

Comparative Education

Innova Schools in Peru Through Arnove's Comparative Education Framework

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Arnove asserts three different elements to achieve Comparative Education, an educational configuration used as a barometer to measure academic success. The variables of Arnove's theoretical framework are pragmatic, international and scientific dimension (2013). Each of these factors will be used to compare and contrast different variables to determine pedagogical achievement in Peru's Innova School.

In 2011, Carlos Rodriguez-Pastor wanted to create an alternative for middle class children to obtain a quality education. At the time, nearly a quarter of Peru's school-aged children attended private schools because the public school had a "jail" feeling to them (Weller, 2017). Therefore, Pastor partnered with IDEO design firm; together, they birthed Innova Schools, an institution that has obtained the International Design Excellence Award.

Arnove's Pragmatic Dimension assesses the practicality of educational institutions; this perspective suggests realistically comparing effective and ineffective approaches to achieve academic success (2013). Innova's ideologies and methodologies revolve around its physical space, academic curriculum and teacher's instructional practices. Physically, Innova Schools have a "modular" design element that are both "open and expansive" (Weller, 2017). Intentional design elements provide a sense of openness and accessibility for both teachers and students. Innova wanted parents "to feel confident their kids were learning in a high-quality environment" (Weller, 2017), opposite of a jail-like confinement feel.

Innova's academic blended learning model has two critical components – technology and independent guided study. Providing a flexible framework that promotes student centered creativity is an underlying factor in Innova's ideology (IDEO, 2019). In a typical school day, classes are divided into two sections. One half of the school day is utilized for independent online inquiry, while the other half is student-led collaboration with minimal teacher input. Innova values when students have opportunity to develop skills needed for the competitive global economy. Furthermore, to meet the demands of the ever-growing Innova Schools, veteran teachers created a catalog of over 20,000 lessons for the Teacher Resource Center (Weller, 2017). This practice promotes uniformity among schools while providing an invaluable, time saving stratagem for novice teachers.

Arnove's Global Dimension suggests society assess the educational infrastructure beyond the four walls of a typical classroom to note effective approaches that are not one-size-fits-all (2013). Innova values holistic education and infuses time for socialization within the school day. To achieve this, time is allotted where the classroom is brought "outside so that kids aren't overwhelmed by their frequent use of laptops" (Weller, 2017). Innova prides itself in "constantly scanning the world for inspiration on how to best educate their students" (IDEO, 2019). Globally, students are encouraged to connect to their world by conducting a self-directed social challenge which they have to present their solutions at the end of the year. "Innova insists that kids need to be self-directed if they're ever going to succeed" (Weller, 2017).

Arnove's Scientific Dimension implies an inquiry quest where data is compiled between the surrounding community, in which family, economics and politics are all a part of (2013). According to Weller, students in Innova Schools exceeded the proficiency scores when compared to the national average. In 2013, 61% of second graders who attended Innova Schools

reached federal proficiency standards in math, while the national average was only 17% (Weller, 2013).

According to IDEO, Innova has opened over 54 schools, and is on track to become “the largest private school network in the region” (2019). This opportunity is not free, nor is it available for every child. Weller points out that this opportunity comes at a monthly cost of \$130 and is specifically targeted for middle class families (2013). Some may view this price tag as being reasonable; however, this favorable type of education is not an option for those who cannot afford it.

References

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