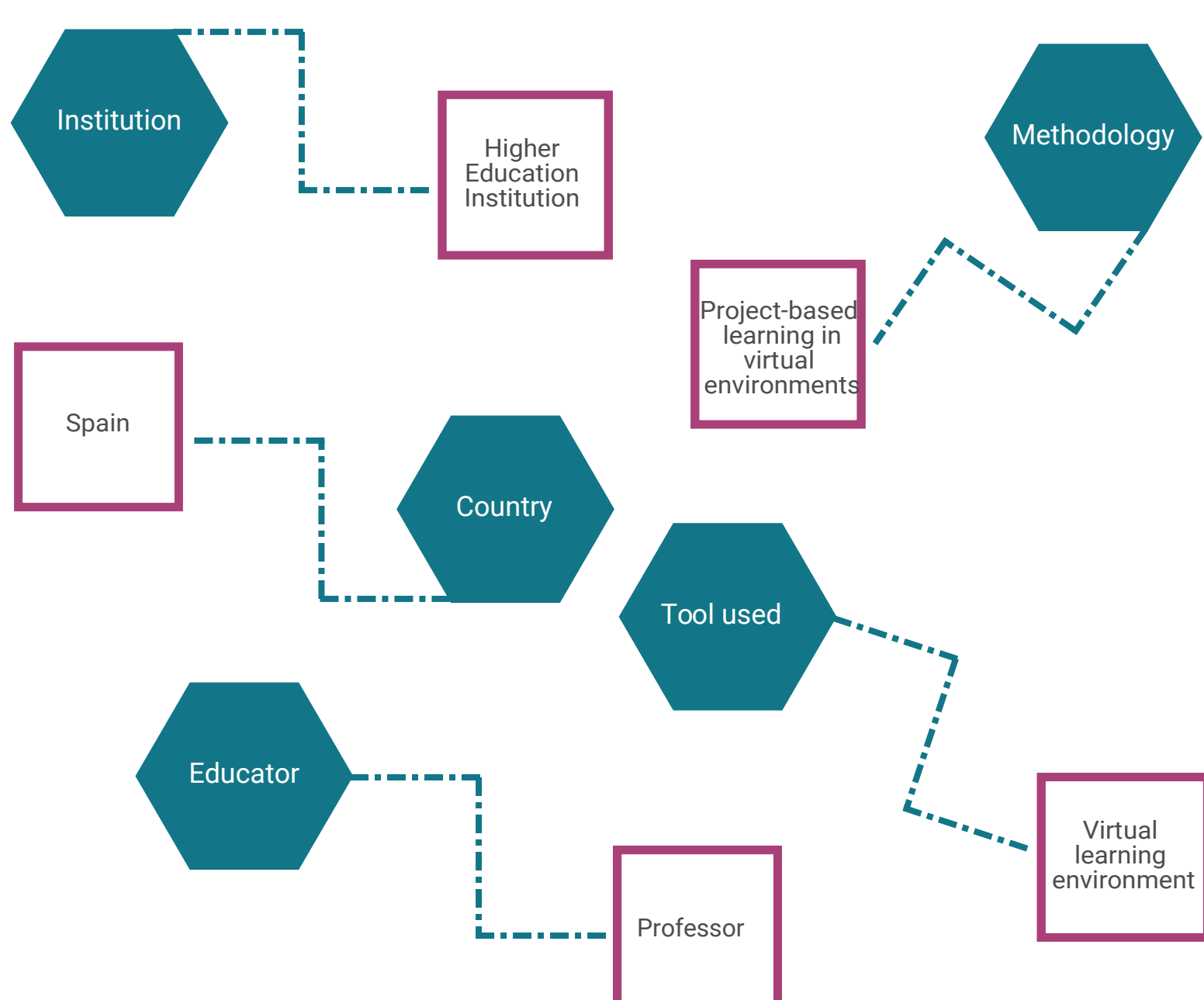


# PROJECT-BASED LEARNING IN VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS



This case study concentrated on how to apply the project-based learning technique through the use of new technologies, and specifically through the resources available in the virtual learning environment. PBL is about getting the students collaboratively and actively to plan, develop and assess a project that has a practical application. The objectives of integrating PBL and VLE were to a) foster the students active participatory and collaborative learning, and b) apply and evaluate the use of ICT mediated PBL.



## Main challenge, Key Success and Enabling Factors



- Virtual communication and interaction tools in the VLE were used in conjunction with educational resources containing attractive, open content that promoted critical, complex, divergent and creative thinking.
- Tutorial action was also implemented, aimed to foster continuous learning, where the lecturer would serve as a support, supervisor and guide in the students' learning processes. To achieve that, face-to-face group tutorials were held before and after the students had submitted each assignment.

## Lessons Learnt and Recommendations

- The assessment of the experiment showed that there was a sustained majority participation in activities in both the classroom and the VLE. The tutorials also produced highly satisfactory results.
- For the monitoring of the procedure, lecturers kept class diaries, where they noted down any observations and incidents that had occurred in either the classroom or the VLE. Furthermore, students were asked to keep field diaries and participate in the forum, which were the main tools for strengthening reflectiveness in the learning process.
- The application of the virtual environment enabled a greater adaptation of the teaching-learning process as it gave the students the opportunity to undertake self-directed learning according to their circumstances.



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