional practices encourage and reward (and should encourage and reward) collective distribution of resources and collective action."

From the above, it can be seen that the differences between Western and non-Western learning interventions are subject to clear criteria. These criteria allow a Western intervention to be transformed into a non-Western one and vice versa. It is assumed that the goal of the intervention does not change.

Figure 7. *Traits of Collectivistic Culture[10].*

8. Conclusions

This article is dedicated to the interventions that are necessary to give students a sense of belonging to the University of Applied Sciences, to social work and to the learning community. The goal is to increase cognitive and social-emotional student success. Several parties work on this sense of belonging. These are the teachers, fellow students, and extended family. Separately, the managers of the Windesheim University of Applied Sciences must create a climate for the teachers that gives them a sense of belonging and that the managers care about them. This care should be understood as both material and immaterial.

This article is based on three previous research articles at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences, Social Work, Almere in the Netherlands. The first article dealt with the theoretical underpinnings of the following two quantitative and partly qualitative surveys of social work students and teachers. These studies used the OECD questionnaires [11, 12], & [13] on students' sense of belonging and teachers' pedagogical skills to make students' learning communities a cognitive and social-emotional success.

COVID-19

These surveys of students and teachers at the Windesheim

7
https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-d&q=group+dynamics+and+coll ectivism
8 https://globeproject.com/study_2004_2007

9 https://globeproject.com/study_2004_2007
10 https://ap.lc/2L17h

University of Applied Sciences, Social Work, were conducted after COVID-19 and its lockdowns, from which education suffered greatly. This suffering was represented by the GGD questionnaire [32], & [33]. The results for COVID-19 are below. It is not often that one can see the impact of such a powerful pandemic on student's sense of belonging and student and teacher well-being.

"Many freshman social work, Windesheim students [2] personally experienced COVID-19 (91.7%). 45.8% of students have had COVID-19 themselves and 75% have been quarantined. The effect of COVID-19 on well-being, belonging versus being alone is greater for male than for female students" "Many teachers have been affected by COVID-19. This ranges from having been quarantined themselves (76%) to having had COVID-19 themselves (71%).

Furthermore, COVID-19 has had a substantial impact on social contacts and free time of teachers [3]. Missing company and feeling alone are striking indicators of this. In addition, COVID-19 has had quite an impact on teachers' general well-being. Noteworthy is the finding that COVID-19 has negatively affected school performance (59%) [3]."

Sense of Belonging

Separately, research was conducted on the sense of belonging among students at the Windesheim University of Applied Sciences, Social Work. An OECD comment is appropriate here ([11] & [12]). Empirical results from the OECD show that there is a ranking among students from high to low sense of belonging. The sense of belonging is high among native-born students, followed by bicultural students, then second-generation immigrants, and finally low among first-generation immigrants. According to the OECD, these are average differences of 11-13 percent. These are significant differences.

Apart from the above, our survey of first-year Windesheim Social Work students shows that a significant number of students do not feel they belong to Windesheim University of Applied Sciences and the learning community. This sense of not belonging is somewhat compensated for by the educators of these students. Despite this compensation, we suspect that many students drop out in their first year because of the lack of a sense of belonging.

Pedagogical skills and Learning Communities

Now that it is known that there is a lack of sense of belonging among first year social work students at the Windesheim University of Applied Sciences, it was also investigated what social work teachers were doing to promote a sense of belonging. For this purpose, the English version of the OECD questionnaire [3] was used, which measures the pedagogical skills of the teachers, which they use in the learning communities and in other teaching activities such as lectures, etc.

There are a number of findings from this research. First, a large number of teachers fail to detect violations of behavioral rules, such as attendance, unauthorized absences, moderate engagement in learning communities, etc. Second, student learning communities need more and better use of teachers'

pedagogical skills. This would promote student success (cognitive and social-emotional).

Interventions

The acquisition of new knowledge and skills requires an approach that takes into account all parties involved in the student's learning process as well as the learning context. By the way, interventions are not only related to the content of learning. A holistic view of learning promotes the cognitive and social-emotional growth of the student. This holistic view distinguishes several parties who are individually and collectively responsible for a student's learning process. These parties are the teacher, peers, and family members.

A corollary of this holistic view is that there should be a move away from the curriculum itself, which is Eurocentric and assumes that the student is addressed on the basis of her or his individual abilities. As if a student can learn and practice on his own. This usually requires a community. It is in this community that learning, and later working and living, takes place.

Encouraging student learning

The following two figures briefly outline how student learning occurs in a processual/social-psychological manner. The focus here is on the social-psychological and cognitive performance of the student.
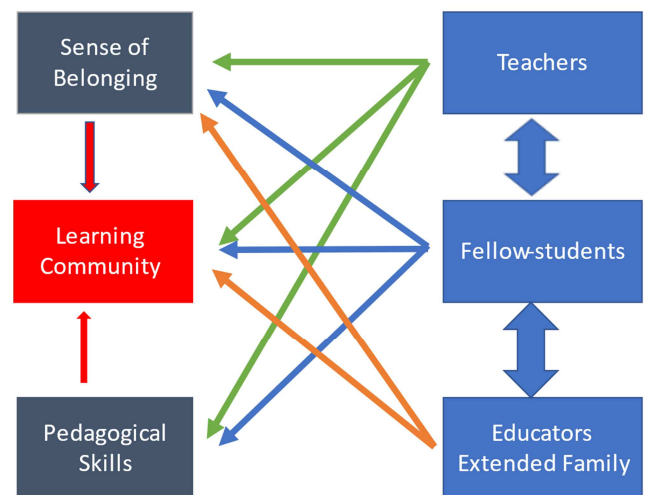

Figure 8. Interventions and Parties.

Our own research, presented earlier, deals primarily with teacher interventions. These types of interventions are the sense of belonging and pedagogical skills that teachers use in student learning communities. The chapter on peer and extended family educator interventions elaborates on these. We also looked for interventions that are effective and useful but were not included in our study. In addition, we found that a book called Design for Belonging [25] has since been published that elaborates a non-Eurocentric view of sense of belonging. The following figure schematically outlines this new development.

The figure above depicts the three parties (teachers, fellow students and educators of the extended family) responsible for promoting a sense of belonging and pedagogical skills in

Learning communities. The following figure lists the actions that can be taken by each of the parties involved.

Types of Interventions
Learning circles & plan, do, act and reflect cycle
Informal and Formal contacts (peer support and Rembrandt van Rijn model)
Lectures and Online Learning (Technical and Pedagogical Skills)
Leaning Communities (sense of belonging and pedagogical skills)
Living Labs & Hackathons (focus on innovation in a short time)

Figure 9. *Types of Intervention.*

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