

## Editorial

Contemporary education involves a shift towards a paradigm focused on students, learning and competences. In today's globalized environment, the educational context needs to add methodologies and tools to obtain high-performance capabilities. In the specific context of Europe, The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) places the concept of competence as the main element in the learning process, and students as the centre of the educational model.

The European Commission has expressed great concern for the gap between employers' skills demands and the skills possessed by workers. Transversal key competencies are demanded, such as problem-solving and analytical skills, self-management and communication skills, linguistic skills, and more generally, «non-routine skills». The competence-based learning model requires new and valuable learning tools to allow students to develop these skills and become active constructors of knowledge rather than just passive receivers of content.

Business simulations, games and other simulation tools provide a useful setting for students to acquire professional skills, which are much harder to acquire through traditional theory-based-learning methods. However, the final outcome of this useful setting is not still clear in terms of the student learning, with much more evidence needed to support the real benefits of these new educational tools.

For this special edition, we invited submissions of papers which may include exemplary but not limited to topics like:

- ♦ Serious games
- ♦ Assessment in games-based learning
- ♦ Use of mobile games for learning
- ♦ Location-based technology for game-based learning
- ♦ Business simulation for learning

- Innovative games and tools for learning
- Social and collaborative aspects of games-based learning
- Competence-based learning with games and simulations
- Cross-cultural comparison in games and simulation based learning
- Participants' perceptions using simulations and games

The result has been 6 papers included, four of them on the topic of the special issue, two included in the miscellany part, and two book reviews.

It is worth mentioning that the four published papers on the topics of the special issue are quite relevant to promote and further our knowledge on simulation and gaming in the learning process.

The first article is a study on practice firms as a simulation tool used in business studies, written by Dr. Massimo Bianchi, Dr. Daniele Gualdi and Dr. Laura Tampieri, in order to analyse the role of organizational ties developed in practice firms as part of the learning process of the students. The results Highlights the complex pattern of ties recreated within the firm and show a certain stability of educational and operative-external ties and the prevalence of internal ties. Furthermore, the feedback, measured as the waiting time for a response, inside the practice firms, analysed among their functional offices was lower than those related to external networking.

Another interesting and original paper by Dr. Jordi Carenys, Dr. Soledad Moya and Dr. Mar Vila analyses the effectiveness of an accounting videogame in terms of attributes, motivation and learning outcomes. Results show that, regarding attributes, most of them were favourably assessed, being the most valued those related to fun, engagement and the provision of clear information about the goals while the less valued were those regarding feedback. For motivation, results show that also participants perceive the learning experience as motivating, with a particular focus on enjoyment and sense of success. And regarding learning outcomes, results show the highest values meaning that students perceive that they are learning with the experience and achieving their objectives. This study suggests that even those students that declare a low esteem for videogames, or don't play it regularly) can benefit of its use in a learning environment.

The third paper written by Dr. Raquel Ferreras, Dr. Ana Beatriz Hernández-Lara and Dr. Enric Serradell-López, aims to develop a systematic literature review on entrepreneurship competences acquired in business plans. The results show that in recent years, with the reforms involved in the Bologna Process, studies on entrepreneurial skills and their relationship with the teaching/learning process have risen considerably. Thus, there are many experiences that include the study of competences or entrepreneurial competences in general and its relationship

to education. However, there are not studies that analyse the achievement of entrepreneurial competences by students when developing a business plan, which determines the suitability of going in-depth in this research line, showing a promising future line of research.

The fourth paper on the topic of this special issue written by Dr. Pablo Díaz-Luque and Dr. Cynthia H. W. Correa examines gamification and tourist destination, and makes a classification of games from the point of view of Destination Marketing Offices. The tourism sector begins to incorporate this tool inside its management and promotion actions. Technological companies with activity in tourism, the tourism sector firms itself, and the public agents develop online games to reinforce their processes and actions. Tourist destinations, through their management and promotion offices, also begin to incorporate this trend in their activities. This paper offers a classification around gamification, it will help to know more in-depth the different types of games from the point of view of the Destination Marketing Organizations.

We also include in this edition of the journal two studies that analyse other topics. The first one, an article from Dr. Ignasi Brunet and Dr. Rafael Bocker, presents a description of the vocational educational model in Spain. The second one, is a literature review written by Dr. August Corrons on complementary coins, money with values.

Lastly, this special issue includes two book reviews. The first one on the book of Yu-kai Chou *Actionable Gamification: Beyond Points, Badges and Leaderboards*, Freemont: CA. Ediciones Octalysis Media., written by Ferran Teixes-Argilés. The second book review made by Dr. Ignasi Brunet, is developed on the book *El gran retroceso. Un debate internacional sobre el reto urgente de reconducir el rumbo de la democracia* It's a collective work, written by Santiago Alba Rico, Arjun Appadurai, Donatella Della Porta, Nancy Fraser, Marina Garcés, Eva Illouz, Ivan Krastev, Pankaj Mishra, Robert Misik, Oliver Nachtwey, César Rendueles, Wolfgang Streeck, David Van Reybrouck and Slavoj Žižek. Barcelona. Editorial Seix Barral.

We would like to extend a sincere thank you to all the people involved with this issue. This publication would not have been possible if it were not for the contribution of colleagues in topics of simulation and gaming. Thank you so much for your valuable contributions.

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