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An investigation of the factors that influence engagement with CPD within e-portfolios used for accredited Higher Education course

Growing use of Continue Professional Development (CPD) e-portfolios

According to Poén (2012, p.360) "employability is an important issue and has become a major concern for the government, universities and graduates." To increase student's independence learning and employability, the use of e-portfolios in higher education is constantly growing (Gebsic et al., 2009, p.327; Tseng & Chen, 2012, p.163). Students are required to reflect on learning and CPD to provide e-portfolio evidence which may be assessed by either teachers and employers.

Students engage with CPD e-portfolios

Engagement with Continue Professional Development (CPD) e-portfolios has been shown to improve graduate employability, when e-portfolios are assessed, they traditionally lack student commitment. For example, in a study of e-portfolio engagement Emmett (2011) found that, although students were encouraged to use e-portfolios for learning and employability, only 87 per cent of the students chose not to use the e-portfolio after completing an assessment task. This suggested that students were strongly motivated by the assessment and not by suggested bene fits to learning and employment (Emmett, 2011, p.114).

Purpose of the study

This research proposes to identify and analyse the factors that may influence engagement with CPD within e-portfolios, focusing on the fundamental disciplines, technology (e-portfolios) and education. It examines the level of engagement with formative CPD and the choices students make are explored.

Research model

For the purpose of this study we develop and use a theoretical model (shown in figure 1) which integrates the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1986) and Task Technology Fit (TTF) (Goodhue & Thompson, 1995) constructs, student's Self-efficacy (SE), Intrinsic Motivation (IM), Extrinsic Motivation (EM) and Social Influence (SI) factors. The model focuses on 5 different technology engagement aspects that may affect the use of e-portfolios for CPD, including student's perception about the e-portfolio, fit between CPD tasks and the e-portfolio functions, individual differences in self-efficacy, students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivations and social influences. Hypotheses are proposed, based on prior research and the models constructs which can then be used to undertake a study of sample students.

Research questions

Why are the factors that influence students to engage with CPD within e-portfolios? Are they:

- Extrinsic motivation (e.g., employer)?
- Intrinsic Motivation (e.g., enjoyment)?
- Social influence (e.g., teacher's influence)?
- Self-efficacy (e.g., person's judgment of their capability to use e-portfolio for CPD)?
- Task Technology Fit (e.g., the match between the e-portfolio functions and CPD task)?
- Perceived ease of use and usefulness of the e-portfolio for CPD?

Figure 1. CPD e-portfolio and stakeholders

Figure 2. The proposed integrated research model and hypotheses

Figure 3. The proposed integrated research model and hypotheses


