Abstract

This article aims to reflect on the teaching and learning experience, in the context of a curricular subject in a Master Degree Course (Specialisation in Educational Technology) organized in the form of a (virtual) learning community. The point of view of the students, who participated in this community, is analysed on the basis of curricular theory, with special emphasis on the development of experiential learning, and particularly, on the factors which the participants take as essential, both in terms of the creating of a learning community as well as of the description of its dynamics. This exploratory study is based, mainly, on the answers the community participants gave to a semi-structured questionnaire, a year after having finished the course. The answers were analysed in two complementary phases: the first focusing on the explicit content of the answer to each question, with the aim of capturing the perception of the former students on each one of the topics they were questioned about and, at the same time, representing the structure of the emerging relationship; the second, transversal and holistic, carried out according to the results of the first phase, and aiming to characterize the perspective of those questioned on the curricular model they considered to be most appropriate to the development of a learning community in its virtual dimension. The provisional results of this study, as this is just the first phase of a broader study, including participants from other communities, seem, on the one hand, to confirm the convictions of the authors of this study regarding the particular adequacy of an open and flexible curricular model, when the aim is to organize learning around objectives that are common to a group of people and when that learning take advantage of the potential of communication and access to information which the Internet provides nowadays. However, on the other hand, the results display the lack of critical awareness on the part of the participants regarding curricular models.

Keywords

On-line education, virtual communities of learning, concept of curriculum.