



Dr Rachel  
Maunder  
The University of  
Northampton

Constructing  
partnerships: is the  
'how' more  
important than the  
'what'?



- Background context: The URB@N scheme
- Interpretations of partnership
- Models of partnerships in practice
- Implications

# Overview



# The URB@N scheme

Undergraduate Research Bursaries at Northampton

Institutional: academic faculties and professional services

Pedagogic research

Projects:

Related to learning and teaching

Student involvement in research (research-based)

Student voice

Potential to enhance the student experience

Application from staff, recruitment of student

Staff-student partnership

10-15 projects per year

Launch event and dissemination event

<https://www.northampton.ac.uk/ilt/research-and-funding/urnb/>

<https://sites.google.com/site/urbanscheme/home>



# Incidental observations

- Varied experiences (staff and students)
- People do it differently
- Some work, some don't
- Expectations
- What partnership means



## Consent: The Game



A study into using gamification as a strategy for teaching university students about sexual consent.

Project by: Dobrzynska, K., Jones, E., Hill, K.M., Cartwright, N.



**Introduction**  
**Rationale**  
Sexual harassment and assault is widespread and university campuses are significant sites for preventative action<sup>1</sup>. There is also a strong need for research on young people's perceptions of consent.  
One means to increase awareness and reduce perpetration and awareness about sexual consent. While there has been some work in this area, there remains a paucity of research surrounding student's understanding of consent<sup>2,3</sup> and relevant processes and procedures within Higher Education<sup>4</sup>.  
We used gamification to encourage discussion around sexual consent and related issues. For Consent: The Game, students constructed cards outlining educational consent-related scenarios. Cards focused on having discussions around consent, healthy relationships and exploring the boundaries of where appropriate behaviour and criminality lie.  
This project aimed to understand game developer and player's understanding of consent before, during and after the development and playing.

**Method**  
**Participants**  
Five game developers (5 female and 1 male) were Law students recruited from The University of Northampton. Game players took part in a game development workshop, followed by a focus group on their experiences of developing the game.  
Five game players (2 male and 3 females) were recruited from the general student population from The University of Northampton. Game players were involved in a game playing session, followed by a focus group on their experiences of playing Consent: The Game.  
**Analysis**  
The game development workshop, game playing sessions and both the game developer and game player focus groups were recorded, transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis.  
The project received ethical approval from the Faculty of Law Ethics Committee.

**Discussion**  
**Conclusion via using 'Consent'**  
The Game was found to be effective in teaching the both the game developer and game players about sexual consent and related topics regarding sexual health, and starting a discussion about them.  
Game developers found the opportunity to develop this card game with the aid of a knowledgeable instructor extremely useful for improving their own knowledge on the topic area. Importantly, having student facilitators to openly discuss their own attitudes and perceptions in the area, as well as what they thought would be important to share with others.  
Game players found the game novel and enjoyed playing the game. All players felt that 'Consent: The Game' was a flexible approach to teaching a wide range of audiences about issues like this which are often stigmatised.  
Implications and challenges included recruitment difficulties, particularly for male game developers and players. While using peer groups to deconstruct the game is important, it is also important to have a knowledgeable facilitator to guide discussions.

Table 1: Main and Sub-Themes from the Thematic Analysis with Supporting Quotes

Theme 1: Educational awareness	Theme 2: Impact of the game	Theme 3: Health consequences and outcomes	Theme 4: Social attitudes
<b>1a. Knowledge of the consequences of non-consensual acts</b> "I believe we consent... unless you have been forced through an official consent that needs to be signed." "I know the consequences of the non-consensual acts." "I know that the game is really interesting and it would be a very useful if it was used in a class." "I think the game is really interesting and it would be a very useful if it was used in a class." "I think the game is really interesting and it would be a very useful if it was used in a class."	<b>2a. Impact of the game</b> "It's a game, it's open to interpretation." "It's a game, it's open to interpretation." "It's a game, it's open to interpretation." "It's a game, it's open to interpretation." "It's a game, it's open to interpretation."	<b>3a. Paranoia and advice</b> "It's a game of the mind, it's not about the physical, it's about the mind, it's about the mind, it's about the mind, it's about the mind." "It's a game of the mind, it's not about the physical, it's about the mind, it's about the mind, it's about the mind." "It's a game of the mind, it's not about the physical, it's about the mind, it's about the mind, it's about the mind."	<b>4a. Stereotypes and inclusion</b> "It's a game of the mind, it's not about the physical, it's about the mind, it's about the mind, it's about the mind." "It's a game of the mind, it's not about the physical, it's about the mind, it's about the mind, it's about the mind." "It's a game of the mind, it's not about the physical, it's about the mind, it's about the mind, it's about the mind."

**Next steps**  
Report write up and dissemination of research  
**Glossary**  
**Qualification:** applying game playing strategies to teaching  
**Thematic analysis:** Analysing themes and patterns in qualitative data.  
**References**  
1. Dobrzynska, K., Jones, E., Hill, K.M., Cartwright, N. (2020) Consent: The Game. Report available for teaching and learning purposes from the University of Northampton.  
2. Coates, M., Hill, K.M., Prosser, C., Smith, B., Gallagher, A., and Cartwright, N. (2020) Consent: The Game. Report available for teaching and learning purposes from the University of Northampton.  
3. Hill, K.M., Coates, M., Prosser, C., Smith, B., Gallagher, A., and Cartwright, N. (2020) Consent: The Game. Report available for teaching and learning purposes from the University of Northampton.  
4. National Centre for Higher Education Research and Quality Improvement (2018) Higher Education Research and Quality Improvement (HERQI) Report of the HERQI Panel on the Quality of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education. Available at: <https://www.herqi.org.uk/>

# Interpretations of partnership



- What does partnership mean to you?
- What words/characteristics should reflect a staff-student partnership?

# Empirical study



Qualitative investigation: focus group and semi-structured interviews



Current and former URB@N participants



N = 21 (12 staff, 9 students)



Research assistant

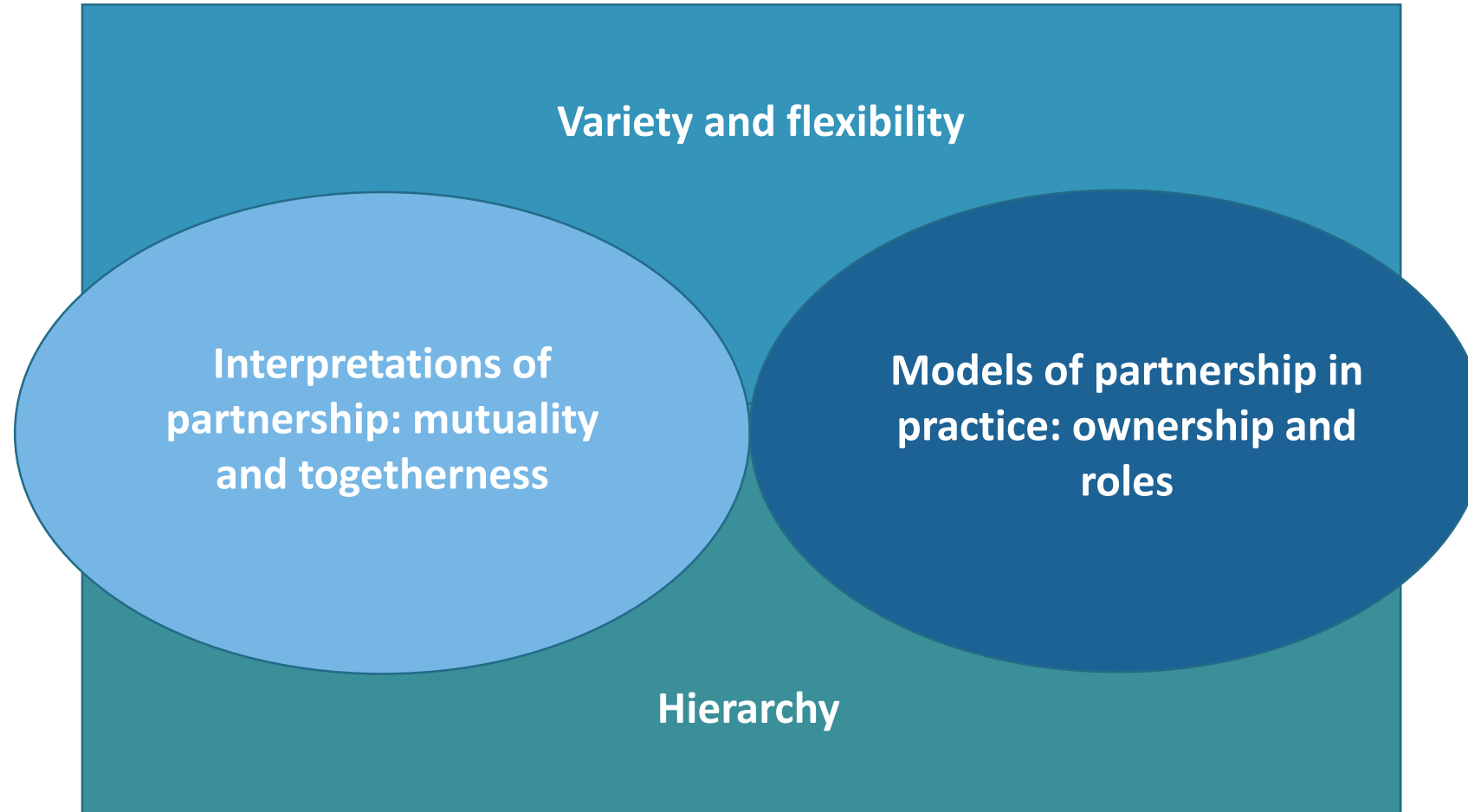


How do staff and students working on pedagogic research projects interpret the meaning of working in partnership?



How does partnership working between staff and students manifest in practice?

# Identified themes





# Examples of different models



The  
Dissertation  
student  
approach



The Research  
Team  
approach



The Research  
Assistant  
approach





# Examples of different models



The  
Dissertation  
student  
approach



The Research  
Team  
approach



The Research  
Assistant  
approach



## Discussion activity

What might these models look like in practice? (How might they work/function?)

What roles might staff and students have in each model?

How can the core features of partnership working be embedded within each model?

What are the benefits and risks/challenges of each approach?

# Implications



- Dialogue about partnership working from the outset: negotiated agreement of core principles?
- Acknowledging different approaches: framework for practice?
- Hierarchy: does this *prevent* partnership working?

WHAT does partnership mean to us?  
WHAT are the core features that we want to prioritise in our collaboration?

HOW can we work together in a way that reflects our core features of partnership?

Can't we just be the  
'how' more  
important than the  
'what'?