

A Reflective Exploration of Student-Staff Partnerships for Technology Enhanced Learning in Higher Education

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Abstract

Collaboration between students and staff has increasingly gained recognition as a powerful avenue for enhancing the overall learning experience in Higher Education. Student-staff partnership projects offer a unique opportunity for students to actively engage with their programme of studies, influencing decision-making processes and contributing to the improvement of the learning environment. This reflective practice piece delves into the lived experiences of four students who embraced student-staff partnership in unique ways, each contributing their perspectives and invaluable insights to projects they were involved in. To emphasise the importance of reflecting on these real-life experiences and recognising their immense value for students, staff, and the institution as a whole, we employed a critical narrative inquiry approach. This method, used alongside vignettes, helped us delve into the nuances and dynamics of student-staff partnerships. It allowed us to unravel the complexities and capture the transformative impact of these collaborations on students. By examining the challenges and triumphs faced by these four student partners, we gain insights into the multifaceted nature of student-staff partnerships, their potential for growth, and the resulting impact on the higher education landscape.

Introduction

Healey et al.'s (2014) proposed model of student engagement through partnership identified four ways of engaging students as partners through partnership learning communities: curriculum consultation, assessment projects, subject-based research and SoTL (the Scholarship of teaching and learning) (Acai et al., 2017). Partnership with students has also been identified as one of the five principles of shared good practice in SoTL by Felten (2013). Working in reciprocal relationships with faculty and staff (Acai et al, 2017). by engaging students as co-creators, co-producers and co-designers can be traced back to 'The flexible curriculum' model proposed by John Dewey (1963) who argued that the design of the curriculum must be flexible and

determined by the learners based on the perception of their own interest to promote educational growth and discovery learning. Using a narrative inquiry approach, the experience of four students who have engaged as partners in four different technology enhanced learning projects, have been critically explored in this reflective piece.

Throughout their respective journeys, these students encountered a diverse range of challenges, some anticipated and others unexpected. From navigating power dynamics and institutional hierarchies to balancing academic commitments and project responsibilities, they faced obstacles that tested their resilience and determination. Yet, amidst these trials, they also experienced moments of triumph where their collective efforts led to tangible improvements and positive change within the projects they contributed to. These victories, however small or large, not only fostered personal growth but also reinforced the importance of student agency and active participation in shaping their own learning experience. Their lived experiences offer a unique lens through which we can understand the complexities, nuances, and intricacies of student-staff partnerships, revealing the true potential of inclusive and participatory teaching and learning.

Background and context

Student-staff partnership (SSP) goes beyond involving students as passive recipients of education and instead positions them as active contributors across various aspects of university life. SSP promotes equal participation, recognising that students can contribute in different ways to both formal and informal aspects of the curriculum. It advocates for a shift from simply listening to the "student voice" to engaging students in decision-making processes (Cook-Sather, Bovill, & Felten, 2014, p. 6; Healey et al., 2016). SSP challenges traditional pedagogical hierarchies and redefines the roles of teachers and learners offering an alternative social imagery to the neoliberal framework prevalent in higher education. It rejects the notion of students as mere consumers and instead positions them as co-producers of knowledge (Green, 2017a). By disrupting power dynamics and traditional hierarchies, SSP has the potential to transform individuals, disciplines, and institutions. In practical implementation, SSP approaches have yielded advantages such as increased motivation, improved communication between students and staff, enhanced creativity, learning, employability outcomes, and revitalised teaching methods (Cook-Sather et al., 2014; Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2017). However, it is important to note that the SSP literature often tends to focus on positive outcomes while neglecting to address power inequalities and the broader educational policies and practices that shape the higher education landscape. The research projects (as described below by the student co-authors) were driven by the transformative potential of SSP, specifically in the context of technology-enhanced learning. It aimed to explore how students and staff navigate challenges related to equity, inclusion, power, and knowledge within the realm of technology-enhanced learning initiatives.

By critically examining the realities of SSP in the face of macro educational policies and practices, this project sought to contribute to a deeper theoretical understanding of SSP and its implications for technology-enhanced learning. It recognised the emancipatory potential of SSP while acknowledging the complexities and contradictions within higher education. This reflective piece delves into the reflections of four undergraduate students who have participated in distinct SSP projects, all centred around the common theme of technology-enhanced learning (Nahar & Cross, 2020). These projects represent diverse approaches to integrating technology into educational settings, spanning areas such as digital literacy skills development, chatbots for student engagement and learning experience (Fryer et al, 2019), co-created games-based interactive learning platforms (Adipat et al., 2021), and artificial intelligence systems co-evaluation for assessments (Guy, 2023). The role and responsibilities of each student in the partnership projects undertaken, have been captured below in their own words to provide some context into the nature of their involvements:

Adeeba (Research intern- Development of Digital Intelligence Capabilities framework for first year students):

'I was a student and a research assistant in this project. I had joined the project after most of the literature review had been completed already. I had to do some additional reading and asked many questions so we could build on their previous contributions. I was curious about the topic of the project and also felt a sense of responsibility. My responsibilities were to collaboratively construct a framework useful to students, help co-develop and co-deliver intervention, gain insight from peer feedback and complete other research related tasks. Another contribution was to present it together at conferences. This added onto the implications of the project helping me understand the implications of the findings to bring about another perspective to the project and continue with ongoing progress of the project'.

Kausar (Research intern -Games-based interactive learning platform development):

'My role in this project was both of a researcher and designer. I undertook some research on the benefits of Games-Based Learning (GBL) and how effective it is. When undertaking this project work, I was also studying as a trainee teacher. To test Ed Owl for its effectiveness to support blended learning, I decided to design some GBL learning activities to formatively assess students on an English language learning module as part of my programme, and get written feedback from these students about their experience of using Ed Owl for GBL. Working on this project gave me an opportunity to align my coursework research requirements from my trainee teacher programme with the requirements of this project which was an enjoyable experience. I used the feedback I gathered, to analyse and write a report on the findings and recommend improvements to the application based on user experience of using Ed Owl for GBL'.

Thomas (Research intern -Chatbot for teaching and learning; Developer- Games-based interactive learning platform development):

'I participated in two projects with Nurun, namely Ask Ada and Ed Owl. Ask Ada was a machine learning chatbot designed to assist students with out-of-hours and remote inquiries about their courses and curriculum. Ed Owl was a web-application learning platform that incorporated games-based learning to enhance student engagement. In Ask Ada, my responsibilities primarily involved academic research, reviewing literature, conducting focus groups with study participants, creating UML (Unified Modelling Language) diagrams for the primary developer, presenting at international conferences, and developing promotional material.

'In Ed Owl, I served as the primary developer for the system, utilising technologies such as Java Spring, ReactJS, Nginx, MySQL, Linux, and virtualization. Additionally, I developed UML diagrams, conducted academic research, produced literature, interviewed study participants, presented at international conferences, ensured system uptime and bug fixes, created documentation for system development and third-party adoption, coordinated advertising efforts, assisted with project management, and produced promotional material'.

Victoria (Student advisor, Evaluation of an AI tool for coursework preparation):

'I was involved in the First Pass project in a few different ways. Firstly, I was involved in co-curating and evaluating information for data-entry into First Pass text-labelling system so this was readily available in a test and learn environment. The second part was implementing the system within a module where this digital tool was piloted, supporting and encouraging students to use the AI system to assist with their assignment preparation and test if the AI system was able to match students' uploaded responses to tasks within the existing database of information on the system to determine if learning outcomes have been met. Once the project was completed, I also contributed to reviewing existing literature to scope out the context of this project and related outcomes.'

Rationale and methodology

By focusing on the experiences of the students involved, this paper aims to provide a deeper understanding of the impact and implications of student-staff partnership projects from a student perspective within the context of technology-enhanced learning. Adopting a critical narrative inquiry approach (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000) is crucial in this exploration, as it connects Dewey's experiential learning with traditional narrative which places emphasis on being engaged in the real life to undergo experience (Ni & Wu, 2023) thus enabling an in-depth examination of the students' reflections, allowing for the uncovering of unique perspectives, challenges, and transformative moments. Such an approach recognises the value of personal

narratives as valuable sources of insight, highlighting the importance of student voices in shaping and improving educational practices. Narratives can best capture the subtleties of human experience (Webster & Mertova, 2007). Because learning occurs within a narrative continuum, incorporating an individual's past knowledge, current experiences, and future prospects, the complexity and individuality of this process can only be effectively conveyed through narratives (Connelly & Xu, 2008). Additionally, employing a critical lens helps to identify potential power dynamics, underlying assumptions, and broader socio-cultural implications that may influence student-staff partnership initiatives (Nerantzi et al., 2023). By adopting a critical narrative inquiry approach, this paper seeks to contribute to the broader discourse on student-staff partnerships, fostering a more nuanced and inclusive understanding of the experiences, benefits, and challenges encountered in engaging students as partners in technology enhanced learning.

Data Collection and Analysis

The student co-authors in this paper have been invited to respond to a set of open-ended questions adapted from Cross et al.'s (2022) reflective essay in a similar context. Using Rolfe et al's (2001) model of reflection the student co-authors critically reflected on their experiences of participating in SSP projects. Their responses have been analysed using Vignettes to evaluate and reveal the level of harmony or discord in their distinct experiences and accounts of working in pedagogical partnerships thus providing benchmarks for understanding differences in interpretation (Nerantzi et al., 2023). Vignettes serve to provide situational context, elucidate influential factors, clarify individual judgments, examine moral dilemmas, and facilitate discussions around sensitive experiences in relation to perceived norms (Barter & Reynold, 1999). Therefore, use of vignettes in this study provides an opportunity to explore the individual interpretations of each student partner within a shared scenario, uncovering nuanced issues that are often underrepresented in partnership research literature.

Making sense of the findings from students' reflections:

Recurring findings regarding reason for involvement, achievements, challenges and learning experiences reported by students involved in the projects and co-authors in this paper are presented in 28 vignettes grouped under 9 themes. Furthermore, the study delved into the evaluation of these narrative accounts by the students, to encourage critical reflection on commonly overlooked or accepted practices within SSP (Green, 2019).

1. Why I wanted to get involved in a partnership project

Vignette 1: understand research process and collaborative contribution

To me, I initially wanted to see what it was like working on a research project, and when I got to know that it was a partnership, it was cherry on top. It meant to me that I would be able to work closely with an academic professional and collaboratively contribute to the aim of the project. It was a new experience to me and an important opportunity.

Vignette 2: Gain practical experience in relevant field

There were two main reasons for my interest in participating in a staff-student partnership. Firstly, I sought to gain relevant workplace experience in the field of computer science, recognising the challenges of entering the workforce without prior practical experience. Secondly, I was passionate about the integration of student learning with technology and machine learning.

Vignette 3: Getting published

Initially I was very interested in being part of a research project as I was in my final year of my degree as a mature student, where my aim was to hopefully have a career change. An area I was very interested in was research and perhaps studying to be a university lecturer myself, Therefore I wanted to take any opportunity whilst studying to increase my research/academia knowledge as well as gaining experience in writing an academic paper. Another reason was the project I took part on was something that we will see affecting education in the future with the current increase in technology and focus on AI we are seeing globally. Overall, the reason was simply to increase my knowledge, experience a student/teacher partnership and experience research. And ideally have my name on a published paper.

Vignette 4: Build experience in research

I decided to get involved in this project because it was to do with research, and I enjoy research of any kind. It also allowed me to build my experience and skills in education and research as this role was based on education.

2. How the partnership developed overtime

Vignette 1: Regular communication

Yes, the partnership went well, and the research project went well. Nurun and I got along, I listened, she listened, and we communicated regularly about the project by zooms or in person which was always productive. It was a great experience working in partnership with College A, seeing the system being built, and there were also opportunities to go to London to a conference which is a great initiative for students

whilst studying.

Vignette 2: from mentor-peer to colleague partnership

Initially, the partnership began as a mentor-peer relationship in the first project, where Nurun provided advice and guidance on academic project procedures. In Ed Owl, the partnership evolved into a colleague partnership, as Nurun provided requirements and I made efforts to deliver or propose alternatives until an established agreement was reached and approved my produced work.

Vignette 3: Open discussions for long lasting and meaningful partnerships

It just did. At first, I was trying to catch up on the process, and Nurun was patient when I asked questions, this helped me feel comfortable to approach her openly about the project. I also felt encouraged to openly share my perspective and experience on things. We would also have open discussions surrounding various topics. Furthermore, we collaborated a few times after the internship ended. It made the partnership more long lasting and meaningful.

Vignette 4: Bouncing ideas of each other

The partnership was a good one, we were a team of three, and we got on well. We bounced ideas of each other by holding regular meetings online and we had an online conference to present our project. We bonded well and really used all our knowledge, skills, and expertise together to make a final prototype.

3.Expectations from the partnership and the project involved in

Vignette 1: Creative integration to co-produce

I think I initially expected something rigidly structured. I'm glad this was not the case as I quickly realised that it was much more open, I feel it helped us to be more creative and have ideas flowing. Although we did have aims and objectives to cover, there was no one particular path to do it. When we were trying to formulate the workshop, we both shared our ideas to sort of co-produce, I guess what I expected at first that it would be my bits and her bits but I found that it was an integration of the two which unfolded in a way that I could not expect and could only be fully seen in after the process was completed.

Vignette 2: Gain relevant work experience

My expectations from the partnership aligned with the motivations I mentioned. I aimed to gain relevant work experience in my field of study, acknowledging the challenges of entering the computer science workplace without prior experience. Additionally, I

sought to engage in a subject I am passionate about, specifically the integration of student learning with technology and machine learning.

Vignette 3: Peer to peer learning

Because it was being completed in an academic environment, I think I had a preconceived idea of how the projects would be managed as the interview process for the projects is quite robust. I think the university could make the application process simpler for students wanting to take part in research projects and streamline this. I guess I expected a structured project, like the way a work project would be implemented, however this was completely different as it was research based. However, I embraced the change and completed everything that was required of me while learning different aspects of research in an academic environment, which I believe helped me with my dissertation. So, there was definitely a positive in completing the project as it gets you in that research mindset, which helped immensely with my final year assessments. Overall, the project was informative and I really enjoyed the research perspective and taking part in the partnership as I believe myself and Nurun did learn a lot from each other.

Vignette 4: from zero expectations to role clarity

When I first joined, I didn't have any expectations about anything as I didn't really know much about the role, or the people I would be working with, but over time as I understood the role, and how the game was to be used and what was expected from it - both from the engineering side and the users' experience side - it became clear as to what was expected from this project and my role and the demands that engineered and steered this project to perfection.

4. Experiences of challenges in the partnership

Vignette 1: Adaptation in unavoidable circumstances

I think some challenges was related to covid and the restrictions much needed so that came with it as there was a number of things that required face to face interaction. However, we are able to adapt our approach and continued to keep the flow. This was also influenced by how the institutions and conferences operated as well.

Vignette 2: Time management and role expectations

In Ask Ada, the primary challenges revolved around determining the appropriate structure, conducting research, and producing content suitable for an academic research project. In Ed Owl, I became more comfortable with the challenges faced during Ask Ada. However, there were ongoing challenges related to software development due to time constraints and the nature of being the primary developer with minor prior experience.

vignette 3: Communication with fellow student partners

Initially, I eagerly anticipated completing the project, having previously been rejected for a research role in year 2. However, midway through, I received comments on my work style, which I accepted as an opportunity for growth. Yet, it became disheartening and demotivating when others weren't as focused on the project. I had worked hard, embraced the responsibilities, and fulfilled the requirements, so this disparity was challenging. Transitioning from a corporate background, I found the research project's structure and peer management style different. Fairness in treating colleagues equally was crucial, and I perceived unequal treatment as a potential cause for resentment. One student didn't complete the required work, which I felt was disrespectful considering they were compensated by the university. I often found myself chasing up others, which added frustration given my previous experience managing staff. Completing the project while balancing my dissertation, part-time job, and other commitments intensified the pressure. Therefore, I suggest that projects involving final-year students would be more successful if completed in semester 1, separate from the dissertation, facilitating research opportunities. Students completing projects for work experience could benefit from better management to shape their work ethic and professional behaviours for the future, as the university's reputation in the corporate world could be affected otherwise.

vignette 4: The challenge I had was to some extent, time management, as seminars clashed with other seminars, I was to be present in. Also, trying to get the users together at the same time was a challenge too, but I managed it by teamwork and collaborating with my own course Professor. She was very supportive in this along with the users.

5. Experience of navigating the power-dynamics in a staff-student partnership

Vignette 1: establishing a common-ground

I don't believe there was any power-dynamics at play during our cooperation, while me and Nurun may have disagreed on some aspects of requirements. We have always been able to establish a common-ground because of our combined desire for these projects to succeed.

Vignette 2: Shared understanding when working towards a common goal

I think perhaps me studying a different course to the one that Nurun teaches, was helping in not having any conflict of interest per say, however there were times where I was more mindful of my approach and did not want to be seen as overpowering. However, that was something I needed to deal on my own as it was perhaps from previous experiences of these power-dynamics from school. I think being a second-year university student kind of supported in balancing this, and it was a combination

of what we had discussed previously regarding what this project and partnership internship entails, I felt a sense of responsibility towards the project due to my role which helped me overcome this. Furthermore, I feel a person's personality affects the dynamics too and because I could view Nurun as a Tutor but also someone who was open, easy to talk to and inviting helped me become more comfortable in approaching her. I felt I was able to rely on her and also felt I was able to contribute uniquely too.

vignette 3: Self-actualisation for empowerment

The feedback from my users was what steered the design function, presentation features, to the content of the prototype game and this was the point which allowed me to navigate the power-dynamics in my favour in the staff-student partnership. Also co-presenting the seminar online too was a great addition to making me feel empowered, as my own research determined what the audience thought – who were experienced professionals with years of knowledge and experience – and how they showed respect, believed, and took my research and knowledge as truth and accepted it as sound information. This made me feel valued and appreciated very much.

vignette 4: Effective communication to build trust and mutual respect

Coming from a country with a different cultural perspective on hierarchy, I have always been taught to treat others with respect regardless of their position. In my education in Australia, there was a strong emphasis on valuing every individual as a fellow human being, recognizing that everyone has their own pressures and unique story. Teachers play a crucial role in creating a learning environment where mutual respect and effective communication are fostered by getting to know students on a personal level. Personally, I did not perceive a significant power dynamic between myself and Nurun in our partnership. Instead, I saw her as someone I could learn from and viewed our relationship as more of a mentorship rather than a hierarchical one. Being in my final year of university and feeling confident in my progress, I did not feel the pressure of power dynamics. However, I believe that respect should be mutual in any learning environment. While university staff deserve respect for their guidance and mentorship, it is important for students to also be respected and valued as active participants in their education.

6. Experiences of achievements in the partnership

Vignette 1: develop confidence by overcoming mini hurdles

I think being able to complete the project was an achievement but also completing little tasks and overcoming mini hurdles during the process was also part of the little successes. I think getting to know the project and becoming familiar with the topic and starting to develop a stronger passion for it was a sign for me that this had been a win.

Furthermore, I felt more confident and comfortable in approaching many professionals and felt I learnt some etiquettes of gaining knowledge and taking part in research. And carrying a strong passion to continue doing research in partnership in a range of different disciplines and partnerships with not just students and teachers but also with other such as in a medical professional and much more.

Vignette 2: Gaining recognition

Our achievements included hosting international presentations and gaining recognition in ongoing research paper development. Our achievements in Ed Owl included hosting more international presentations, positively impacting students' experiences, and being featured in local newspapers for our efforts.

Vignette 3: Stepping stone to a different career

Achievements would be getting involved in an area /role unlike anything I had ever completed before, so for me this was an accomplishment in itself and I was excited to be getting involved in what was going to be the first stepping stone in hopefully a different career. I dedicated myself to extensive reading and studying, particularly in the field of AI, and eagerly embraced opportunities to learn and engage in academic research. Despite juggling various commitments, I took pride in completing a 2000-word literature review and fully honouring the university's process.

Vignette 4: Turning challenges to achievements through critical reflection

The challenges I encountered became achievements for me, and it allowed me to be out of my comfort zone and really challenge my personal development, develop, innovate, and question the teaching pedagogy within the latest research, and get in hands-on to develop something which was innovative, educational, and fun. It also developed my knowledge on prototyping too.

7. Learning experiences from the partnership

Vignette 1: Self-awareness, critical analysis and adaptability when interacting with others

Engaging and interacting with others is a crucial aspect of partnership that significantly influences the overall experience. Through this experience, I have learned valuable lessons about teamwork, self-awareness, and understanding others. It has provided insights into the research process and the dynamics of partnerships. This enjoyable and impactful experience has fostered personal growth, boosted my confidence in acquiring knowledge, and reinforced my commitment to contributing to society. It has

enhanced my adaptability and highlighted the importance of effective communication. I have gained valuable academic and professional development, as well as transferable skills such as communication, teamwork, critical analysis, and resilience. This experience has ignited a strong passion for contributing to applicable research, and I am eager to continue building partnerships. I would gladly participate in similar endeavours again, as they have profound implications for research and learning. Overall, this reflection underscores the fruitfulness and significance of this learning experience.

Vignette 2: Establish ground for career development in the field of technology integration

Extremely positive in terms of my career development, it has had a large impact on my resume for employers and allowed me to establish my desire to pursue a PhD in a related field of technology integration with students at HE. This has also enhanced my work ethic significantly and I am proud of the work I have produced over the past 3 years as an outcome of involvement in these projects and external endeavours.

Vignette 3: Project management and research knowledge in learning technology

I learnt a lot about education, academia and research and found the project very insightful. I definitely learnt a lot from my own working behaviour to how different projects are managed in different environments. The partnership allowed me to look at research in a different manner as I was learning from someone who had undertaken a lot of research projects which was a good learning outcome for me, and I believed it did have a positive impact on my research behaviours which did assist me on my other assessments as well as give me an introduction into AI which has assured me in my role in data & analytics as I have been able to relate to some AI based projects I'm involved in within my current role.

Vignette 4: opened other avenues of career and professions

This work has provided me with a profound learning experience, allowing me to collaborate with experts from different professional areas such as programmers and professors. It has boosted my confidence and opened up new career opportunities, particularly in roles like User Researcher/Designer that offer flexibility and a better work-life balance. Additionally, it has sparked innovative thinking in my teaching methodologies, incorporating game-based activities to enhance student engagement and concentration. I deeply value this experience and wish to continue working on similar projects. The knowledge and skills gained have been invaluable, and I am proud of the achievements accomplished as part of a successful team.

Evaluation

The vignettes presented offer diverse perspectives on staff-student partnerships in research projects, revealing both the positive achievements and challenges encountered in these collaborative endeavours. For each of the student partner, there were unique intrinsic motivations for getting involved in a student-staff partnership project. This ranged from a strong desire for career change and academic aspirations to an interest in experiencing a student-staff partnership, emphasising the value of collaborative work and the opportunity to learn from academic professionals and getting published by gaining practical experience and increasing their knowledge in research and academia. However, a common thread that intertwined a connection between their aspirations was an awareness of the growing impact of technology and AI on education. They were intrigued by the potential of technology-enhanced learning and sought to be part of a project that explored this intersection. The partnerships have proven to be valuable learning experiences for the students involved, allowing them to develop knowledge, skills, and contribute to research and academia (Healey et al., 2016). The vignettes highlight the significance of active engagement, regular interaction, and effective communication between staff and students for successful collaborations (Cook-Sather et al., 2014; Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2017). However, they also shed light on the complexities of power dynamics within these partnerships, indicating the need for clear management of expectations and fair treatment among team members. Challenges such as differences in work styles, time constraints, and adapting to new project structures are inevitable in such collaborations. These insights emphasise the importance of clear communication, fair treatment, and effective project management in fostering successful staff-student partnerships. Overall, this critical review underscores the valuable opportunities and learning experiences that staff-student partnerships provide, while highlighting the need for ongoing efforts to address challenges and power dynamics to ensure equitable and productive collaborations in the future (Green, 2017).

From the students' vignettes we can see the need for mutual respect, open dialogue, and recognition of each other's expertise to balance partnership commitments. They highlighted the benefits of mentorship, collaborative decision-making, and shared opportunities to contribute unique perspectives and ideas to make the partnership fruitful and empowering for both students and staff.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the vignettes offer a testament to the profound benefits of involving students in technology-enhanced learning initiatives within higher education. These partnerships have offered students the opportunity to actively participate in research projects, contributing to the development of innovative solutions and expanding their knowledge and skills in technology integration. The experiences have fostered

adaptability, critical thinking, collaboration, and effective communication among students and staff members.

However, while the vignettes emphasise the positive outcomes of student-staff partnerships, they also bring attention to areas that warrant critical examination. Challenges such as unequal treatment, time constraints, and power dynamics emerged, highlighting the need for fair and equitable practices within these partnerships. Future research should focus on addressing these challenges and developing strategies to promote equal participation, respect, and effective communication between students and staff. The implications of these findings are significant for student-staff partnerships in higher education. Institutions should recognize the value of involving students as active participants in the development and implementation of technology-enhanced learning solutions. This requires creating an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages collaboration, open dialogue, and shared decision-making. Student-staff partnerships can serve as a catalyst for transformative learning experiences, allowing students to contribute their unique perspectives, skills, and creativity to shape the future of education. Moving forward, further research is needed to explore best practices, effective pedagogies, and the impact of student-staff partnerships on student learning outcomes. By continually evaluating and improving these partnerships, higher education institutions can cultivate an environment that nurtures student agency, fosters innovation, and prepares students for the evolving demands of the digital age.

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