“CHANGE IT UP, CHANGE THE SYSTEM!”

Exploring career development learning and social justice through action research

Student march for free tuition 2, Trafalgar Square, London, UK by Cory Doctorow, licensed under CC BY 2.0
RATIONALE

Social justice and careers: Plenty of theory but a dearth of practical examples.


• Prominent examples in HE suggest a progressive approach (Watts, Law, Killeen, Kidd and Hawthorn 1996) is the dominant strategy.

• Student engagement – what about the non-careerists? (Tomlinson 2007, also Law 2009) Gen Z?
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How can I design a career development learning intervention informed by perspectives on social justice?

2. What can I learn about my practice from delivering a career development learning intervention informed by perspectives on social justice?

3. Reflecting on my responses to these two questions, what are the implications for practice?
STRATEGY

- A critical pedagogy of work education (Simon et al., 1991)
- Socio-Political Ideologies in Guidance (Watts et al., 1996/2016)
- Career Guidance in Communities: A Model for Reflexive Practice (Thomsen, 2017)
- Hooley’s framework for emancipatory career education (2015)
- Mignot’s conceptual framework for anti-oppressive practice (2001)

2-hour workshop
Key themes identified included:

• Diversity – the importance of relatable role models;
• Lack of information and tools as a barrier to action;
• Negative perceptions of employer attitudes;
• Focus on individual responsibility to take action;
• Interest in acting for the ‘greater good’.

“Oh, ok... where’s all the females? Aren’t I supposed to be inspired to be like you, but... there’s no-one like me there”

“We’re just given the resources to go into the world how it is, we’re not given the resources to change it...change it up, change the system!! – I think that’s really important!”
Title: I want to make a difference! Social justice and your career

Aim: To increase understanding of social justice as it relates to career, and inspire action to promote it.

Learning outcomes:
1. Interpret two contrasting narratives about the labour market;
2. Discuss the potential impact of these narratives on themselves and others;
3. Apply strategies of individual or social change to a labour market problem;
4. Compare the strengths and weaknesses of these strategies;
5. Propose actions they can take to promote social justice through their career.
The Gig economy is women

Talk to Deliveroo couriers.
EVALUATION: STRENGTHS

• Collaborative design: Engaging and relevant

It’s very interactive, enabled me to hear other people’s views.

I loved the session.

I enjoyed the debate on individual vs. societal changes.

The session was engaging and the debate was a great strategy to promote participation from the students. It encouraged creative and critical thinking.

It was really good to have the time to talk things over in groups.
EVALUATION: STRENGTHS

- Achievement of aims and outcomes through collaborative learning

- Look into HeForShe and Lean In. Have a discussion with my friends, (especially male friends) about social justice and gender equality.

- Find out the gender pay gap in the property industry. Watch TED talk

- What local pressure groups are available in promoting socio-economic justice (e.g. pro-investment, anti-austerity?)
EVALUATION: CHALLENGES

• Harnessing the affective dimension of learning

• Classroom as ‘a site for the interrogating of competing claims to truth’ (Simon et al. 1991)
FURTHER APPLICATIONS

Working within pre-existing communities

Curriculum input (KS3/4?)

Beyond formal education
For a copy of the workshop materials, email: a.h.delauzun@reading.ac.uk
REFERENCE LIST


REFERENCE LIST CONT’D


