THE BENEFITS of E-PORTFOLIO

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Abstract

Structured reflections helped this student analyze her learning experiences to reveal and understand outcomes that might otherwise have been missed. While course syllabi and college catalogs may declare what learning is supposed to take place, the structured reflection required for an e-portfolio can push students to "own" learning outcomes when they describe their progress and cite specific evidence of learning within their collections of work.E-portfolios can be used for different purposes that may shift as students move through their programs. This community college student consciously (with professor guidance) began with self-exploration and expression (the "about me" section of her e-portfolio), moving on to communicating her learning and academic goals to her family. Finally, she emphasized professional aspects of learning by posting her most valued work from her major to represent her significant achievements and learning over time. This essay shows impressive development and self-awareness as the student takes control of her personal, academic, and professional planning and accomplishments.

Keywords : education, educational system, evaluation, e-portfolio

Introduction

One of the observed tendencies is a gradual departure frmom sumative and normative assessment, i.e. from those forms, which separate assessment from other aspects of education, they do not see a student as a partner in the education process and they do not perceive their self-awareness and distinctiveness as a base for their mutual relationship. Innovative approaches, which belong to this field, are e.g. introducing individual norms for every student, dispersing their doubts and concerns about negative assessment, encouraging student's participation in education, emphasizing self-presentation and self-understanding and paving the way to metacognitive thinking, during which students reflect on themselves the process and meaning of their learning.A number of published international surveys support this trend worldwide and this trend manifests itself in national and supranational conceptual and curricular materials as well. The importance of assessment is also obvious in the revised Bloom's taxonomy of learning objectives for learning, teaching and assessment, in which evaluation is placed on the second highest place in the cognitive domain. Equally, metacognologists define evaluation as the fourth highest level of the cognitive domain, before which they place knowledge of facts, conceptual knowledge and procedural knowledge. Mainly these innovative approaches to education require new stimuli of tendencies in education. One of the ways to achieve these attempts is to use evaluation tools. Pupil's, or student's portfolio, belongs to one of them, and it is also the topic of this article.

The use of e-portfolio in education

Due to a considerable fragmentation of information in the use of portfolios in education, the attempts and initiatives which try to uncover its advantages, but also difficulties in implementing and using portfolio in education, are very important. These facts are underlined by the fact that portfolio has been making its way into its electronic version as e-portfolio. For the purpose of an easier overview and understanding opinions on e-portfolio better, interesting world organisations, surveys and projects were chosen, which deal with this area and they can serve as valuable sources for deeper contemplation of portfolio evaluation. The part showing the use of portfolios in our country forms an integral part of this article.

Scope In Future of E- portfolio

They will discover a valuable exercise in self-assessment through the reflection process

Learning will take on a new depth through the reflection process

Their self esteem and self-confidence will be enhanced as they take control of their learning.

They may develop their own goals for their learning.

Assessment of their learning may become more student centered; the learner is involved and authorized to make decisions about will be evaluated.

They will receive more recognition for individual learning abilities and preferences.

They will learn and begin to practice a process that will be used in life long and life wide learning pursuits.

They will have a tool for personal development.

They will have a personal learning record.

They may receive credit for informal and non-formal learning as well as formal learning.

They will have direction for career planning.

They will have a tool for feedback from teachers and peers; feedback in the form of comments, as opposed to marks.

They will have a concrete way of showcasing strengths to teachers or future employers.

They may have needed documentation for prior learning assessment or program credits.

They may receive credit towards a course completion or towards graduation

They will have an extremely portable tool to use no matter where they are in the world.

Materials and Methods

Reflection is a cyclic process of self-regulation that students revise and think about their work and actions. Stimulating reflection needs some certain conditions such as good introduction, clear purpose and appropriate structure, it means students learn from their own experiences. In general, the purpose of educational portfolio is to systematically organize and manage evidences at three levels or domains: curriculum of the program, instruction and assessment, and students' reflection on learning. E-portfolio has great potential to alter higher education. In this study we used e-portfolio as a digital tool to collect work (artifacts), which demonstrates students' ongoing effort and growth (development) in research methodology area. Methodology Study design. The study employed a quasi-experimental single group design (before-after-design) in order to examine students' improvement in specific defined learning outcomes through e-portfolio. Since random selection was not possible this design was chosen. Total of 33 students were assigned to the course by the e-learning department based on their needs to present a research proposal in order to graduate. The students experienced learning through a student-centre approach using e-portfolio, which allowed them to take control of their learning process. The students had access to the free online course management tool (Mahara, which is localized based on the university LMS and is explained bellow), and the instructor directed them to various online lessons (subject matters). Each student created their own learning artifacts and had the opportunity to reflect on them. The educator acted more as a guide or facilitator rather than someone who delivers information and provided feedback on students' artifacts (assignments). Participants In this study a total of 33 students, 26 female and 7 male from

postgraduate medical education students who were in their final semester and were enrolled in Research in Education course. Data Collection Data sources included pre-test and post-test scores. All students received the pre-post-tests. The researcher graded the pretest in order to assess the students' knowledge of the subject. Then the researcher administered the instruction and provided feedback. Finally, the post-test was conducted and graded by the same researcher. It is worth noting that the results were anonymous. Content validity of the tests was confirmed by 5 experts in the field of research methodology and Kuder Richardson index (0.78) confirmed its reliability. Means and standard deviation of the pre-post test scores is reported in table 1. Design stage of e-portfolio. At the design phase some value-added features were considered and added. These features consist of: customizable, multiple structure, ability to share and interact with supervisors and peers, ability to search, integration to LMS, ability to transfer data, download records, back up and reduce storage requirements. These features facilitate sharing different parts of e-portfolio and provided cross-referencing capabilities. The system that seemed to meet our requirements was Mahara, which was compatible with the university virtual settings. Mahara is an open source e-portfolio. However, there were running costs such as maintenance and upgrades. Customization of the e-portfolio was provided after major challenges and improvement in resources. Finally, it was integrated into the university virtual learning environment (LMS). At the second phase, a structured student centred learning outcomes were designed. In this approach the teacher's role was to help students think through by using the following steps: 1). The learner identified and described the experience (assignment), and the teacher listened actively to encourage, not judge or make any interpretation. 2) The learner reflected on what was learned and the teacher clarified and summarized. 3) The learner identified new learning needs and their plan to meet these needs, and the teacher facilitated their plans. At the end of the program all intended and unintended learning outcomes were reviewed. The evaluations of the e-portfolios were based on the following criteria: - Educational value added to students' learning Sharing material and learning resources Learning activity Reflective work - Functional: Ease of use for students and supervisors Ability to search keywords Ability to bookmark educational materials – Technical. All students were informed about the purpose of using e-portfolio. It was emphasized that e-portfolio is being used as a formative teaching tool and focuses on students' development through the use of self-evaluation and reflection.

Interventional stage-in this stage researcher played the role of facilitator to provide necessary instructions and encouraged them on reflection. The course consisted of four 3-h sessions related to the subject matter. During each session different part of the subject was discussed and at the end of the course, students were asked to complete four learning activities (assignments). Students could record and reflect on their learning in writing proposal skills. Researcher provided feedback on assignments and checked their progress. At the beginning of the training program after the researcher had introduced herself, she explained the objectives and the need to implement e-

portfolio to the students, and a written informed consent was obtained from the participating students. The students were also assured that all information collected will remain confidential.

Discussion

The Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), which operates under the European Commission, perceives the need to integrate e-portfolio into learning process as highly up-to-date. This agency published within Eurydice, its international network, the document Key Data on Learning and Innovation through ICT at School in Europe 2011. It deals with evaluating key competences with the use of information technologies and in the Educational processes and Assessment section, it addresses current insufficient implementation of e-portfolios for pupil assessment and it considers portfolios „a genuinely ICT-based assessment mechanism". The survey mentions, apart from e-portfolios, two more innovative approaches to pupil assessment, which can benefit from ICT. The first approach concerns using ICT for pupil self-assessment, the second is based on learning outcomes in connection with a paradigm of competences as target structures. Into key competences, we can rank secondary literacy as well, e.g. information literacy. The study recommends that the evaluation of these literacies should be carried out only by means of ICT means. The survey also mentions missing recommendations of the Ministry of Education on the use of ICT for pupil assessment at central level. On the contrary, in the field of the evaluation of ICT competences through theoretical and practical exams and project evaluation. Unfortunately, this type of testing is not used for school leaving exams and when completing a particular educational stage. Conclusion From the above mentioned chapters it follows that evaluation with the accent on e-portfolio is currently an up-to-date topic worldwide at all education levels. We can see first signs of using portfolios as tools for evaluation, self-evaluation and self-reflection at all educational levels and also as occupational portfolios. The review recommends building capacities for evaluation in the whole educational system, supporting a teacher's role in pupil assessment and enhancing its systematization in connection with the introduction of national standardised testing, developing teaching standards, teacher appraisal and certification, strengthening school evaluation and evaluation in the whole evaluation and assessment framework. Its outcomes strengthened the motivation for its extension intoother study programmes. Further implementation of portfolio evaluation for prospective teachers is about to happen also thanks to the teacher career structure, which is in preparation, and a related system of teacher certification.

Conclusion

Evaluation with the accent on e-portfolio is currently an up-to-date topic worldwide at all education levels.Evaluation of education still faces problems, which hinders the use of The review recommends building capacities for evaluation in the whole educational system, supporting a teacher's role in pupil assessment and enhancing its systematization in connection with the introduction of national

standardised testing, developing teaching standards, teacher appraisal and certification, strengthening school evaluation and evaluation in the whole evaluation and assessment framework. Based on the examples of good practice and international experience, there was a pilot project on implementing e-portfolio into extramural studies in Information Technology running in the winter semester in school year. Its outcomes strengthened the motivation for its extension into other study programmes. Further implementation of portfolio evaluation for prospective teachers is about to happen also thanks to the teacher career structure, which is in preparation, and a related system of teacher certification.

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