Innovation in Education
Tools and methods for success

PEARSON   Workshop Summary Report   **ELIG**.org

On the 8 April 2014 Pearson / ELIG, with support from local partners, have been running a workshop on "Innovation in Education: Tools and methods for success". The workshop was co-organized by colleagues from SCIO and Lab4Ed, and hosted by the Escola Superior de Educação (Porto, PT). The workshop attracted more than thirty educational actors from several action fields: higher education teachers (from both public and private universities), universities' professionals, vocational education and training teachers, MOOC's and e-learning trainers, educational innovators, and university students. The workshop had as keynote speakers Dr. Andreas Meiszner, representing ELIG – European Learning Industry Group, and Kelwyn Looi, on behalf of Pearson.

The main purpose of the workshop was to evaluate how analytical tools, such as the Pearson Efficacy Framework, could enhance already established innovation support models, structures and processes. The workshop continued on from a 2013 workshop at the Online Educa Berlin conference and introduced the Efficacy Framework and explore its applicability as a tool to support technology-enhanced learning innovations. The Pearson Efficacy Framework appeared to be of potential use as an analytical tool as it can be used / applied to:

1. **Support the variety of modes and contexts** in which innovation may emerge.

2. **Be successfully understood** (or has the potential to be understood) and supported by different categories of stakeholders (e.g. institutional investors, school leaders, publishers, policy makers, teachers' networks, student associations, consultants.

3. **Identify what works, where and under what conditions**, distinguishing between success factors that are relatively "unique", specific to the context, and others that can more easily be found or reproduced in other contexts.

This first session of the workshop provided a more conceptualized presentation of innovative support tools and methods, with some constructive critical inputs that was provided from teachers and educational experts. The second session of the workshop in contrary allowed for a more practical exercise and was targeted at university students and young entrepreneurs. This second session provided an insight regarding the use of the innovative framework to their school works, and some comparisons with other methodologies.

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Workshop Session One

Concepts and Models

Workshop Session One focused on 'Concepts and Models' such as the applicability, usefulness and integration of analytical tools like the Pearson Efficacy Framework, and how those could enhance already established innovation support models, structures and processes. The session provided an introduction into Pearson's Efficacy Framework to subsequently open the floor to a discussion on its applicability within the Portuguese higher and adult education context. The topics explored in the session covered the following:

- Introduction to Efficacy at Pearson.

- Exercise: Using the Efficacy Framework and the Outcomes and Evidence criteria, examine the innovation potential for these 3 fields of innovation: MOOCs, Learning Analytics, Educational Games.

  o From the product POV: if you were designing a product in these three areas of innovation, examine the Efficacy Framework as a tool to support the development of such an innovation.

  o Innovation potential assessed through examining a hypothetical product for each; a MOOC helping students to learn English, a product that enabled significantly improved learning analytics of an English language learning course, and an Educational Game designed to teach English.

- Open discussion on the applicability of the efficacy framework as:

  o A tool to support higher education institutions to innovate.

  o An applicable tool in the Portuguese education environment.

- Introduction to the Alive in the Swamp document as a resource to support transversal ideas and more specific questions to the development of digital innovations.

Workshop Session Two

Tools and Techniques

Workshop Session Two focused on 'Tools and Techniques' and provided an introduction to the methods that are for example used within Pearson, and particularly with regards to its Efficacy Framework. Session two allowed the audience, which was composed by university students and young entrepreneurs, to apply this framework to their on-going and future projects, developed in some university subjects that link ICT with education. Within Pearson the framework is currently being used as a tool to embed their notion of "Efficacy" so to allow for a measurable impact on improving someone's life through learning, but also to allow for measuring business processes, and it is covering the company's global product and service portfolio. The second session allowed participants to develop an understanding of the principles governing the framework, so that they could see its application to their own projects and ideas. The topics explored in the second session covered the following:

- Introduction to Efficacy at Pearson.

- Case Study exercise to examine and use the Efficacy Framework.

- Discussion around the use of the Efficacy Framework in scholarly projects, such as 'ClassDojo'.

Lessons learned from the workshops

General lessons learnt from the two workshop sessions with regards to innovation support are:

1. Practical examples, particular those that have a local relevance and using cases that are familiar to participants, appear to be a valuable vehicle so to allow for the autonomous self-directed application of analytical tools such as the Pearson Efficacy Framework.

2. Consideration of language as a barrier should not be neglected and a translation of any type of information might be considered.

3. Keeping complexity moderate by breaking down complex topics in well defined and clearly understandable chunks does further support participation opportunities as well as autonomous self-directed application.

4. Draw and consider existing constructs, prevent the attempt to re-invent the wheel. Some individuals drew some comparisons in between the Pearson Efficacy Framework and other constructs, such as the action research cycle.

Wider learning for the team regarding the Efficacy Framework

1. **Consider the translation of the Efficacy Framework** to make it accessible to non-English speakers into more languages, and for those that are colour-blind.

2. Consider possible limitations with regards to process support. Participants feared that **the framework does not take into account "process"** within the criteria (for example e-learning is very much a process) and that the framework is more applicable to products.

3. **The issue of measuring the non-tangible outcomes** was raised, particularly outcomes of confidence, motivation and role-modelling, given some innovations are often focussed on purely course or product-level outcomes. How could those be measured, directly or indirectly?

4. **What is considered as being a "good" outcome is relative** and will vary by context and – is there a way to establish a minimum standard for innovations?

5. **If it is used as a framework by comparison** for innovations within the technology-enhanced learning environment, then how do we ensure a consistent comparison across a diverse possible range of innovations? Feedback was that it should be contextualised and applied in scenarios where people who apply it are involved with interventions.

6. **How can we harness the Alive in the Swamp document?** Initial thoughts are that it could be used as a way to embed efficacy at the Idea stage for digital innovations, after which the Efficacy Framework is used for product development and implementation.

Feedback from participants

Feedback provided from the participants do include the following aspects:

How you did experience the workshop discussions?

In general, participants share the opinion that the workshop did allow them to build up capacity, but that the format might still be improved. Participants perceived the workshop discussions as relevant, pertinent, suitable, knowledge generator, useful, and interesting in the way that it brought together visions of educational actors from several different action fields. An aspect to be improved for future workshops was that it would be easier to understand the context and applicability of the subject if it was given alongside more illustrative practical and local relevant examples from a successful case, either local or national.

How did you rate the usefulness of the Efficacy Framework as a tool to support technology-enhanced learning innovations?

Participants found that the Pearson Efficacy Framework can be indeed a suitable analytical tool, and that it can act as foundation for project building in different areas. One participant said that most of the Efficacy Framework questions should be part of a good teacher reasoning. However, even though it would add a value, some pointed out that teachers and the educational system, in general, show too much resistance when similar tools are presented and an implementation is tried.

Take-away from the session?

Two key take away experiences that were put forward by participants was an increased understanding about the usefulness and applicability of an assessment tools with regard to efficacy and, secondly, how difficult it can be to innovate in education against the traditional mentality teachers have regarding change.

What improvements could be made to the session so to better support educators through such a workshop?

As a common response participants mentioned that they would like to see more illustrative practical and local relevant examples. While all participants had close ties to the education sector, in the one form or the other, it was felt that their different action fields bring along different meanings for the presented concepts, and thus illustrative practical and local relevant examples would help to establish a common language framework.

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Porto, 15 May 2014