

The Impact of Assessment on Student ICT Literacy

Purpose

Most university students are considered digital natives who, having grown up in a digital world, intuitively understand ICT (information & communication technologies) and demand innovative and dynamic approaches to learning (Prensky; 2001a&b). This pervasive belief has led to a strong imperative for universities to use digital technologies as a tool to enhance and deepen student learning (Flavin & Quintero, 2018). However, whilst embedding digital technologies in the classroom may improve overall learning, it does not automatically improve ICT literacy among students (Šorgo et al, 2017). This is important because a number of studies have queried the reality of digital natives, questioning their ICT literacy skills (e.g. Margaryan et al, 2011).

To compete in a competitive employment market, graduates need strong ICT literacy skills (DBIS 2016). However, notwithstanding some stand-alone assessments (Sparks et al, 2016) and subject-specific ICT (Sutherland & Ho, 2017), there is little research on embedding ICT skills in core learning activities. Assessment is a powerful way to embed learning and there is some evidence of a link between the form of assessment and ICT competency (Hudson Smith, 2015). This study aims to examine this further, by looking at the relationship between the technology students use in assessments and their overall ICT literacy.

Methodology/Approach

A survey of business students at a large, teaching intensive university is undertaken to map courses and assessments against student-reported ICT skills. Statistical analysis will determine significant relationships between the data.

Findings

The results will show whether lecturers can help to develop and enhance ICT competencies in their students through the technology required to complete assessments.

Originality/Value

Students tend to work tactically, learning what is required to complete assessments. Designing innovative assessments that require students to use a range of technologies might improve ICT skills.

References

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