



THE PERCEPTION AND EXPERIENCE ON THE USE OF E-PORTFOLIO AMONG ART & DESIGN STUDENTS

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Abstract

A current technology in the form of e-Portfolio has taken place as an area of interest in field of Art and Design. It enhances students' experiences, skills and prepares them for a career. This paper shows the discussion on perception and experience on the use of e-Portfolio as a part of course requirement among Art and Design students. Topic discussed are the definition of e-Portfolio, purposes, from traditional to electronic portfolio, types of e-Portfolio, benefits and recommendation for future research. The findings show that majority of the students satisfied and feel that e-Portfolio is an interesting learning tool and highly recommended to Art and Design courses. In addition, e-Portfolio would improve their skills and knowledge to be better. In fact, it's easy to construct the e-Portfolio since they were computer literate and technology capable. However, students also claimed that the concept of e-portfolio will course difference perception in the form of assessment compared to the traditional portfolio that contains the original artwork. By bringing technology of e-Portfolio into Art and Design courses would attract students and gain experience from the technology.

INTRODUCTION

Rapid development in computers and digital technologies (such as internet) in the last twenty years are influencing instructional practice (Niza, 2008). This electronic learning enables instructional content or learning experiences to be delivered by computer based technology. In this context the use of e-portfolio as a learning tool promotes the active work of the students can encourage the development of reflective thinking and self-regulated learning. Electronic portfolio is collection of students' work that may be posted online (called webfolio) or saved onto a CD-ROM (Yasser, 2014). It helps student in sharing their work with a larger audience by giving them a wider audience outside the classroom. They are accessible from anywhere in the world with an internet connection. Electronic portfolio or e-Portfolio offer authentic assessment tool, motivate student, and contribute to the learning process.

For art education purposes, Elif (2012) stated, the definition of a portfolio is more complicated; students prepare portfolios to develop their learning, parents want to see them to learn about their child's learnings, and institutions need them to learn their own progress. Institutions, educators, students and parents could follow student development by collecting and organizing student work samples over a period (Elif, 2012; Abrenica 2012). However, the usage of portfolios in art education is not a new idea, they have received increasing attention in the past decade (Elif, 2012) but still in the place of traditional portfolios. In implementing e-Portfolio, the shift of interest from the traditional teacher-centred to the one that is student centred has left a beneficial impact in art education. Art students are always technological capable in designing and creating

creative works. So, portfolios are used for storing ‘best’ work of art (Bain Bittel, 2001). Students were already familiar with the concept of portfolios through traditional way, which require a great amount of time to collect, space to keep and manage their work as a preparation of evidence of their competence after graduate. Therefore, e-Portfolio is a new solutions and opportunities for those problems especially students to try it out.

The use of e-Portfolio in art education is still rarely used in this modern technology, but the interest on e-Portfolio is very high due to benefit that art students and educators could gain. The usage of e-Portfolio in the field of art education is important areas which deserve more attention, considering it is importance for the individuals, artistic and professional development of art students, and art educators (Eliff, 2012). E-Portfolio would assist the students in gaining their first employment and prepare them for lifelong and professional learning. The purpose of the e-Portfolio in art education is self-evaluation; demonstrate impact on student learning and for external review. To foster the development of e-Portfolio, it is not yet possible to say that it is widely accepted approach in the field of art education. So, this study focuses on students’ perception in implementing e-Portfolio to their learning and experiences among art undergraduates.

In art education, the students are well trained to produce excellent creative design work and the ability to mastering some design software, the problem with their unorganized artefacts and lack behind of using traditional portfolio (paper copy) rather than the development of e-Portfolio in today’s technology era requires the faculty’s full attention. This is because with the competition in the workforce, a e-Portfolio provides a visual presentation that sets the graduate students apart from other candidates by allowing them to express their individual strengths and unique style (Kimberly and Emily, 2012). Thus, students need to know the entire possible outcome that e-Portfolio has offer to intention and willingness to adopt this new concept of e-Portfolio. To achieve this, the following objectives have been designed to guide the study.

- i. To find out the students’ general attitudes towards the concept of e-Portfolio.
- ii. To measure the student’s perceptions of implementing e-Portfolio as a learning tool.
- iii. To examine students’ experience of creating their e-portfolio as part of the course requirement.
- iv. To investigate on the students’ opinion on having e-portfolio for job application
- v. To analyze the students’ level of comfort in showcasing their e-portfolio.
- vi. To analyze students’ experience on the use of e-portfolio.

This study aims to examine the perception and experience of students in art education of using e-Portfolios as a learning tool. Introducing the e-Portfolio in art education will be studied to see students’ perspective and experience of the samples in terms of improving from traditional paper based portfolio to electronic version. Findings would highlight the students’ preference of how they experience and feel with the implementation of e-Portfolio. This study is useful for art education to strengthen the courses offered and assist the faculty, administrator as well as the educators to design an appropriate course content to fulfil the students’ needs and finally make every student learn to be more structured.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

E-Portfolio stakeholder interaction model were use in this studies as the aims is to examine students’ perception and experiences toward using e-Portfolio. Figure 1 displays the relationships among the stakeholders with an e-Portfolio as the central device.

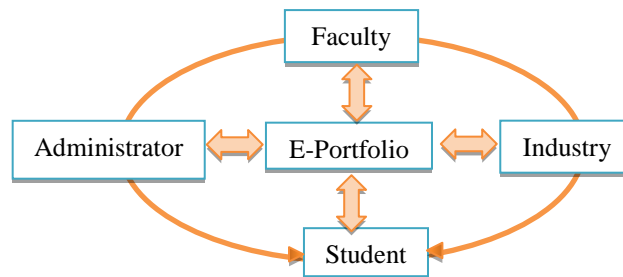


Fig. 1.: E-Portfolio stakeholder interaction model (Ritzhaupt, Singh, Seyferth and Dedrick, 2008)

The four stakeholders which are the faculty, administrator, student and industry presented the characteristic and benefits of e-Portfolio. Each stakeholder formed a concept of e-Portfolio and communicates to each other through four relevant domains of interest and brings benefit to the stakeholders. Ritzhaupt, Singh, Seyferth and Dedrick, 2008 has identified the four relevant domains related to e-Portfolio from a students' perspective: learning, assessment, employment, and visibility. Table 1 show the stakeholders in relation to each of the domains of interest and provides examples.

Table 1

Stakeholders	Examples	Domains
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential employers ▪ Managers 	Employment, Visibility
Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professors ▪ Instructors 	Assessment, Visibility
Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Academic advisor ▪ Chairs ▪ Accrediting boards ▪ Deans 	Assessment, Visibility
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students ▪ Peers 	Learning, Visibility

This study was also carried out to examine the perception and experiences of students in art education using e-Portfolio. The limitation also concerns on the four relevant domains of interest: learning, assessment, employment, and visibility to the stakeholders by Ritzhaupt, Singh, Seyferth and Dedrick, 2008.

Literature Review

The literature reviews in this chapter consist of the following sections pertaining to the research objectives of the present study.

Need for Student perspective on the concept of E-portfolio

Comparing the use of e-learning methods in the past, current and future it shows that the use of e-learning will continue to grow. This is because learners have different needs and many like the flexibility that e-learning has to offer. E-Portfolio give them much more flexibility since it presents like easy to access and this notion has attracted many stakeholder of e-Portfolio, particularly the students and educators. This is support by Yasser Ali (2005) which claims that most important benefit of electronic portfolio is more accessible than paper-based portfolios. He also explained it provide easy access to the stakeholder either over the Web or through other technological media. Furthermore, student can access their e-Portfolio everywhere while the educators can check on the students' learning processes (Yasser Ali, 2005). However, there is not many studies have been done to examine students' perception of e-Portfolio as part of course requirement. It only more focused on faculty and institutional perspectives but rarely consisted about how useful the e-Portfolio to the learners. Therefore, the students' perspective on the showcase e-Portfolio needs to be explored.

Introducing e-Portfolio in Art Education

The e-Portfolio is a result of technology being readily and conveniently used in most classrooms today. They are highly motivating for the students who are encouraged by exhibiting their work (Yasser Ali, 2005). Tarmizi, et al (2009) stated that technological elements use of computers began seeping into the Art education in Malaysia. This is show where art students are always technological capable in designing and creating creative works using many design software. So, portfolios are used for storing 'best' work of art (Bain Bittel, 2001). Since they already familiar with the concept of portfolios through traditional way, e-Portfolio is a new approach to be used especially students in learning course.

Students' Experience through e-Portfolio

Four common themes emerge from the analysis of a study by David Tosh, et al (2005): buy in, motivation, assessment and the e-Portfolio technology. They highlight these themes need to have alignment between the goals of those implementing the use of e-portfolios and how the technology will be used by the students to carry-out their e-portfolio work. In this situation, how the new approach of introducing e-Portfolio to the students is very important to ensure buy-in. Student should know what purpose of e-Portfolio, how to use and operate through the software provided, and most importantly how it may benefit them for the project to succeed

(David Tosh, et al, 2005). Without this student will not view the new approach of e-Portfolio as being meaningful will not understand that it can work to experienced deeply in learning. Therefore, in this study, 8 weeks given for student to socialize more with the concept of e-portfolio before the data gathered.

Major stakeholders and constructs of E-portfolio

Bergman (undated) has offered some general guidelines for implementing electronic portfolio in a programmed. He suggested that one must start slowly and seek linkage for stakeholders. E-Portfolio stakeholder interaction model were use in this study. It displays the relationships among the stakeholders with an e-Portfolio as the central device. The four stakeholders which are the faculty, administrator, student and industry presented the characteristic and benefits of e-Portfolio.

Benefit from Industry Participation

Electronic portfolio has increasingly become the preferred reference tool for employer seeking talent (Heather, 2013). It is now a trend where employers looking up on students e-portfolio accounts to try to determine who potential hires are. It just because of e-portfolio makes them easy to access.

Benefits from Student Development

According to Linda Ralston (2013), she says students may utilize an e-Portfolio within a specific area such as to document their improvement in writing, journal their observation during a study abroad experience or evidence their ability to utilize the new software application. Studies have shown that the use of e-Portfolio in education improved writing ability and deepened critical thinking skills. In art education, students will develop a good design work by pulling together of what they learned and achieved, and showcase their e-portfolio to potential employers, educator and peer.

Benefit from Faculty Development

By implementing e-Portfolio as a programmed requirement, educators can evaluate students' learning outcome and they can see the improvement over the duration of the semester or make it as references to the junior. Faculty may also have benefited from more time to meaningfully integrate the e-Portfolio system into their existing curriculum (Ritzhaupt, et al 2008).

Benefit from Administration

The university can drive an internal and external assessment of the effectiveness of a curriculum or general education to meet standards (Linda Ralston, 2013). A showcase e-Portfolio provides faculty and peers an opportunity to review, evaluate and share ideas across the Internet. Like portfolios, there are several reasons why e-Portfolios are being integrated relatively quickly into higher education. Literature illustrates several organizational purposes, including meeting requirements from accrediting boards (Siemens, 2005; Strudler & Wetzel, 2005), and states' approved technology standards (Curts, Yanes, & McWright, 2003). This new approach will have good impact and benefit to the organization.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methodology used to complete the study and emphasized on research design, population and sample. This is followed by instrument that related to examine students' perception and experiences of using e-Portfolio in learning. Validity and reliability and procedure of studies are also explains in this chapter. It ends with discussion on data analysis.

Research Method and Design

The framework for gathering the research data was mixed method, based on questionnaires for quantitative data and simple qualitative data in the forms of comments and the data collected through interview with focus group. The questionnaire data will be analyse using descriptive statistics while the interview will provide data for qualitative aspect.

Population and Samples

The data take from one local university in Malaysia which is under Faculty of Art & Design. The total 30 (n=30) undergraduate students enrolled in Diploma in Graphic Design & Digital Media programme who fit well within the context and purpose of this study. 10 students participated to answer open ended questions. The samples were convenience sampling.

Instruments

The complete instrument consisted of 30 items in five sections. Part A was adapted from questionnaires measuring attitudes towards e-Portfolio by Mokhtari, et al, (1996). The questions in Part B, Part C, Part D and Part E were developed from electronic portfolio student perspective instrument (EPSPI) with modifications to

fits the specific context, adapted from Ritzhaupt, et al (2008). EPSPI was to capture critical information related to students' perspectives and intended uses of e-Portfolio to aid faculty and administrator in the decision making process Ritzhaupt, et al (2008).

Adaption of the questionnaire was carried out from the second original version of 34 items organized into four areas which are learning, assessment, employment and visibility. The instrument was use Likert scale measure with five possible answers: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Students who participated in the focus group and interviews will answer some question related to the study and to support the data gathered from the questionnaires.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure validity and reliability of the survey instruments, the survey instruments were sent to and evaluated by experts in the field of questionnaire design at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) and Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM). The instrument was also piloted on a group of student and revealed that student easily understood the question and that the instruments were reliable and appropriate for the study.

Data Analysis

The data will collect by distributing a questionnaire to 30 samples to answer all the items and 10 of them will be interviewed to get their experience in using e-Portfolio in learning. The questions will be answering the research questions and at the end support the data gathered from the questionnaire. In this study, mixed method approach was used to collect data. Quantitative research may well generate masses of data. A questionnaire was distributed to 30 respondents with 30 items on each using descriptive analysis by SPSS. Meanwhile for qualitative data consist of words and observation, not numbers. These require creativity, discipline and a systematic approach. By giving open-ended questions and written comments to the ten respondent may generate single words, brief phrases, of full paragraph of text. Then the narrative data will be in categorizing information.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the findings and discussions of the present study. It is divided into five areas in the instrument of Part A: statement on general attitude, Part B: statement on learning, Part C: statement on assessment, Part D: statement on employment and Part E: statement on visibility. There are also open-ended survey questions and the similar codes in nature were grouped together to define patterns. The following sections outline the findings of this study in relation to the research objective.

Students' General Attitudes towards the Concept of E-Portfolio. (Part A)

All respondents agreed that e-Portfolio is worthwhile. In addition, they also agreed that e-Portfolio is appropriate for their course and should be done in any of art & design courses and can choose their best artwork for e-Portfolio. Meanwhile, most of the respondents see that e-portfolio allows more flexibility as compared to traditional portfolio. They believe that developing an e-portfolio will make them more creative.

Student's Perceptions of Implementing E-Portfolio as a Learning Tool (Part B)

Respondents are agreed that using e-Portfolio will help them develop their skills and prefer that e-Portfolio is a way to monitor their skills as it develops over time. In addition, the students think that by viewing their peers' e-Portfolio would be a valuable learning experience and will help them to develop their knowledge. All respondents agreed that they will continue to enhance their e-Portfolio for life-long learning.

Students' experience of creating their e-portfolio as part of the course requirement (Part C)

Participant feels comfortable with an accrediting agency (such as MQA) looking at their e-Portfolio for accreditation of the school they attend. Interestingly, all participants feel comfortable if an e-Portfolio is used as part of a requirement for internship/industrial training placement. Besides, they feel comfortable if e-Portfolio used as an assessment tool by faculty for an assignment in a course. In addition, student will use the faculty comments about their e-Portfolio as constructive criticism. Result also indicates that most of the respondents feel that e-Portfolio is a good way for faculty to access their skills.

Students' Opinion on Having E-Portfolio for Job Application (Part D)

Respondents prefer to use an e-Portfolio as a snapshot of their knowledge and skills to show to the potential employers. Moreover, all respondents think that e-Portfolio would be beneficial for them to get a job. In addition, all students feel comfortable if an employer requested to see their e-Portfolio to aid in the hiring process. They also prefer using an e-Portfolio as an electronic resume to show to the potential employers.

Students' Level of Comfort in Showcasing Their E-Portfolio (Part E)

Respondents feel comfortable with faculty evaluations of the work posted to e-Portfolio if only they could view it. There is several of respondents are not comfortable if their lecturers show their e-portfolio to other lecturers. However, respondents feel comfortable if their lecturers showing their e-Portfolio to the potential employers.

Students' Experiences in Using Their E-Portfolio (Open Ended Questions)

The following are some themes that have been categorized from the question answered.

Experience in using the e-Portfolio

Many respondents expressed good feeling, stating that e-Portfolio is a new way that makes them easy and convenient to bring all of their artwork using the cloud. Besides, using e-Portfolio will save the time to produce as compared to the traditional portfolio. Meanwhile, the students do not have to spend more money like printing cost and of course it safe from any damage. Several respondents expressed bad feeling, stating that e-Portfolio is a new technology and it takes time to learn how to create the e-Portfolio. There is also possibility that other people will easy to copy the artwork without the owners' permission by just download it. Furthermore, compared to traditional portfolio, people can see the original artwork produce by the students but e-portfolio, people only can see the picture that they capture from the original artwork

Most and Least useful aspect of e-Portfolio.

Many respondents stating that the most useful aspect of e-Portfolio is easy to use and other people could view it at anywhere and anytime. E-Portfolio also can improve students' skill and knowledge since they develop over time. It also saves cost and time rather than to print all the artworks and spent more money for traditional portfolio. Interestingly, e-Portfolio is a best place that people can showcase their artworks. Majority of respondents were state that there is a specific software to create e-Portfolio. So, students should be mastering the software first to create their e-portfolio. Secondly is about internet connection. To run the e-portfolio, internet connection is important for people to view the e-Portfolio and for students to upload their artwork. There is still a gap between traditional portfolio and e-Portfolio where the value of the artwork will be arguing.

Main challenges/ benefits of using the e-Portfolio as in this course.

Most of the challenges are about internet connection. If there is no internet provided, the process of creating e-Portfolio could not be done. Everything is using internet server. Besides, there is still some faculty still not use e-Portfolio as a learning tool or its new approach and still in the process of acceptance. Therefore, it takes time for students to adapt. Furthermore, some employer still demands of traditional portfolio (paper based) because they want to see skill and creativity of the candidate during the interview session by looking at their original artwork.

Most of the comments show the benefit of using e-Portfolio. Students can upload as many as they need from previous until now. It is an easy and saving way when they just create the e-portfolio using the specific software and save time as compared to traditional portfolio were using much paper and expensive. Moreover, e-Portfolio will be as part of their preparation for job interview. Finally, they would improve their skills and knowledge to adapt this new technology in education.

SUMMARY AND RECCOMENDATION

Student's General Attitude towards the Concept of E-Portfolio

The result of the survey shows positive attitude towards the concept of e-Portfolio. All the students agreed that this new approach of e-Portfolio allows more flexibility since all of them were computer literate. By introducing e-Portfolio to them, they can demonstrate their competence using e-Portfolio. There is some of them were neutral when asked whether e-Portfolio is the way they can show their competence. It could be because of the time provided to learn how to create e-Portfolio is not enough to make them feel confident and needed more time to overcome it. All respondents have the same attitude toward the use of e-Portfolio for Art and Design courses are worthwhile. They believe that creating e-Portfolio will improve them in learning process and finally for their future.

Students' perception on Learning.

As they are in the era of technology, it seems like almost of the students can adapt this e-Portfolio process. E-portfolio is a platform for all peers and lecturers to view thus giving comments and suggestion. So, it's a valuable learning experience. A few students expressed neutral or disagree. This is because e-Portfolio is still new to them. They just even not realize the importance of storing all the artworks in a place that makes easy for them.

Students' perception on Assessment

E-portfolio for assessment tool is the challenge part to get positive response from the students. Most of the comments expressed positive concerns, sometimes disagreed. It may take a lot of time to produce e-portfolio for each course they took while at the same time they should prepare for original artwork. Compared to the current assessment process, the lecturer will evaluate through the original artwork, while if the artwork turns to be digitalize, it could distract the process of evaluating.

Students' perception on Employment

Talking about portfolio for job application, it is a common that all art & designs' graduates will prepared their portfolio for interview but using traditional portfolio. E-Portfolio could be a good solution for them and no need to print all the artwork back, wasting time searching for old artwork. Creating e-Portfolio could save time and money. E-Portfolio would be used as electronic resume to show potential employer. Majority of the respondent feel e-Portfolio would be beneficial to them get a job.

Students' perception on Visibility

Now, people tend to share everything to other. Same goes to the use of e-Portfolio to be freely visible for anyone to see. Some students state that they are uncomfortable to have e-Portfolio visible to others. Maybe they felt embarrassed to share their artwork to family or strangers but considered among their friends would be better and sharing comments to improve on their work. Most of them are comfortable and confident enough if their e-Portfolio visible to others especially their lecturer, peer, family or even potential employer.

Students' experience on e-Portfolio.

Students feel that e-portfolio is important and useful as an additional learning tool which could help them to improve their skill and knowledge. They don't have to spend more money to print all the artwork and arrange them into a big file holder. Compared to e-Portfolio, it is a space where students can upload as many artworks they want and well organized. Students also can express their creativity while designing their own e-Portfolio and try to adapt this new technology in their learning process. But there is a problem that the student claimed which is internet connection. To create and view e-Portfolio, there must have internet server. So, this is the limitation if e-portfolio needs to be used. On the other hand, both of traditional and digital portfolios have their own strength. As we can see, people will look at the original artwork if the students come with traditional portfolio and it would be different if they look in the form of e-Portfolio. It could not be the same result as what people look at the traditional portfolio. Finally, majority feels that e-Portfolio is a good way to enhance professional development process and duration of time that the students were exposed will take them to accept the important of e-Portfolio.

Recommendation for Future Study

The outcomes of the research findings have raise further recommendation for future research to be done.

Limitation of e-Portfolio

Creating an e-Portfolio is the interesting way to showcase students' artwork especially for Art and Design courses. It can be more constructivists and student-centered learning approach. E-Portfolio can be freely visible to anyone to see and shared but it requires internet server. Without internet server, it is pointless to implement the e-portfolio in the learning process. As a result, the solution should be investigating to overcome.

Preferences towards portfolio showcase in online or actual.

Art and Design courses have implement the traditional way of assessment by evaluating original artwork from students. In to implement the new way of assessment by using e-portfolio is different perspective. Do the result of evaluating the original artwork will be same as in the form of e-Portfolio? Therefore, research on this situation should be done in the future.

CONCLUSION

This research brings about on the perception an experience of using e-Portfolio among Art and Design students. The findings on the perception are based on the five constructs: general attitude, employment, assessment, learning, and visibility. The practice of e-Portfolio is a very good way of learning. This study found that students' perceptions and experiences of e - portfolio from the five constructs were extremely positive. Support by the open-ended question of the students' experience, e-Portfolio could be the best way in showcasing students' artwork. The implication of the findings may give some useful transformation of e-Portfolio on the possibility bringing technology into Art and Design students. This research provides the platform for future research on stakeholder's preferences towards portfolio showcase in online or actual.

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