The Importance of Education, in Proliferating Democratic Participation and Representation in the European Union, by Engaging with Cyber-technology

Introduction

This discussion paper is in 4 parts. The first section provides a conceptual overview explaining why this topic is an important consideration for future research in the European Union (EU). The conceptual overview acts as a precursor, signposting the salient issues to be explored e.g. how education is crucial to making informed decisions. Also that technological advances mean that all EU stakeholders must be able to use cyber-technology, due to the future likelihood that more services will be delivered by this medium. The second part of the paper provides a critical review of some of the educational methods using cyber-technology, which can be adapted to promote engagement with the EU agenda. Section two discusses some of the pedagogical aspects of education with digital technology, critically evaluating the different approaches. The third section discusses research methodology design, beginning briefly with an exploration of some of the philosophical aspects of research. Epistemology and ontology and their affect upon the researcher and the research conducted, is discussed in the section. The third section provided a critical review of some of the research methodology which could be used to investigate the role of education in promoting the EU agenda. The fourth part concludes my discussion paper, providing a brief critical theoretical review of the key issues, regarding the likely future role of education using cyber-technology, in enhancing democratic participation and representation in the EU.

Conceptual overview

Across the social sciences, the concept of democratic participation, representation and legitimacy, maintains a pressing level of importance. Policy makers, when dealing with questions of governance, accountability, scrutiny, all essential components of democratic participation and representation, have to consider the issue, are people equipped to deal with such abstract concepts. This early question provides a precursor to the wider, social, political, economic and perhaps cultural perspective, to justify the rationale that education has a key role in disseminating democratic participation and representation throughout the European Union (EU). Whether investigating the practice of EU institutions, or redistributive, environment or neighbourhood policies, democratic participation and representation are central to the stabilisation of sustained social orders. Being able to demonstrate how and why decisions were reached, facilitates justifying ordering practices. People need to understand, why a new hospital or school was built 20 kilometres from their home and not in their neighbourhood where they live. Similarly, people are given a rationale as to why certain practices have been made illegal, while others are not. At this early juncture, we have an indication that education plays a key role in the decision making process in the EU. People need to understand what is meant to be achieved, by decisions that have been made. People must also be able to comprehend, the societal benefit of allocating resources to certain issues, while deferring the provision of others. This process requires EU citizens to be educated, to the extent that people can critically evaluate, policies, procedures and protocol. Furthermore, people must be educated so they understand the socio-politico-economic-cultural factors, which influence such policy formulation.
The European Union is a geographically large area, home to some 500 million people, making the EU the largest, formally connected (28 member states) area on the planet. The EU is socially, politically, economically and culturally very diverse, having different constituents which are at different stages of a development cycle in neoliberal terms. Typical with most areas globally, approximately half of the EU’s population live in urban areas, cities, while the other half live in rural areas. This poses a number of societal challenges for the EU, most of which can ameliorated by better education of the EU populous, especially in the rural areas. The issue of the EU urban/rural nexus is of particular importance to the EU in terms of its European integration and Europeanisation agenda. Poverty and inequality indicators can appear more acute in rural areas, than in cities. This could act to derail European integration, if people living in the predominantly poor EU areas, the rural areas, cannot see any benefits in signing up to the European ideal. One social response to challenge what is a real danger to the European project is education, coupled with democratic participation and representation. Another generic facet of the EU urban/rural nexus is it provides an impetus to proliferate democratisation by the use of cyber-technology. Cyber-technology will enable people, living in EU rural areas to be able to engage with and participate in, the democratic process of EU decision making. However, people will have to be educated in the use of cyber-technology, in order for this intervention to be effective. An early recap, I have made two assertions, education and the use of cyber-technology are pivotal to increasing democratic participation and representation in the EU. These knowledge claims lead the reader to inquire, how does one examine the role of education, to establish whether it has any influence upon democratisation and representation in EU decision making. Other fundamental questions logically follow; how does one observe and measure an abstract and theoretical concept of democratic participation and representation. Can robust, plausible claims be made about the effect education had upon EU citizen’s engagement in EU decision making. To what extent, if any, was the role of education in democratic participation and representation, changed by differing social, economic, political and cultural climates that EU people live in? The reader can see that this list of fundamental questions, is far from exhaustive. My paper will provide a conceptual theoretical review of some of the critical issues surrounding the EU, education and cyber-technology. My paper will demonstrate how the European integration and Europeanisation process, is in danger from the critique of ‘democratic deficit’. The EU project will stall on a number of levels, if the majority of the EU populous are not sufficiently educated, to give informed consent.

Critical review of educational approaches using cyber-technology to increase understanding of European Union policy formulation

Model European Union

Model European Union (MEU) is a simulation exercise based upon European Union (EU) decision making and politics. In the course of the simulation debate real-life legislative proposals drafted by the European Commission (EC). Subsequently, MEU participants simulate EU law making, by adopting the roles of Members of the European Parliament (EP), or as Members of the Council of the European Union (COE). “MEU is therefore an educational project that succeeds in giving participants the opportunity to develop their skills in EU law debating and negotiations at an EU level and to understand the complexities of the EU in practice” (Model European Union, 2014, Official Website). The simulation exercise teaches participants, that
cooperation between the EP, the EC and the COE is at the heart of ordinary legislative procedure. MEU is very effective pedagogical tool for teaching European political sciences and provides a by-product, in the form of enhanced democratic participation and representation. MEU does have some educational limitations, participants have to have an existing high level of understanding in European affairs, in order to be able to fully participate in the simulation exercise. Participants have to be motivated, with a prior commitment of wanting to engage with the EU, for MEU to work efficiently. That said, as an educational tool, MEU is clearly beneficial ‘as a contributor to the goal of European integration’ (Model European Union, 2014, Official Website). By definition, MEU makes a concordant contribution to democratic participation and representation as well.

There are other simulation exercises such as EuroSim, which like MEU is an annual event. In EuroSim, approximately 170 students from the United States and Europe perform similar functions of simulating the role of political advisors, interpreters, lobbyist, think tank analysts and journalists. EuroSim takes place over a four day period. There is then a process of deep learning, which includes undergraduates reflecting upon what issues they encountered in their role play or simulation roles. Here, simulation and role play exercises have had the unintended consequence of encouraging reflective practice. Students focus not just upon what was learnt, but the pedagogical aspects of how knowledge was transferred, how for example, debating or negotiation skills were learnt. Once again, as with MEU, EuroSim participants are required to have a pre-existing, functional grounding and interest in the European Union. On this issue, the critique of EuroSim and MEU are exactly the same.

For role play and simulation exercises to be effective, they should be linked to real-life situations that have relevance to the learner. Ideally the student group would choose to the subject matter to be taught. This would facilitate the selection of the simulated body, which itself is influenced by the socio-political-economic-cultural setting. This paper focusses upon education using cyber-technology to enhance democratic participation in the EU. Simulation and role play are generic and transferable pedagogical tools, this is important when one considers more closely the definition of a simulated body. The simulated body could be an organisation in the private sector, or an international organisation. The simulated body could be a statutory agency such as a school, hospital or civil defence e.g. the police or fire service. Alternatively it could be a non-governmental organisation (NGO) e.g. a climate change, or an ageing demographics charity. The remit of the organisation, the simulated body, is influenced by its composition, powers and procedures. There needs to be consideration of why choose simulation as a learning tool, is it for curricula design or crisis intervention work. Or for our purpose, increasing democratisation in the EU, by using cyber-technology to educate people, in issues of governance, representation, scrutiny and accountability. The generic and fluid nature of simulation and role play, enables exercises to be tailor made to suit the background of the group of participants. This is especially important because it enables simulation and role play exercises to be implemented at public meetings, away from higher education institutions. Here, attendees will probably not have the academic background, motivation or interest in European affairs, compared to that of a social sciences undergraduate. Such public meetings provide an opportunity to educate people, on how digital cyber-technology can be used to access the EU decision making process (UNDESA, 2013, p2). As discussion develops in public meetings, people get to talk about the merits of EU
policies, detailing what their priorities are. This is the type of interaction EU policy makers are looking for, people using the information they have received at public meetings, subsequently choosing to access websites containing EU information. The simulation and role play exercises delivered at public meetings, also act to educate people on how they can have a direct say in EU policy formulation. A process which is substantively different to having a periodic vote every few years, to elect European Parliament members. Simulation and role play exercises, can be adapted to have a role in educating people regarding the Open Method of Coordination (OMC). OMC is discussed in the next section of this discussion paper.

**Open Method of Coordination**

Open Method of Coordination involves the use of scrutiny of guidelines, benchmarking, best practice and compliance indicators towards agreed policy goals (Europa, 2014, Official Website). OMC focuses upon scrutiny, is delivered by EU member states cooperating with each other, to address a societal challenge of common interest. This creates a national policy for each cooperating member state, directed towards a common objective. We now have intergovernmental EU policy implementation, with member states acting to evaluate each other’s performance on jointly agreed policy targets. This process creates normative expectations and also peer pressure, which when used constructively, often acts to improve performance in policy implementation. The EC has a surveillance role, helping to set policy agendas, encouraging certain member states into action, to alleviate pressing EU issues. The OMC approach often acts as a foothold, enabling the EC to raise issues perceived as manifesting themselves acutely, in certain EU member states. The choice of compliance indicators is pivotal to the success of OMC. Indicators need to adequately reflect the societal problem identified at the start of the process, in social terms, not just in economic, neoliberal terms. The EU address this issue by implementing a scheme called PROGRESS², which facilitates stakeholder representation on Social OMC. Social OMC considers social protection issues e.g. child poverty and homelessness.

“It has also been considered important that stakeholders participate in the Social OMC process at the EU level. In order to give stakeholders a voice, core funding is being provided for EU stakeholder networks through the programme for Employment and Social Solidarity – PROGRESS”

(Lelie and Vanhercke, OSE 10, 2013, p24)

The Social OMC process is overseen by the EU Social Protection Committee, this group has civil society organisation (CSO) representatives and other social partners, as full or co-opted lay members. The peer review facet of OMC acts to promote joint learning, training and knowledge transfer, particularly useful in disseminating best practice on community projects. The EU recognise via their OMC process, that there must be increased democratic participation throughout the whole process. There is similar EU recognition that all stakeholders, to include NGOs and member state authorities, must be represented at all stages during OMC. This approach helps the OMC to achieve set targets, with an element of legitimacy. Non-state actors have a voice in setting targets, what the compliance indicators are and how they will be monitored. Issues which are essential not just in achieving targets set, but just as importantly, crucial in helping to deflect the critique of democratic deficit.
that would surely be levelled, if local people are not being represented at the OMC level. Essentially the OMC approach would be criticised for acting ‘...as a Foucaultian tool for ‘governance at a distance’, concentrating power in the hands of the Commission and national executives’ (Haahr, 2004; Smismans, 2004 and 2008, cited in Zeitlin et al, 2014, p6). OMC can be adapted to enhance democratic participation, representation and the use of cyber-technology. People can access a software package on their handheld device, to inform the OMC panel whether a certain policy objective was met or not. People can also give feedback on how effective they perceived a certain service to be, having a vote as to whether this service should continue to be funded or not. This would be an adaption of ‘crowdsourcing’, ‘...engaging with large, undefined groups of people to address a message or engage in a specific task’ (Council of Europe, 2014, p21). By getting people to engage in OMC using their mobile phone, tablet or laptop, people will become educated on one mechanism by which EU priorities are reached. Furthermore, people will become more educated on complex abstract ideas e.g. agenda setting, media manipulation or proportional representation, learning how such issues can affect the EU decision making process.

**E-Learning**

Electronic or e-learning is the use of cyber-technology, electronic media and information and communication technology (ICT) in education. E-learning encompasses all forms of educational technology in learning and teaching. An extremely long list includes virtual learning environment (VLE), technology-enhanced learning (TEL), internet-based training (IBT), computer-assisted or computer-aided instruction (CAI) and online education. There are literally dozens more, all share at least one common feature of being either electronic, digital, using a silicon chip, or only being accessible via the internet. E-learning can be received inside or outside a classroom, or at home. E-learning can be self-directed learning, asynchronous learning, or academic led, synchronous learning. E-learning can be done in tandem with classroom tuition, blended learning, or on a distance or flexible learning basis. The latter is very useful as asynchronous learning allows people to teach themselves, without being dependent upon other people’s involvement in the learning process. Asynchronous learning is especially beneficial for people who may have childcare responsibilities or health care problems. Such people can learn at their own pace at a time to suit them. They may not be able to attend a synchronous learning session, where they have to interact with other participants at a set time. In asynchronous internet-based courses, people can re-play teaching and information again, stored on their digital device. Synchronous e-learning environments can include online real life contact time with an instructor, also feedback on earlier learning. Synchronous e-learning enables collaborative online distance learning using virtual operating or classrooms, chat rooms or Skype webcam conversations. Here, small or large groups of people are learning, problem solving an issue working as a team, with everyone online simultaneously. There are several strands to the operational mechanics and pedagogical aspects of e-learning. This paper discusses just one of those strands, that of e-learning as a technological medium, which assists in the communication and transfer of knowledge.

Classroom 2.0 and e-learning 2.0 are effective ways to learn teach the theory and practice of democratic participation and representation, using cyber-technology. Classroom 2.0 can be adapted to connect two or more separate locations that may be
in two different regions of a country or in different EU member states all together. Social and cultural integration learning opportunities are enhanced as two or more joint sets of learners, discuss via classroom 2.0, aspects of EU decision making. Skype and videoconferencing are two mediums by which classroom 2.0, a computer-supported collaborative e-learning system approach, can be delivered. E-learning 2.0 is different to classroom 2.0 in the sense that knowledge is itself socially constructed. Here, learning takes place through conversations with other people, interacting to discuss problems and possible solutions. Essentially a form of peer learning, social learning takes place. Social learning works on the basis that one mechanism to acquire knowledge or a skill, is to teach others. Under e-learning 2.0, one manner in which social learning could manifest itself, is by the development of a spokesperson who is confident they have understood the facet of the EU project, which has been discussed. This spokesperson would become elected by a process agreed by the e-learning participants, then proceed to teach others and themselves, the inner workings of the EU aspect they had been discussing. E-learning 2.0 allows people living in different cities, if not countries, to problem solve together, by the use of virtual world, blogs and podcasts. In that sense, e-learning 2.0 and classroom 2.0 are quite similar. However, these e-learning mechanisms are pedagogically quite different. In essence, classroom 2.0 teaches by instructivist knowledge transfer. Whereas e-learning 2.0 teaches by a constructivist, experiential learning basis, learning by doing, crossed with peer type, social learning knowledge transfer. Both these e-learning technological approaches can be used to educate and motivate people, regarding democratic participation and representation in the EU.

Massive Open Online Courses
Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) belong are a form of e-learning. There are two types of MOOCs, the cMOOC and the xMOOC. The cMOOC use open source learning platforms and are conducted internally, by academics based entirely at their home institution. Their pedagogical approach is that of peer learning. The c in cMOOC is for connectivism, a process which helps to underpin peer learning. People acquire various skills and knowledge by making connections between different domains, activities and individuals they interact with. The xMOOC is an online electronic version of traditional university based, lecture, seminar, workshop, plenary discussion, on tailor made specialist online platforms, provided by a third party private enterprise. Thus xMOOCs are delivered by a contractual arrangement between a university who supplies the pedagogical content, and a technology supplier who provides the software and the hardware, by which the xMOOC is presented. MOOCs are different to other more traditional forms of e-learning, as hardly any professional academic teaching time is allocated to supporting the learner (Haggard, BIS 130, 2013, p10/11).

The differences between the two types of MOOCs are worth expanding on further. They act to explain how online e-learning in MOOCs, can be adapted to teach problem solving, tact, diplomacy, debating and negotiating skills.

“cMOOCs emphasise connected, collaborative and the courses are built around a group of like-minded ‘individuals’ who are relatively free institutional constraints. cMOOCs provide a platform to explore new pedagogies beyond traditional classroom settings and, as such, tend to exist on the radical fringe of HE. On the other hand, the instructional model, (xMOOCs), is essentially an extension of the pedagogical models practiced within the institution
themselves, which is arguably dominated by the “drill and grill” instructional methods with video presentations, short quizzes and testing”

(Yuan and Powell, 2013, p7)

Further analysis of Yuan and Powells (2013) observation, demonstrate MOOCS can be adapted to act as a pedagogical tool to teach service learning, participatory action research, project based learning and community based research. Online e-learning through MOOCS won’t provide the experiential learning element of the civic practices learning journey, which students clearly benefit from. However the use of MOOCs, can provide subject specific specialist knowledge on a learning module basis, to teach issues such as democratic participation and representation. Furthermore, the cyber-technology used in delivering and engaging with either c or x type MOOCs, can be directly used for exploring democratisation issues, such as EU interaction with special interest parties. MOOCs can be adapted for simulation and role play exercises, for example key information regarding a discussion topic, could be released in stages. MOOC can then be used to have an online mass discussion, where people indicate if they had changed their perception regarding the subject matter, once new information came to light. This exercise could be used to demonstrate how knowledge is power, if certain factions had a gatekeeping role, this could be abused for the purpose of agenda setting. The online e-learning of MOOCs using cyber-technology, might perhaps act to demonstrate this facet of democratic participation, more effectively than traditional learning methods. Non-cyber technology teaching would not have the same speed of effective communication, as educating people using MOOC. This exercise using MOOCs could be rolled out and implemented at public meetings, educating people how important it is that they engage with the EU process. These self-same public meetings can also be used to proliferate democratic participation and representation, demonstrating it is in people’s best interests to be able to use digital devices. This is particularly important in the European integration and Europeanisation process. Due to the ageing demographics, the EU population is getting older, in keeping with global trends. Research has consistently demonstrated that older people are more likely to vote than younger people. Research also shows that elderly people are less likely to regularly to use a hand held device compared to younger people. The continuing societal impetus of constant technological changes means there is a growing danger that elderly people will be disenfranchised if they are not educated to be able to use cyber-technology. Not only will this affect democratisation, the ability or inability to use cyber-technology will have substantial implications in many other areas e.g. accessing healthcare and social protection payments (European Commission, Work Programme 2013, p10; UNDESA, 2013, p3). This societal challenge of educating people using cyber-technology, so they become active citizens engaging in democratic participation, underscores the interdisciplinary aspects required to affect change. There is one challenge to MOOCs current meteoric rise of being able to educate masses of people. Distributed open collaborative course (DOCC) emphasises not the grand scale of MOOC, but that knowledge transfer might be better achieved from the existing expertise of all online course participants. DOCC recognises that such expertise is present throughout the whole group, not just in a couple of individuals, MOOC barely acknowledges this issue.

Research design methodology – a critical review
The importance of philosophy on research design methodology

The nature of the research inquiry is the benchmark by which the choice of research methodology should be made. This makes the researcher’s philosophy, critical to the manner in which the research is conducted. A researcher’s philosophy tells the reader, the philosophic view of the surrounding world held by the researcher. This gives an insight into how the researcher considers knowledge and knowing, the role individual values have on interpretation, and how they would approach a research inquiry. “Every research tradition makes four key assumptions: ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological” (Wahl and Prause, 2013, p.72).

Epistemological and ontological issues to consider in research

From Wahl and Prause’s (2013) observation about research, two of the four key concepts mentioned, epistemology and ontology, need to be defined. This is because they affect the philosophical approach of a researcher, and subsequently the nature on which the inquiry would be conducted. Epistemology can be defined as all of one’s explicit and implicit beliefs, attitudes and assumptions about the acquisition, structure, representation, and application of knowledge (Tsai, 2012, p.310). In practice, epistemology employs a scientific discourse derived from the epistemologies of positivism and realism. Epistemology is about discovering the underlying meaning of events and social interaction. On research study implementation, epistemology can be defined as a focus upon reliable and valid tools, with which to uncover knowledge. Epistemology can be said to be different forms of knowledge of reality (Bamber et al, 2012, p.47). Using this definition, the researcher would be constantly asking questions, mainly regarding the potential for an accidental introduction of bias into the proceedings. This epistemological approach would ask, what is the nature of the relationship that exists between the researcher and the participant? How do we know that what we’ve seen is the truth? Epistemology would also ask, how do we come to understand a unique person’s worldview? Such questions help the researcher to understand, the perception of the social, political, economic and cultural context of the social action observed, could be influencing how the researcher chooses to interpret the data collected. Epistemological beliefs can help the researcher to understand repressed and/or subconscious views, which have remained hidden from the research participant and perhaps significant others attention (Krauss and Turpin, 2013, p.7).

Philosophically, epistemology can be propositional or non-evidentiary, alternatively, it can be weak or strong argument (Nicholson, 2013, p.1).

Figure 1 provides diagrammatically, further conceptual explanation of the nature of epistemology and ontology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Epistemology</th>
<th>Ontology</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explicit and implicit knowledge</td>
<td>Nature of reality and being</td>
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</table>
We next move on to ontology, which similarly to epistemology, involves how a person views the world around them. In one interpretation of ontology, reality is created by individuals and groups. In this interpretation, ontology is an individual's collective beliefs about the nature of reality and being. Developing deductively, ontology would mean the world and knowledge is created by social and contextual understanding. Reality exists and has been created on a directed social basis. There is an objective reality and we can understand it, and it through the laws by which it is governed. Reality is the practical effects of ideas. (Ritchie et al, 2013, p4). A definition of ontological belief, is the researcher accepts the origin, permanence and changeability of reality and being. Put simply, ontology is identifying the reality of “how things really are” and “how things really work” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011, p201). This fits in with the social constructivist perspective, who would favour research design methodology which is qualitative in nature. A research approach which is most effective at interpreting human social action from the insider perspective (Brundrett and Rhodes, 2013, p15).

Research methodological design choices to study the role of education

This paper gives a critical theoretical review of various methodological approaches that could be adapted, to analyse the effect of education upon democratic participation and representation in the EU.

Social Network Analysis

Social network analysis (SNA) can be used for either quantitative, or qualitative research (Dobson et al, 2013, p72), so it can be used in a mixed-methods research design. “Social Network analysis (SNA) often uses a sociogram to clarify different concepts. Sociograms are network graphs in which nodes represent actors and ties represent relationships between them” (Chu et al, 2013, p2). A sociogram (Moreno, 1933, p17, cited in Yan 2013, p4), is a powerful analytical tool that enables the researcher to identify causal relationships between various independent variables e.g. disease spread knowledge (Christakis and Fowler, 2010, p2), or tobacco usage studies (Chu et al, 2013, p2). SNA can be used to study how education or the lack of
effects people’s interaction with the EU and the concordant effect upon democratic participation and representation.

**Secondary data sets**
The research design could choose to include the use of secondary data sets, which themselves can come in many forms. Epistemological, ontological and objectivity considerations manifest themselves, in choice of time period in which the secondary data sets are taken from. There’s also such influence on choice of secondary data, which press releases, company reports, audited accounts, statements, speeches, media contact and press interviews. Similarly, who authored such documents? Secondary data sets written by stakeholders who rely upon an EU supporting organisation for a significant service they use, might author much more favourable text, then a special interest political party, who are campaigning against some of the organisation’ activities (Mundaca et al, World Bank Working Paper 6565, 2013, p28).

Analysis of secondary data sets would take place from the epistemological position at the outset, that education has some effect upon democratic participation and representation in the EU. In the process of conducting the research using secondary data sets, the inquiry could be geared to collect and interpret the effect of education, or the lack of, upon people’s perception of how the EU affect their lives (Sharples et al, 2013, p36). That would be an ontological choice made by the researcher.

**Data collection and analysis**
The paper turns to discussion of some of the theoretical concepts, of a fundamental process which underpins research methodological design, that of data collection and analysis. Table 1 details the six most common ways in which research studies are designed, providing a conceptual framework of the epistemological and ontological construct, for each methodological measurement strategy.

**Table 1: Six measurement strategies used in research** (Schraw, 2013, p9)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Construct that is measured</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Design of the measurement tool</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires</td>
<td>Measure multiple, presumably independent epistemological beliefs</td>
<td>Questionnaires</td>
<td>Agreement using a Likert scale using specific statements</td>
<td>Measures separate independent beliefs using same scale; statistical analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>These methods measure the structure, impact and origin of the belief</td>
<td>Interview, verbal responses, think-alouds (Hofer, 2004)</td>
<td>Usually a structured interview with probes</td>
<td>Depths of response; justification of beliefs, evidence and examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vignettes</td>
<td>Vignettes measure commitment to different epistemological world views and stances</td>
<td>Vignettes that summarise a prototypical world view or situation</td>
<td>Agreement using a Likert scale using to the vignette</td>
<td>Measures relative commitment to separate world views described in the vignette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essays, journals and storyboards</td>
<td>These measure the structure, origins and impact of beliefs</td>
<td>Detailed question</td>
<td>Usually an essay focussing upon one of several specific questions</td>
<td>Depth of response; justification of beliefs, evidence and examples; can be revised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept maps</td>
<td>Measure the relationships among beliefs</td>
<td>Individual create a concept map</td>
<td>Individuals construct the concept map; identifies key concepts and their links</td>
<td>Identifies key concepts and their relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scales</td>
<td>Scales measure commitment to epistemological and ontological relativism</td>
<td>Four quadrant scale</td>
<td>Situates oneself at a specific point in the quadrant</td>
<td>Compares epistemological and ontological beliefs using the same scale; measures strength on each dimension</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the methodological tools discussed in Table 1, can be used on an interchangeable, multidisciplinary basis. This means that the six measurement strategies discussed,
can be used in mixed-methods and grounded theory research methodological design (Schraw, 2013, p8).

**Data collection and data analysis revisited – a few more examples**
The researcher could choose to use interactive board games, adapted to encourage the use or discussion of people's perception, of what role education could play in proliferating democratic participation and representation in the EU. Such interaction, perhaps at a public meeting or conference could also illicit responses, which indicate if people feel that education is more or less likely to feature in initiatives to democratise the EU. In a different setting e.g. a team building event, or workshop, simulation or role play could be used. Here participants would be asked to play the part of either an educated or uneducated stakeholder. After group work, participants feedback what they feel people's perceptions are of EU decision making processes to the wider community, if stakeholders are educated or not. Role play and simulation exercises can then conclude with a plenary session where representatives of each role, can feedback their views of the issues faced by each type of internal or external EU stakeholder, educated or not. These interactive board games, role play or simulation, can also be used to establish, if people felt that better governance and accountability policies would be devised or not, changing the efficacy of EU policy and practice 4(Leeds Metropolitan University, 2013, ‘Roll With It’ and ‘Curveball’).

Finally, when discussing data collection and analysis, this author’s epistemological and ontological choice, is to use NVivo10 to analyse the verbal or text discourse. I feel NVivo10 software, with its ability to analyse a rich multi-layered tapestry, of the many nuances and themes that can arise, is the most accurate way to analyse interview data and secondary data sets. There is also non-verbal communication (NVC) data which can be observed during interviews, which in turn can be themed and coded, as part of data analysis method.

**The future role of education in promoting the EU agenda**

**Conclusion**
This discussion paper has considered the role of education in democratising EU policy and practice. My paper has highlighted that the EU citizenship must be educated in order to be active, so people are enabled to become fully informed and have a real say in EU decision making processes. There are constant technological advances at an ever increasing pace, which will affect all our lives, in numerous ways. For European integration and Europeanisation to continue progress, it is in the EU’ interest that the citizenship is sufficiently educated to be able to use cyber-technology. Extreme weather events are becoming more frequent due to climate change. During these periods, transport becomes difficult, people will need to be able to communicate with statutory agencies on key issues e.g. healthcare and social protection payments. Furthermore during extreme weather, or for reasons of disability, poor health or childcare duties, people will need to be able to be educated or work from home. This is where people being competent in cyber-technology usage is crucial to the EU agenda. This issue becomes more acute when one considers that a significant proportion of the EU population live in rural areas. The ageing demographics are another causal factor highlighting the need to educate the EU populous. Generally, older people will make regular calls for healthcare, as often they have complex needs, requiring a multidisciplinary approach in their care plan. The health and social care
professionals need to be proficient, educated in the use of cyber-technology, in order to deliver their service to the ageing population. As an unintended consequence of discussing the role of educating people using cyber-technology, to promote democratic participation and representation in the EU, my paper has digressed into the global societal challenge of ageing demography. The author hopes the reader perceives this as a positive benefit in the discussion.

Notes

1 SOCIENTIZE is a consortium of mainly universities and higher education institutions in Spain. The SOCIENTIZE project has been engaged by the European Commission’s Digital Science Unit to coordinate public consultation on citizen science.

2 The PROGRESS Programme (2007-2013) is a financial instrument supporting the development and coordination of EU policy, in the areas of employment, social inclusion and social protection, working conditions, anti-discrimination and gender equality (Lelie and Vanhercke, OSE 10, 2013, p24).

3 Connectivism, is a theory of learning which emphasises the extent to which knowledge and skills emerge from connections experienced between different domains of activity such as experience, learning and knowledge, as well as between individuals in a social network. It foregrounds learners’ exposure to social and cultural experiences, rather than their exposure to didactic transmission or self-directed enquiry. Connectivism is closely associated to educational theorists such as George Siemens (Haggard, BIS 130, 2013, p11).

4 ‘Roll with It’ and ‘Curveball’ are two interactive games that have been designed by a project team at Leeds Metropolitan University. They are pedagogical tools to assist in the teaching of Research Methods. They can be adapted to virtually any social science discipline, including researching the effects of education EU processes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>(Page No*)</th>
<th>Full Wording</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAI</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>Computer-assisted or Computer-aided Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CETIS</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>Centre for Educational Technology Interoperability and Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COE</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>Council of the European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>EP</td>
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<td>EU</td>
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<td>EUI</td>
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<td>European University Institute</td>
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<td>GIGA</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>German Institute of Global and Area Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>IBT</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>Internet-based Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>JISC</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>Joint Information Services Committee</td>
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<td>MEU</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>Model European Union</td>
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<td>NIC</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>National Intelligence Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>OMC</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>Open Method of Coordination</td>
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<tr>
<td>OSE</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>European Social Observatory</td>
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<td>PROGRESS</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity</td>
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<tr>
<td>RSCAS</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>Robert Schumann Centre for Advanced Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social OMC</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>Open Method of Coordination in Social Protection and Inclusion</td>
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<tr>
<td>TEL</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>Technology-enhanced Learning</td>
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<td>UNDESA</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs</td>
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<td>UNSDN</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VLE</td>
<td>(p1)</td>
<td>Virtual Learning Environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bibliography


Leeds Metropolitan University, 2013, ‘Roll With It’ and ‘Curveball’


