Student Voice: Reviewing Two Decades of the Literature to Guide the Next 20 Years

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Abstract

Attention to students and their education experiences has become increasingly important in the 21st century. Student experience—particularly active and agentic practices captured in terms like 'student voice' and 'partnership'—was an obvious choice in response to *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice* (JUTLP) editors' commissioned series of literature reviews analysing 20 years of the journal's publications. A hybrid method for the systematic review was guided by the question: *What does the last 20 years of student voice publications tell us about the past and future?* A student voice and partnership framework adapted from Fielding (2004, 2012) was developed to provide theoretical guidance for the review. In total, 92 publications were identified and described quantitatively (year, country, research design, etc) and qualitatively using reflexive thematic analysis. Overall, the findings show increased publications over time that document active student involvement in developing, shaping, designing, evaluating, or researching alongside staff. The upward trend of partnership is a marked change from early JUTLP publications that studied students as objects of research and sources of data with passive roles in education practices and student life activities. The trend is toward students as active, agentic participants, partners and leaders in shaping and influencing their education experiences. Moving into the next 20 years, the JUTLP community is urged to engage with students as co-authors, co-researchers, and co-designers to report on educational praxis with staff and to open up new avenues for students contributing to knowledge and the mission of JUTLP.

Keywords

Citation

Introduction

Since its inception, the *Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice (JUTLP)* has centred students and their learning in the ecosystem of educational praxis. To celebrate the journal's 20th anniversary, the editors commissioned a series of literature reviews. As the journal editor for the student experience section, I consulted Kelly Matthews and Alison Cook-Sather, two scholars and thought leaders who have published extensively on student voice and partnership, on developing a student-focused review following a recent successful collaboration that re-imagined and re-shaped JUTLP's stance on the position of students in higher education (Ashton-Hay & Williams, 2023; Cook-Sather & Matthews, 2023). Together, we articulated a question to guide the review:

What does the last 20 years of student voice publications tell us about the past and the future?

JUTLP is a practical forum to select papers for such a systematic review because the journal leads in publishing higher education research in Australia and globally with a steadily rising Scopus ranking. One of the journal's aims is to change how people think in order to improve higher education teaching and learning practices. A two-decade time span provides a suitable positioning to overview the past, identify emerging trends and enable guidelines for future practice. In this framing, the importance of student voice in their educational experience enables this review to focus on students' emerging agentic and relational positions as signalled by the term 'student voice' and the practice of staff engaging with students as partners in higher education. As has been true in the sector, how students are positioned, discussed, and represented in JUTLP publications has evolved in the last 20 years. This systematic review seeks to identify and analyse some of the changes in a trend towards a more democratic, inclusive and participative model in higher education.

Literature

Student voice and engaging students as partners in higher education

The term 'student voice' is an umbrella term that has been both embraced and debated over the last 25 years. Emerging first in relation to student engagement in K-12 schooling contexts, the term signalled having a legitimate perspective and opinion, and an active role "in decisions about and implementation of educational policies and practice" (Holdsworth, 2000, p. 355). Scholars and practitioners in the early 2000s consistently used the term to "connect the sound of students speaking not only with those students experiencing meaningful, acknowledged presence but also with their having the power to influence analyses of, decisions about, and practices in schools" (Cook-Sather, 2006, p. 363). This linking of voice with agency, of presence with power, is evident in several typologies for mapping the degrees to and ways in which practices called 'student voice' afford students such agency and power within formal educational structures. Fielding's (2004) typology remains among the most useful for how it maps degrees and kinds of agency in educational research— (1) students as data source, (2) students as active respondents, (3) students as co-researchers, and (4) students as researchers. To guide this review, my thought partners, Kelly Matthews and Alison Cook-Sather, and I worked to adapt the final three of these to create a typology for student voice that links student voice with power and agency (Cook-Sather, 2006; Holdsworth, 2000).

As student voice has been taken up as a term and a practice in higher education (HE), these variations in degree and kind of agency and power have persisted. Conner et al. (2024) note, for instance, in the introduction to *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Student Voice in Higher Education*, that there are "different conceptualizations of student voice, some of which position students as data sources and others of which position them as policy actors, actively shaping the educational environment for themselves and their peers" (p. 1). The basically hierarchical structure of higher education, like traditional approaches to research on student experiences (Thiessen & Cook-Sather, 2007), do not readily afford students the kind of power and agency that proponents and practitioners of student voice work imagine and work toward.

While students are always expressing themselves in a variety of ways and through a variety of media, the academic term 'student voice' focuses on the impact this expression has on formal educational institutions, faculty/academics and staff, curricula and pedagogical practices, and students themselves. In some framings, student voice overlaps with student representation in elected, organised student guilds, unions, and associations whereby student representatives speak on behalf of the student body to institutional leadership. There is increasing scholarly interest in formal student representation; for instance, Klemenčič (2024) theorises student representation as student impact focused on student rights in decision-making through HE governance and separating activism from politics. Student voice is often translated in HE through notions of student partnership and student representation, although there are risks in conflating these two practices (Matthews & Dollinger, 2022). Particularly, student representation enables elected or selected students to engage in formal and informal academic governance (committees, senates, etc) while students engage in partnership with staff including faculty, academics, and administration on the everyday pedagogical and student life activities. Confusing them often involves student partners being positioned as 'speaking for all or some students' instead of valuing their unique perspectives that might not represent the broader student body.

Student voice has evolved alongside a thriving focus on student experience and student success in higher education. As Klemenčič (2024) observes, the dominant literature (largely from the US) describes the student experience and engagement in terms of "how universities affect students" p. 1). In contrast, Klemenčič believes "students have capabilities to intervene in and influence HE structures and policies and are not merely affected by these" (p. 1). Student voice is concerned with whom students can shape and influence in HE just as much as those institutions shape student learning and trajectories. Such a stance requires an agentic framework to guide the identification of implications for inclusion in this systematic review.

Student voice

The decades between 2004 and 2023 showed an increase in the number of student voice articles published in JUTLP. As shown in Figure 1 below, the number of student voice publications rose after 2019 and peaked between 2020-2021 with over 26 publications. Concentration on this topic was also rising between 2022-2023. This steep rise in publications from 2019-2023 may be indicative of the growing interest in how university education experiences affect students, as mentioned in the previous paragraph. The recent rise in student voice publications may also suggest growing changes to the role students play in higher education with developing agency, presence and power to actively shape policy and education experiences beyond being a source of data as Fielding (2004, 2012) describes in his typology.

Figure 1

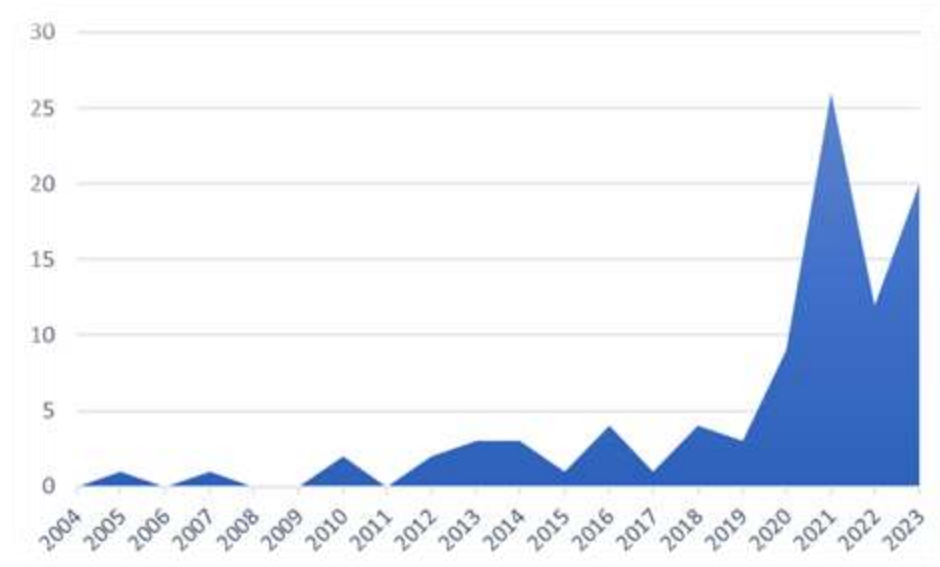*Student voice publications in* JUTLP

Figure 2 shows that most of the international contributions to JUTLP's student voice articles from 2004-2023 were largely from Australia, the UK and the USA. This is not surprising as JUTLP is an Australian publication and much of the readership is in Australia too. Publications from Aotearoa/New Zealand and South Africa were slightly fewer, followed by even fewer international submissions from the other nations listed. The two graphs show the sources of JUTLP's student voice publications as well as the recent rising interest in student voice since 2019, particularly from Australia, the UK and the USA.

Figure 2

International Student Voice Contributions to JUTLP *2004-2023*
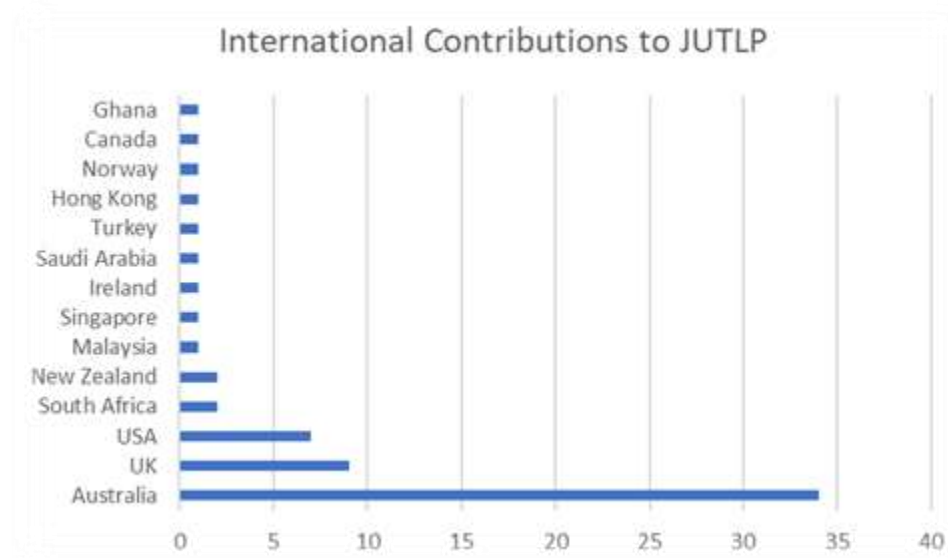
A revised student voice typology

Scholars are continually seeking to theorise and re-theorise student voice across practice and scholarship, and the typologies that have been developed, while helpful in differentiating kinds of student voice work, are hard-pressed to capture the complexity of the work, since student voice is a dynamic, relational interaction shaped by people and their contexts and always entangled in the structure, processes, and cultures of the educational institution. Embracing the spirit of student voice that calls for student agency and influence, and therefore moving beyond notions of student voice as a data source, the examples of student voice in JUTLP publications are mapped, updating Fielding's (2004, 2012) typology designed for educational research into a typology for student voice in HE as shown in Table 1 below. The updated student voice categories are considered more reflective of current practice in higher education and informed by recent literature discussed earlier (Conner et al., 2024, Klemenčič, 2024, Matthews & Dollinger, 2023). Since Fielding (2004, 2012) originally identified typology categories of student voice, students are now emerging as more agentic, participative partners and leaders in shaping their higher education experience.

Fielding (2004, 2012) originally developed the typology as a new model to track student voice and patterns of partnership which in his words not only "challenge the domination of neo-liberal perspectives, but also provide a practical means towards the realisation of democracy as a way of living and learning together and of schools as themselves examples of democracy in action" (p. 197). Fielding further advocates for identification of key factors and core elements that sustain and develop education over time and the imperative to draw on radical democratic traditions of public education "and reclaim our histories, for without them we are prisoners of an impoverished future" (p. 197). To offer an alternative to the market accountability model, Fielding's typology presented a person-centred education model for democratic fellowship. The typology focused on participative interaction, and collaborative partnership between students and HE staff. This typology identified and opened up opportunities for different kinds of relationships and different configurations of power.

Table 1

Student voice typology in current higher education, drawing on Fielding (2004, 2012)

	Students as …			
Student voice in educational research (Fielding, 2012)	source of data	active respondent	co-researcher	researcher
Student voice in HE	[removed]	active participant	partner	leader

In 2012, Fielding extended his "researcher" typology to various levels of co-enquiry including students as co-authors, co-designers of curriculum and assessment and co-creators of knowledge. Since the student acting in these collaborative capacities is potentially shaping their education experience and leading transformative change, the adapted typology for student voice

in HE uses "students as leaders" to include these opportunities. As a leader, the student actively participates, partners collaboratively with staff and influences their education experience. The category of "students as data source" has been removed from the adapted typology as it no longer reflects current student voice practice in HE. Student surveys and teaching evaluations may continue but since the student is not actively participating, partnering or leading influence, this category is redundant. Although student voice and engaging students as partners are often evoked in publications, this typology became the analytic threshold to determine if JUTLP publications would be included in the systematic review.

Method

The intent of the review was to explore the emerging and evolving, dynamic topic of student voice in HE, which is often discussed in terms of partnership in HE (Matthews & Dollinger, 2022), and to expand scholarship and theorisations of educational praxis underlining JUTLP's mission. Importantly, the review focus was descriptive, theoretical, and practice-oriented, not an effort to evaluate the quality of JUTLP publications. The method of scoping reviews aligned with the intention of the review as it emphasises exploration and enrichment of theorisation (DiCenso et al., 2010), works well where few prior reviews of the topic have been done (Mays et al., 2021), and charts descriptively the volume and patterns of the literature without methodological judgment (Arskey & O'Mally, 2005). Given the request from JUTLP editors, aspects of the PRISMA approach (Page et al., 2021) were incorporated, mainly to show the steps of the systematic review in following a rigorous method for identifying, screening and including papers for review. Articles using student voice as a theme were identified, screened and eliminated, as shown in Figure 3, at each stage of the review process. Thus, a mixed literature review method was used, and, much like mixed methods, this approach can be generative of new insights that any single method might not yield.

Identifying relevant publications

Identifying the relevant literature was easier than many reviews because it was limited to one journal and publications from 2004-2023. Overall, I anticipated a unique snapshot of the dynamic changes that have occurred over the last two decades in HE reflective of the JUTLP scholarly community. The journal has focused on scholarly teaching practices and has always been hosted by an Australian university with overseas contributors. Inclusion and exclusion criteria for the review are summarised below in Table 2.

Table 2

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
All articles published in JUTLP	Not published in JUTLP
All articles published between 2004-2023 including editorials and research articles	Did not explicitly evoke student voice or partnership
Articles evoking student voice or partnership explicitly with student participation meeting criteria of our student voice in HE typology	Student voice or partnership was explicitly written about but did not meet threshold of Fielding (2004, 2012) framework
	Student voice or partnership was equated with collecting data from students with no other form of student involvement in the research process

Articles were excluded if these were: 1) not published in JUTLP; 2) not explicitly evoking student voice or partnership, and/or content not relevant or having no connection to the specific search terms; 3) articles listing keyword content but not providing any evidence of student voice or students as partners or students and staff as partners to meet the threshold identified in the updated student voice in HE typology, and finally, 4) articles that mentioned a key term but equated with only collecting data from students and students with no other form of student involvement in the research study were excluded. Thus, all articles published in JUTLP between 2004-2023 including editorials and research articles were included. Articles explicitly evoking student voice or partnership and student participation meeting the criteria of student voice typology were also included.

The focus of interest was active student voice. My thought partners and I debated search terms and scholarly definitions and drew on existing reviews of students as partners in higher education (Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2017), students as partners in Asia (Liang et al., 2020), and intercultural pedagogical partnerships (Zhang et al., 2023) to identify search terms and used a combination of terms (e.g., 'student voice', 'students as partners', 'students and staff as partners', 'student-staff partnerships'). These keywords were the main search terms with filter dates from 2004-2023. Using this search strategy, a total of 92 published JUTLP articles was gathered. These articles were all documented in a table to enable further analyses for inclusion.

Selecting publications

The revised student voice typology (see Table 1) guided the analysis of the 92 identified JUTLP publications. Each publication was accessed and reviewed. Abstracts were read first. Some publications were easily ruled out based on this information (students were mentioned, but it was research about academic identity or technology adoption, for example). Then, full publications

were reviewed, and data charted into a table, including reasons to include, exclude, or consider further. At this stage, reflecting the rapid changes in student voice and student partnership since Fielding's 2012 article, the conclusion was that students as a data source no longer resonates with current practice or theory of agentic student voice and partnership approaches with students. Through this elimination process, 32 publications were then selected for inclusion in the review. One of these was eliminated as not meeting Fielding's typology, which left 31 articles as eligible for analysis.

These articles were mapped to Fielding's typology and further analysed for eligibility. As stated earlier, the review method was mixed and combined Fielding's (2004, 2012) typology to identify included articles and exclude those that used student voice as a data source, where students were not active partners, students were not involved as policy actors, students were not shaping education, and/or the idea of student agency was not carried through the article. A PRISMA (Page et al., 2021) flow diagram in Figure 3 shows the process of identification, screening, and inclusion while not strictly following the scientific PRISMA method but rather basing inclusion and exclusion decisions on Fielding's (2004, 2012) typology for student voice as shown in Table 1. This screening analysis eliminated a further 16 articles with 15 publications remaining to include in the systematic review. These remaining articles were deemed to meet the updated version of Fielding's typology of students as active respondents, partners, participants, co-researchers, co-authors, and co-enquirers and/or leaders shaping their HE experience. Co-creators of knowledge is considered an integral aspect of co-research and co-authorship.

Charting data

Standard data from each of the 15 papers were collected into a single table. This included year of publication, country in which the study was conducted, genre (research, editorial, book review, etc), methods, number of participants, fit for purpose to the updated version of Fielding's (2004, 2012) student voice typology, and notes on the paper which were later used to develop qualitative themes. The table also included a hyperlink to locate each of the articles for convenient review and comparison. Figure 3 shows the systematic review flow diagram steps of identification, screening and inclusion of articles process.

Figure 3

Systematic Review Flow Diagram
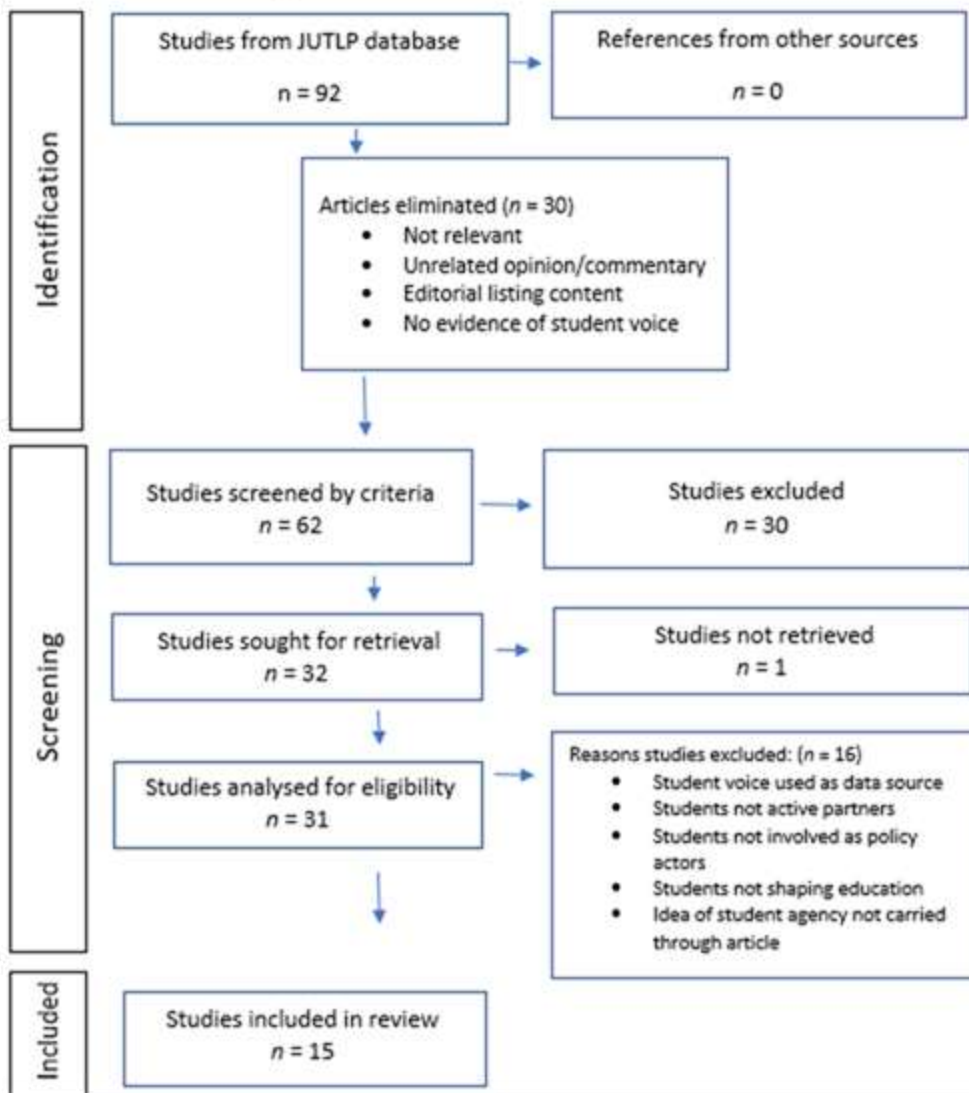
Data were analysed in two ways. First, descriptive analysis examined abstracts, keywords, research method, and how student voice was positioned in the paper. The active participant, partner and evidence demonstrating student agency were keys as opposed to student voice presented as a source of data or passive students as objects of study.

Second, reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2019) focused on change in the positioning of student voice and partnership over time. The use of reflexive thematic analysis facilitated the researchers' role in the process through familiarity with the data and generating matches to the typology. The papers were examined for demonstration of student partnership and agency through, for example, approaches such as the co-creation of knowledge, co-authorship, collaborative curriculum development, assessment redesign, rubric model development, co-creation of capstone courses, or potential change and transformation of university policy and

student experience in higher education. The themes were identified and matched to the revised typology. In some studies, students demonstrated active participation following a staff invitation to become involved in a particular initiative. In other studies, students were clearly partners with staff and although there were some overlapping boundaries, student leader studies were also evident from the impact, influence and transformation of praxis or policy. The final 15 studies included in the systematic review are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Selected student voice articles for review

Author(s)	Year	Country	Genre	Method
Abegglen, Burns, and Sinfield	2021	Canada, UK	Special issue editorial	Essay
Ashton-Hay and Williams	2023	Australia	Editorial	Essay
Billett and Martin	2018	Australia	3-yr study	Student co-creating curriculum
Cook-Sather and Matthews	2023	USA, Australia	Invited editorial	Essay
Crilly, Panesar, and Suka-Bill	2020	UK	Case Study	SaP-reading lists
Donnelly and Sherlock	2023	Ireland	Case competitions	SaP; producers of knowledge
Kaur and Noman	2020	Malaysia	Case Studies	SaP
Keeling, Phalen, and Rifenburg*	2021	USA	Study	SaP; co-authors
Morton, Northcote, Kilgour, and Jackson	2021	Australia	Study	SaP; co-design rubrics
Partridge and Sandover	2010	Australia	Study	Students as researchers; SaP
Payne and Payne*	2023	Australia, USA	Book review	Relational pedagogies; co-author
Peseta et al.*	2021	Australia	Study	SaP; co-authors
Wilson, Tan, Knox, Ong, Crawford, and Rudolph*	2020	Australia and Singapore	Study	SaP; co-researchers and co-authors
Wisker	2018	UK	Case studies	SaP; knowledge co-creators
Wright, Smith, Vernon, Wall, and White*	2021	UK	Study	SaP; co-creators of curriculum and co-authors

includes student co-authors

Findings

Descriptive summary

The selected studies were summarised in a table listing publication authorship, year, type, method, and country.

The systematic analysis of 15 student voice publications included seven research articles, four case studies, three editorials/commentaries, and one book review by authors from seven countries. Australia is most represented, reflecting the journal's editorial location and lead contribution place shown earlier in Figure 2. Three of the publications included students as co-authors and these are marked with an asterisk in Table 3. The low fraction of student involvement in research and co-authorship indicates future potential in this area.

It was intriguing that the selected articles reflected the JUTLP student voice publication trends shown in Figures 1 and 2. Only one article from 2010 was selected, two from 2018 and eight from 2020-2021 when student voice contributions peaked, followed by four from 2023 when the trend rose again. Overall, Australia contributed eight publications, the UK had three, and the USA had two, which also corresponded to the three top scholarly contributors to JUTLP. The remaining articles were comprised of a single contribution from Malaysia, Singapore, Ireland, and Canada. Four of the published papers were co-authored by international colleagues across Canada and the UK, the USA and Australia, and Australia and Singapore.

Thematic analysis

After applying the student voice typology, the review identified 15 publications. However, numerous publications evoked student voice, students as partners, or similar terms that were not included. Many of those positioned students as data sources or as the object of study. Some of the screened studies drew on theorisations in their narratives. For example, Lodge (2023, p. 11) discussed the interactions of learning designers (administrative staff with educational specialist knowledge supporting teaching staff) with academics noting the "unequal relationship they have with academic staff, who retain ultimate ownership and decision-making capacity about what occurs in their units of study" and resembles obstacles in student-academic pedagogically oriented partnerships. Similarly, AlMarwani (2023) recommends that academic excellence involves "engaging students' voices as a guide for shaping decisions related to learning experiences" (p. 5) following interview study with academic staff. In a theoretical article on anti-ableist pedagogies, Nieminen and Pesonen (2022) call for co-design through the lens of students as partners scholarship. As these examples illustrate, there are scholarly conversations in JUTLP connecting to and offering theorisations of student voice and learner-teacher partnership beyond the 15 publications included in this review.

Analysis revealed that the selected studies correlated to students as active participants, students as partners and students as leaders in the revised typology for students in HE shown in Table 1. In many cases, the boundary between students as active participants and students as partners was blurred and occurred almost simultaneously depending on the various contexts reported. It was clear that in each of the selected studies, student voice demonstrated agency through an active role in participating, partnering, or leading, through agentic responses, creation, or

production of an outcome related to their own educational experience. Fielding's (2012) typology of students as a source of data was removed and revised to include students as active participants, partners and leaders in the selected studies. In many cases, the active student voice led to improved policies, the resolution of wicked challenges as well as pedagogical transformation to demonstrate leadership. For instance, Payne and Payne's (2023) book review reiterates the impact relational pedagogies are having in higher education and urges educators to "engage various others as we work to address issues of relationality, connection and mattering in contemporary and meaningful ways" (p. 22). This advice embodies a strong theme of social justice and inclusion running through many of the selected student voice studies. These themes are particularly evident in three editorials published between 2021-2023, which advocate for democratic, equitable and inclusive education through student agency.

Democratic, equitable, and inclusive education

The three editorials selected in this systematic review championed relational collaboration in higher education as a vital emerging influence. As Abegglen et al. (2021) suggest this evolving trend showcases "refreshed notions of collegiality and collaboration in HE" (p. 4) and support for "new and more nuanced dynamic models of co-creation" (p. 4). Cook-Sather and Matthews (2023) offer three anchoring principles to better understand and support student voice in HE, emphasising a shift in attitude, more supportive structures and sharing goals of teaching and learning. The authors' invited commentary highlighted what the principles look like in practice. Cook-Sather and Matthews claim teaching and learning dialogues are a "space of radical openness" to better support "social justice, democratic education and widening participation efforts" (p. 6). Ashton-Hay and Williams (2023) editorialise about the need for student voice evidence rather than students as a source of data. Ashton-Hay and Williams further advise against misrepresenting student voice as tokenistic representation from one or two individuals instead of an entire cohort and urge readers to maintain inclusive mindsets. The JUTLP editors invited manuscripts that examine collaboration and partnership using genuine student voice and agency. Across the three editorials, there was a shared understanding of student voice as an engaging and empowering force for equitable, inclusive and democratic education and an invitation for more studies that evidence this practice in higher education.

Discussion

The discussion will focus on the revised typology themes that emerged in this systematic review including students as active participants, students as partners, and students as leaders. These examples of student voice studies validate the agentic and active role that students are beginning to play in shaping, revitalising and transforming their education experiences. Each of the studies highlights unique collaborative approaches alongside students in shaping a more meaningful student experience. Students have much to offer when their voices are included in active participation and partnership and the trend is toward further collaboration in the future.

Students as active participants

In JUTLP student voice publications from 2004-2023, the first study of students as active participants appeared in 2010, followed eight years later by two studies published in 2018 detailing students as active participants in co-creating knowledge and curriculum. Partridge and

Sandover (2010) offer the first publication explicitly and substantially engaging in the practice of recognising students as active participants. The study values student expertise and identifies the significance of collaboration in areas of prioritised need for the university to resolve some ongoing issues. This study, the earliest publication selected, reiterates the valuable 'insider' perspective offered by students that has previously been overlooked. It took eight years for the next two publications to be published and begin to move student voice beyond the perception of students as a source of data. Student voice is not constituted in end-of-course surveys or degree evaluations (Ashton-Hay & Williams, 2023) but is more of an ongoing relational practice to help drive change and improve the student experience. Billett and Martin (2018) report on their three-year study of engaging students in the active co-creation of sociological knowledge and curriculum design as an aid to deep engagement. The second student voice study published in 2018 by Wisker details case studies of students as active participants in the co-creation of knowledge through PhD research. The Research Skill Development framework was instrumental in scaffolding research, identifying problems and questions, searching literature, determining methods to analyse data, narrowing down themes and addressing questions. Active participation added tension and creativity as students learned the process and how to manage the steps in research.

The call for papers in the 2021 special issue included student partnership, although most papers published in that issue reflected a broader sense of collaboration. Clearly, the special issue marked an uptick in JUTLP student voice publications, signalling the importance of this new topic of relevance and interest to the journal editors and international readership.

Students as partners

The students as partners theme appeared through a variety of innovative approaches. Several of these examples show an overlap between students as active participants and also on the typology level of students as partners. Kaur and Noman's (2020) study describes how students as partners fulfill a basic need for students to be actively connected and promotes motivation, engagement, and improves learning outcomes. This study claims their students as partners approach met students' psychological need satisfaction in order to maintain motivation and sustain engagement, making "education a joint enterprise" (p. 3).

Morton et al. (2021) highlight student capability as partners to co-create a collaborative rubrics model which transformed education beyond classroom processes to include equity and inclusion (Dunne et al., 2011) at their institution. Donnelly and Sherlock (2023) offer another example in their international case competitions for Marketing education as a practice example. They claim that "the art of teaching is the art of assisting discovery" (p. 15), evidenced by staff and students co-producing knowledge and winning a number of international case competitions. The university, teaching staff, and students fully invested the time and resourcing required to partner with students in co-creating knowledge that could be applied to the cases resulting in international prizes and reputational acclaim.

Peseta et al. (2021) present a thought-provoking study on "learning to be realistic and cautious about the transformative claims of student-staff partnership" (p. 269). The participants express pride in the extent of their co-creation of substantive knowledge, focus on curriculum development and commitment to negotiation while also being mindful of the "incremental, compromise-filled,

restricted and contingent initiatives" (p. 270) inherent in student-staff partnership. Despite the challenges described in this complex study, hope and possibility remain as underpinning values. These same values of hope and potential are also reiterated by Keeling et al. (2021) in their study of students as partners to co-design an English capstone course. The goal of the course design was contingent upon building community, supporting one other, learning, and writing for themselves and each other. The studies reveal a blurred boundary between students as partners and co-enquirers in co-creating knowledge for marketing cases competitions, the collaborative rubric students co-designed, and Kaur and Noman's (2020) study on how partnering fulfilled basic needs for students to be connected. These examples indicate the dynamic, agentic and relational aspects of emerging student voice practice. The literature reveals the dedication and creativity in developing effective, relational student as partner initiatives to enhance the education experience.

Students as leaders

Students as leaders form a large part of the collaborative initiatives discussed in four studies. These studies demonstrate the leadership potential of students actively participating and partnering as co-enquirers, co-researchers and co-creators. Wilson et al. (2020) include four students on their research team to co-create a collective ethnography of experiences during a Covid-19 pivot to online teaching. The collective ethnography realistically shares first-hand experience of students and their feelings of disconnectedness. Plans for mentoring by academics and new teaching strategies were developed to improve the situation. Wright et al.'s (2021) study of students as co-creators of curriculum focuses on promoting inclusion, social justice and anti-oppressive practice to transform education at their institution. The study was underpinned by a social model of disability theory and achieved a positive impact evidenced after evaluation. Likewise, Billett and Martin's (2018) three-year study enlists students as co-creators of sociological knowledge, curriculum development and pedagogical design. The outcomes of including students in this study improve teaching and learning practices and facilitate deeper engagement from students. Crilly et al. (2020) welcome student voice and leadership to decolonise and liberate the curriculum, in particular, reading lists that maintain Western/European/White disciplinary canons and what being 'well-read' actually means. The reading lists underwent an audit by staff, students and librarians for reimagination to represent multiple narratives and diversity. The student input received a positive evaluation as the university realised how reading lists are an under researched feature of academic life. These studies highlight the lived experience of student influence to improve education outcomes. As HE pays more attention to relational, agentic forms of student engagement, JUTLP student voice publications are likely to increase.

Conclusion

The review of JUTLP articles shows that conceptualisations and practices of student voice have evolved toward more agentic and active student participation over the last 20 years. Students as data is no longer representative of student voice practice. Instead, the current trend is toward more active student participation, initiatives with students as partners, and students as leaders in educational transformation.

What does this mean for JUTLP and future authors? As expected, theories and practices change, and scholars and practitioners will no doubt expand and extend the revised framework on student voice offered and illustrated here. In the analysis of JUTLP publications, the evolution in student voice as agentic, relational praxis is also evident. Scholarly tensions are evident as well. The first tension is how some authors continued to evoke student voice when collecting data from students in research studies designed and delivered without active student contribution. Another tension was evident in what was not published: accounts of or studies on student voice through student representation or political activism. Recently, Connor (2023) discussed the role of political activism as student voice. Yet, Klemenčič (2024), in a detailed historical account of student politics and representation spanning the Global South and North, did not draw on theorisations of student voice.

The clear trend in student voice is toward relational, agentic and active participation through collaborative partnerships and student leader roles which may include opportunities for co-research, co-authorship and co-creation. The reporting of student voice as a source of data shows past practice and is less relevant to current direction in higher education where students are active and agentic. JUTLP welcomes more papers that focus on evidence-based student partnerships and collaboration as active participants, agentic partners and influential leaders. As Keeling et al. (2021) state in their co-authored students as partners study, "[our] hope is that our work together is the beginning of future, sustainable partnerships between faculty, staff and students with the beautiful goal of supporting all learners" (p. 254).

Acknowledgements

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