

Projects r+i+i: Research

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Project Name

Learning experiences and learner identity in the digital age: mapping learning pathways across formal and informal educational settings

Project data

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Abstract

This project focuses on the construction of Learner Identity (LI) in the new learning ecology, one of the hallmarks of the Information Society (IS).

In this framework, the learning experiences that are the basis of the construction of the LI are not confined to settings within formal education. People have learning experiences from and learn in a variety of contexts. This has always been the case, but with the spread of digital information and communication technologies (ICT), new contexts that provide opportunities and resources for learning have appeared. At the same time, the potential of the traditional settings as sources of learning has expanded significantly. People move across these contexts, participate in the activities that take place in them, take more or less advantage of the opportunities to learn and have learning experiences that provide the raw material to build a representation of themselves as learners.

On this basis, the project has three objectives:

- (i) to identify, describe and analyze the learning pathways of students who are at different stages of their schooling, based on their accounts of learning experiences, the socio-institutional contexts “including school-” in which these experiences occur, and the nature and characteristics of the activities to which these experiences are linked;
- (ii) to analyze the impact of the learning experiences reported by students on the meanings that they construct about themselves as learners; and
- (iii) to study two elements that, according to the results of previous research on the LI, play a prominent role in the processes of construction of this identity and are particularly relevant from an educational point of view, namely conceptions of learning that students use to construct meanings about themselves as learners, and the incidence of other identities “especially cultural and gender identities” in the construction of the LI.

In order to achieve these objectives, a multi-method approach is adopted that combines quantitative techniques and methods of collecting and analyzing data (questionnaires, descriptive statistics and correlational) with other qualitative methods (focus group interviews, individual interviews, graphical methods, content analysis, discourse analysis).

The design includes three phases.

- i) The first aims to identify and describe the types of activities in which the subjects are usually involved outside of school. For this purpose, data is collected through focus group interviews with children and adolescents, and individual interviews with parents.
- ii) The second aims to contrast, broaden and deepen the information obtained in the first phase by applying a questionnaire on learning experiences in school and non-school contexts to a relatively large sample of children and adolescents; and
- iii) The third seeks to obtain information from a relatively small sample of subjects about the construction of meanings about.

(end of abstract)

