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GAIHE Survey Report Results

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Overview

This survey attempts to answer a number of specific questions:

• How does the management of universities adapt to innovations?
• What, if any, are the new modes of education provision?
• What is the role of university governance in establishing and regulating innovative modes of education provision?
• What are the motivations, barriers and drivers for innovative education provision?

Throughout the survey, the emphasis is on innovation for education, rather than any other potential outcomes.
Survey Background

• Survey from the Governance and Adaptation to Innovative Modes of Higher Education Provision (GAIHE) Project, funded by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) through the Lifelong Learning Programme.
• Survey conducted from 31/3/14 to 18/4/14
• Results from Report on the Survey of Governance and Adaptation to Innovative Modes of Higher Education Provision (GAIHE).
• Online at: http://arrow.dit.ie/aaschsslrep/26/
Innovation Definition

• Derived from the OECD’s Oslo Manual: Guidelines for Collecting and Interpreting Innovation Data (2005):

  “An innovation is the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service), or process, a new marketing method, or a new organisational method in business practices, workplace organisation or external relations.” (§ 146)

• Survey defined innovation as a “change with an increased ADDED value, replacing an existing product or production method”, implemented since 2008.
Literature Review: I

• 4 suggested **drivers** of innovation:

1. Knowledge Economy/Society 
2. Accessibility 
   (Tuomi 2013; Jones and Lau 2010; Barber et al. 2013)
3. Disruptive Innovation 
   (Bleed 2007; Istance 2011; Flavin 2013)
4. Financial Pressures 
   (Blin and Munro 2008; Smith 2012; Barber et al. 2013; Brennan et al. 2014)
Literature Review: II

• **Agents of change:**
  – **Students** (Pedro 2006; Redecker et al. 2009; Newland and Byles 2014)
  – **Teaching staff** (Flavin 2013; Bayne and Ross 2014; Brennan et al. 2014)
  – **HEIs themselves** (Brennan et al. 2014)

• **Barriers:**
  – **Student resistance** (Jaldemark and Lindberg 2013)
  – **Teaching staff resistance** (Smith 2012; SJSU 2013)
  – **Organizational obstacles** (Istance 2011; Jones and Lau 2010)
Survey: Respondent Overview

- **SurveyMonkey** Online survey
  - Contacted 47 HEIs, selected by consortium members (6* per country)
  - 31 respondents answered all of the 29 questions, 16 answered some
  - Total of 47 responses, but **not** 100% response rate. Some HEI responded twice...

- Countries: Austria, France, Ireland, Latvia, Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain. Regional parity.

- Date of HEI establishment
  - Majority (58.6%) of respondents from post-1970 HEIs

- Type of HEI
  - Majority (65.5%) of respondents from teaching and research focused HEIs
  - Majority (72.4%) of respondents from public HEIs
Survey Findings

- **All** (N=42) respondents indicated there had been innovations in their HEI since 2008.

- **Level of innovation**: “Module” level dominates over “Programme” or “Institution” levels... Low hanging fruit?

- **New modes of education provision**:
  - “New technologies” not always successful.
  - Many (96%) respondents have established partnerships with other HEIs, but success of these questioned by some participants.

- **Innovation leadership**: Top management/rector-level and teaching staff regarded as most important; students, admin. and library staff less so.
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Survey: Innovation Drivers

• Equally on “efficiency/better use of resources” and ‘improving learning outcomes’
  – All respondents identified these as drivers.

• Responding to “societal/economic needs and regional accessibility”
  – Importance of maintaining a relationship between HEIs and the wider community.

• “Requirements of funding models” and “economies of scale”.

• Growth in alternative ed. provision least influential.
Survey: Innovation Leaders I

YES
Rector and senior leadership team
University governance body
University Teaching Staff

NO / ?
Regional/local external administrative body
Media
General Public
Employers and Business Leaders
Survey: Innovation Leaders II

- University governance body
- Rector and senior leadership team
- University teaching staff
- University administrative staff
- Students of the university
- University library staff
- National government/ministries
- Employers or Business leaders
- Regional/local external administrative...
- General Public
- Media

0 = NOT AT ALL responsible
1 = Responsible in a MINOR way
2 = Responsible in a RELATIVELY MORE SIGNIFICANT way
3 = Responsible in a VERY SIGNIFICANT way
Survey: Barriers to Innovation I

• Student and administration staff resistance to change is not seen as having inhibited change, or doing so to only a limited extent.

• Insufficient financial resources and insufficient skilled personnel however did inhibit innovation.
  – Less consensus on where the emphasis is.

• Over half of respondents said academic staff resistance to change was either quite or very strong.

• A spread of views aside from this...
Survey: Barriers to Innovation II

Inadequate organisational structure: 27.3% did not inhibit innovation at all, 39.4% inhibited innovation to a limited extent, 18.2% to quite a large extent, 15.2% to a very large extent.

Atmosphere in workplace, interpersonal relations, etc.: 27.3% did not inhibit innovation at all, 36.4% inhibited innovation to a limited extent, 27.3% to quite a large extent, 9.1% to a very large extent.

Student resistance to change: 42.4% did not inhibit innovation at all, 39.4% inhibited innovation to a limited extent, 15.2% to quite a large extent, 3.0% to a very large extent.

Administration staff resistance: 12.1% did not inhibit innovation at all, 66.7% inhibited innovation to a limited extent, 18.2% to quite a large extent, 3.0% to a very large extent.

Academic staff resistance to change: 12.1% did not inhibit innovation at all, 36.4% inhibited innovation to a limited extent, 42.4% to quite a large extent, 9.1% to a very large extent.

Absence/insufficient control mechanisms: 34.4% did not inhibit innovation at all, 37.5% inhibited innovation to a limited extent, 25.0% to quite a large extent, 3.1% to a very large extent.

Insufficient forward planning: 27.3% did not inhibit innovation at all, 36.4% inhibited innovation to a limited extent, 27.3% to quite a large extent, 9.1% to a very large extent.

Lack of leadership to support/understand change required: 33.3% did not inhibit innovation at all, 33.3% inhibited innovation to a limited extent, 15.2% to quite a large extent, 18.2% to a very large extent.

Human resource management functions didn't support it: 33.3% did not inhibit innovation at all, 36.4% inhibited innovation to a limited extent, 21.2% to quite a large extent, 9.1% to a very large extent.

Wrong type of internal communication in HEI: 27.3% did not inhibit innovation at all, 39.4% inhibited innovation to a limited extent, 27.3% to quite a large extent, 6.1% to a very large extent.

Insufficient vision for innovativeness: 24.2% did not inhibit innovation at all, 36.4% inhibited innovation to a limited extent, 24.2% to quite a large extent, 15.2% to a very large extent.

Insufficient skilled personnel: 9.1% did not inhibit innovation at all, 39.4% inhibited innovation to a limited extent, 30.3% to quite a large extent, 21.2% to a very large extent.

Insufficient financial resources: 12.1% did not inhibit innovation at all, 15.2% inhibited innovation to a limited extent, 21.2% to quite a large extent, 51.5% to a very large extent.

0 = Did not inhibit innovation at all
1 = Inhibited innovation to a limited extent
2 = Inhibited innovation to quite a large extent
3 = Inhibited innovation to a very large extent
Survey: Impacts

- **All** said there had been changes in organisational structures and staffing
- Greater emphasis on **quality assurance** (89%)
- Greater emphasis on **accountability** (70%)
- Most (82%) made changes to mission statements
  - Easy, **cosmetic changes**? Intention is there...
- Little change (33.3%) in the role of the Rector/President
- Split in terms of introducing **new teaching positions**, and in terms of demanding greater flexibility from academic staff, as well as new performance/compensation criteria for staff
- 96% established **partnerships** with other institutions
- Less emphasis on becoming more specialist, reducing the number of faculties/schools, downsizing the HEI, or mergers with other institutions...
- More investments in technology to support academic staff
Survey: The Future of Innovation

• Agreement on the importance of technology to ensuring innovation (93% agree or strongly agree).
• There is a split on the question of MOOCs, with more disagreeing with the idea that they make HE better.
• 84% view academic staff as leaders of innovation and change.
• Majority (68%) of respondents don’t think their HEIs are one of the most innovative in Europe.
• 63% think European HE is one of the most innovative in the world.
• Governance problems with innovation...
Survey: Desired Changes

Desired changes to support innovation in education provision:

“A significant shift from state control of higher education to state steerage; HEIs need the HRM toolkit to manage their own affairs. Contracts are too rigid to support flexible and innovative initiatives.”

“My HEI has very limited autonomy due to centralized and ministerial power. The first step ought to be to gain full autonomy and responsibility.”
Issues Arising I

• Less flexibility in terms of introducing innovations in European HEIs – real or perceived?
  – GRC and Higher ed.: Result of established public system of HE and “compliance” mindset?
  – Innovation, by contrast, is a “risk” activity.

• Compare with US experience (Pearson 2013).

• Response to societal/economic needs, as well as an emphasis on efficiency... European situation different to the US?

• Less negative view of MOOCs in Europe than US.

• “Low-hanging fruit” innovations (module level) have been implemented, LR suggested this is commonly the case
Issues Arising II

- Staff as both barriers and drivers?
  - Possibly module-level instigators...
  - But programme- and institution-level innovation may require more work between HEI management and academic staff...thus resistance

- Problems of definition, what kinds of changes are being discussed?
  - Were the changes simply *part of the normal ebb and flow of development and evolution* within an institution or across a system?
  - Were they *intended* changes with a view to adding value, as the survey hoped to capture?
  - Between these two extremes, the “low-hanging fruit” of easily implemented changes, first steps in thorough-going process of value-adding innovation...
Comments...

Questions...

Thank you