Educational Innovation Successful Cases: Part 1

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ABSTRACT

Educational innovation is a key factor to improve educational goals and learning outcomes. There are very good practices in different contexts that may be reused and adapted in other ones, however these good practices are difficult to find and share, this means teachers repeat again and again the same "innovative" practices with local results and an overall idea of reinventing the wheel than produce a valuable improvement or adaptation of an existing practice. This special issue (organized in two parts) tries to share some interesting teaching practices that may be adopted and adapted in other different contexts and subjects.

Keywords: *Educational Goals, Educational Innovation, Learning Outcomes, Teaching Cases, Technology and Education*

INTRODUCTION

We are living in a society in a continuous evolution. Some authors think we are in a transition moment from Industrial Society towards and Information Society (Tiffin & Rajasingham, 1995), other ones defend the idea of we are currently in an Information Society (Cabero Almenara, 2007; Castells, 1997), based on the conception about information does not mean knowledge, however, there are also authors that prefer to talk about a Knowledge Society, because of Information Society has capitalist connotations (Burch, 2005) or technological innovation orientation (Waheed Khan, 2003).

Independently of the name we use to refer current society, this is characterized by the strategic importance of the knowledge. Thus, the knowledge management, collaborative processes, ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) and new kind of skills related to informational competences are the real causes of the society changes and evolution.

In this sense, Education must evolve in the same way that Society does, trying to incorporate the those innovations that allow improving the learning and teaching processes, solving current problems in these educational processes and achieving a more students' engagement.

Educational Innovation means introducing changes that allow improving the Education in a broad sense. But these changes must be sustainable, transferable, effective and efficient. Some of these changes are achieved throughout ICT, new trends, new processes or new approaches. However, it is very important disseminate and sharing the good practices and experiences about innovation in education (Sein-Echaluce, Lerís, Fidalgo Blanco, & García-Peñalvo, 2013), this way we will be able to analyze their scope

and the possibility to adopt and adapt them in our daily teaching activity. With this aim, we must walk to build up new Higher Education orientation (Berlanga, García-Peñalvo, & Sloep, 2010; García-Peñalvo, 2008, 2011), based on an Open Knowledge philosophy (García-Peñalvo, García de Figuerola, & Merlo, 2010a, 2010b) and more integrated with a lifelong learning (García-Peñalvo, 2007) and informal learning (García-Peñalvo, Colomo-Palacios, & Lytras, 2012) approaches.

Following this criterion, this special issue gathers eight good practices of educational innovation that have been selected from two different International Conferences, CINAIC 2013 (Fidalgo Blanco & Sein-Echaluce Lacleta, 2013) and TEEM 2013 (García-Peñalvo, 2013; García-Peñalvo, García-Holgado, & Cruz-Benito, 2013), extended and, after a new reviewed, included in this monograph. The special issue is organized in two parts. The first one gathers the firsts four papers and the second part gathers the other four.

SPECIAL ISSUE CONTENTS

The first paper by Domingo Alfonso Martín Sánchez and Ana García Laso is entitled "Experiences in social innovation. A platform for ethics through a school of engineering studies". This contribution presents the strategy followed in the Mines and Energy Engineering School of the Polytechnic University of Madrid (UPM from its name in Spanish) to enhance social learning through a program based on the assembly of training practices on Mentoring, Service Learning and social consciousness (Ethics and values in engineering).

The second paper by Manchado-Pérez et al. is entitled "Value of adaptation of methodologies between different knowledge areas in the context of project based learning: a case in industrial design engineering university degree". This article introduces a case of the successful adaptation of the methodology of Systems of Layouts, as used in Graphic Design, to a University Degree of Engineering in Industrial Design and Product Development.

The third contribution by Iglesias Rodríguez et al. is entitled "Case study on collaborative work experiences with Web 2.0 in Spanish primary schools with the highest institutional accreditation level". This case describes and analyses the collaborative work experiences with ICT that are being implemented in the third cycle of Primary Education in schools located in north-western Spain (Region of Castile and León). The results evince that teachers hold a positive view once they have used such technology-based approaches, although they demand a better provision of infrastructures and more institutional support, including specific aids for life-long learning schemes. Conclusions of this study have been drawn both to help and to offer some guidance to teachers engaged in innovative, collaborative, and technologically-assisted curricular processes within 2.0 school settings.

Finally, last paper of this first part of the special issue by Nieto Isidro and Ramos Calle, entitled "Improving mathematical competencies of students accessing to Higher Education from Vocational Training Modules", is centered on describing the behavior and results obtained by two groups of engineering students from Vocational Training Modules who were recruited to use an on-line tool designed to improve their mathematical performance.

The set of papers in this issue show the importance of the educational innovation in Higher Education. Guest editor hopes that readers find the papers of this volume useful and innovative.

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