

Experiences Using Autoethnography as a Methodology for Research in Education

Authors : Sarah Amodeo

Abstract : Drawing on the author's research about the experiences of female immigrant students in academic Adult Education, in Montreal, Quebec, this paper deconstructs the benefits of autoethnography as a methodology for educators in Adult Education. Autoethnography is an advantageous methodology for teachers in Adult Education as it allows for deep engagement, allowing for educators to reflect on student experiences and their day-to-day realities, and in turn, allowing for professional development, improved andragogy, and changes to classroom practices. Autoethnography is a qualitative research methodology that cultivates strategies for improving adult learning. The paper begins by outlining the context that inspired autoethnography for the author's work, highlighting the emergence of autoethnography as a method, while examining how it is evolving and drawing on foundational work that continues to inspire research. The basic autoethnographic methodologies that are explored in this paper include the use of memory work in episode formation, the use of personal photographs, and textual readings of artworks. Memory work allows for the researcher to use their professional experience and the lived/shared experiences of their students in their research, drawing on episodes from their past. Personal photographs and descriptions of artwork allow researchers to explore images of learning environments/realities in ways that compliment student experiences. Major findings of the text are examined through the analysis of categories of autoethnography. Specific categories include realism, impressionism, and conceptualism which aid in orientating the analysis and emergent themes that develop through self-study. Finally, the text presents a discussion surrounding the limitations of autoethnography, with attention to the trustworthiness and ethical issues. The paper concludes with a consideration of the implications of autoethnography for adult educators in juxtaposition with youth sector work.

Keywords : artwork, autoethnography, conceptualism, episode formation, impressionism, memory work, personal photographs, and realism, realism

Conference Title : ICAEPAL 2022 : International Conference on Adult Education Practice and Adult Learning

Conference Location : Montreal, Canada

Conference Dates : June 16-17, 2022