Advance Social Innovation and Sustainability: Problem-Based learning in Service Design Pedagogy

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Richard Buchanan proposed ‘four orders of design’ according to the levels and nature of problems (Buchanan 1990; Buchanan 1992; Buchanan 2001; Buchanan 2019). The first order of design involves problems of communication. The second order of design is about problems of constructions in tangible products. The focus of this article is on the third and fourth orders of design, which involves problems of actions in activities and services, and problems of integration in the environment and social systems. In teaching service design, the challenges the students facing were identifying and verifying the ‘wicked problems’ in 3rd and 4th order. By teaching the service design as a mode of inquiry, postgraduate design students had more opportunities for conversation, action and reflection. Their service design approaches include exploring authentic, real-world problems through service design thinking, and the methods for knowledge production are expanded (both tangible and intangible).

This paper presents the reflection and findings from a Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in postgraduate Service Design teaching and learning. Eight Master of Design Strategies students’ service design projects (semester-long) were studied and analysed. The analysis revealed the challenges in student’s approaches in different stages of design thinking. Findings suggest three practical intervention in the transition from divergent thinking to convergent thinking and vis versa. The service design thinking, combined with project-
based learning (PBL), was adapted and illustrated how-to advance social innovation and sustainability in the postgraduate teaching and learning.

Reference:

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Fanke is a discipline lead and senior lecturer at the Faculty of Arts and Design, University of Canberra. Fanke is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and in 2019 was awarded two Vice Chancellor’s Teaching Excellence Awards – University Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning (team award), and University Citations for Innovative Approaches to Teaching and Learning (team award). As the founder of the Cross-Cultural Design Lab, she is passionate about cross-cultural and interdisciplinary teaching and research. Her research focus is on design and health, creative thinking, cross-cultural design pedagogy, and service design for sustainability and social impact. She has worked on a range of interdisciplinary projects, supported by funding from Australian Council for the Arts, UK research councils (AHRC, ESRC, EPSRC, TSB), the Museum of Australian Democracy, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Fund. Recent publications include Cross Cultural Design for Healthy Ageing (co-edited book 2020), Service Design Thinking for Social Good (co-authored journal article 2020) and Cross-Cultural Design (co-authored book 2017).