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Evaluations of Introducing Project Based Design Activities in First and Second Years of Engineering Courses

Design is a core element of engineering education. In first and second year it is generally approached as the learning of theory or as undisciplined activities. This research evaluated the introduction of disciplined but open-ended design activities to these stages. The hypothesis that all students of whatever learning type could learn from them was supported but no factor was identified that accounted for the minority who nevertheless disliked the methodology. This was an example of active research and so a degree of subjectivity was inevitable. Sufficient objective analysis was conducted, however, to support the contention that the results reflected the opinions of all participants and were not significantly coloured by the author's enthusiasm for such activities

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