

The Potential of Collaborative E-Portfolios for Enhancing the Creative Teaching Skills of Pre-Service Business Education Teachers

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at examining the use of collaborative tools and activities in producing e-portfolios for creative teaching skills of pre-service business education teachers. A list of creative teaching skills was prepared. This list included three main skills: creative planning, creative implementation, and creative evaluation of teaching. To train pre-service business education teachers to produce e-portfolios for creative teaching, an instructional module was developed based on the principles of writing interactive materials. A sample of 75 pre-service business education teachers was selected to quantify the effect of e-collaboration in producing e-portfolios. The participants were assigned to three groups, two experimental groups and a control group. The first experimental group used Google Drive tools in producing their e-portfolios collaboratively. The second experimental group used Google Drive tools in producing their e-portfolios individually. The third group did not produce any portfolio. Study results indicated that collaboration had a significant effect in producing e-portfolios for creative teaching.

KEYWORDS

Business Education, Collaborative Learning, Creative Teaching, E-Portfolio, Pre-Service Teachers

INTRODUCTION

Recently, education and scientific research became one of the issues that nations and countries concern with, in spite of the different political, economic, social and ideological systems. That is because education leads the human development to achieve the social, economic and scientific development.

As it is observed that knowledge economy increases depending on the information revolution, it became necessary to concentrate on preparing generations of teachers who are able to produce and use knowledge in order to cater for demands of human development resources, (AL Hela, 2007). Furthermore, it is worthy that most countries spend more for preparing teachers in various fields. In particular, developed countries can achieve the continuous and real success in preparing and qualifying learners who are able to accommodate and adapt with information and communication technology. This can be done through presenting future solutions to overcome the problems of bad quality of preparing the teacher.

The teacher, as a major player in the educational arena, has to be given due emphasis and concern. In the 21st century, his role differs from the previous traditional one. Abdelaziz (2012) showed that digital information technology contributes in changing the teacher's role from just being a person who transfers information to a someone who is capable of acting as a facilitator, a demonstrator,

DOI: 10.4018/IJTD.2016010101

an evaluator, a guide, a trainer, and an effective leader. Therefore, business teachers in particular should adopt and use the recent digital technologies in education and development to improve the educational practices, and should adapt to the requirements needed to make the best use of up-to-date technology, specifically those innovations relevant to business education, in order to prepare generations of learners who are able to benefit from the contemporary technology of learning and the professional development in the future.

Apparently, establishing and developing knowledge communities and the eLearning systems is an issue that requires developing teacher preparing programs. This can be done through experiencing with modern approaches for qualifying and training teachers and providing them with skills and capabilities which contribute to increase their abilities to carry out future job requirements. This can also be achieved in an educational environment rich with eLearning tools and approaches (Abdelaziz, 2014b).

Yet, current educational paradigms call for documenting the learning process and the teaching and learning practices. This probably will help make both learners and teachers alike become aware of the cognitive processes relevant to various pedagogical tasks. The e-portfolio is one of those tools and practices. This tool reflects the organized and rich accumulation of the practical activities that teachers and learners carry out. It is worth mentioning that the E-portfolio is a means for integrating information and communication technology in teaching and assessment. Recently, the use of portfolio in education has increased rapidly. This is probably due to the potential of this tool for documenting the performance of the teacher and the learner. It may also help boost reflective thinking, make learners become more active, encourage them to practice self-assessment helps learner to play an active and positive role in learning, and develops self-assessment, and achieve high levels of self-esteem (Barrett, 2010; Chau & Cheng, 2010).

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

E-Portfolios

Challis (2005) describes the E-portfolio as an organized selective accumulation of information. This information is accumulated to achieve many purposes and to introduce tangible evidences about the achievement and development of the learner. E-portfolios enable learners to store activities digitally. In addition, they can be developed and managed through suitable programs. Furthermore, they are usually designed using proper multi-media, besides; the ability to get back the content of the portfolio is available via websites or using DVD or CD. E-portfolios are important tools and to reflect the quality of teaching and learning. Thus, E-portfolios offer several benefits for both teachers and learners (Alabasi, 2001; Chen, 2005; Miller, 2009). For example, they can be used as tools to accumulate experience in a tangible and concrete form; 2) they can be used to reflect the best selected works and achievements of the teacher and learner; 3) they can show the advance and development documented by evidences; 4) Through using E-portfolios, learning progress can be measured in relation to the learned cognitive structure; and 5) It contributes in developing the technological qualification of students effectively. Furthermore, the constructing of E-portfolios is a positive process, which helps to examine the student's beliefs, philosophies, objectives, attitudes, and learning difficulties. Finally, E-portfolios help learners acquire up-to-date literacies of information and communication technologies which have become necessary in order for learners to survive in the 21st century (Milman, 2005).

E-Portfolio Design

The process of designing of an E-portfolio has many stages: motivation, planning, content preparation, implementation and evaluation. Motivation stage includes promoting the culture of E-portfolios culture as an effective approach in developing learner's skills and in modifying their attitudes towards education (Ahmed, 2006). This can be done through introducing the e-portfolio to learners and

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