

https://dspace.org/

The relationship between the digital identities of teacher trainers and their approaches to the use of ICT in teaching and learning: a case study at the University of the Witwatersrand

Nsele, Amanda

2014-11-13
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/15879

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the digital identities of teacher trainers at the University of the Witwatersrand School of Education (WSoE), where the study was carried out. The study aims to find out if teacher trainers have adapted their use of technologies such that the students' trends of learning are accommodated, also to establish the practices and approaches of teacher trainers and the implications that their digital identities have in forming them. This study uses Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital, field and habitus as a theoretical framework to assist in explaining how teacher trainers choose to adopt technologies in their practices by referring to Bower (2008). Bower (2008) indicates that, in order to match learning tasks with learning technologies, educational goals and the requirements for each task must be identified first. Kirschner et al. (2004) cited in Bower (2008) notes that, "educational affordances are characteristics of an educational resource that indicates if and how a particular learning behavior could possibly be enacted within the context.

The study uses a mixed method approach which incorporates techniques from both qualitative and quantitative research. It uses data previously collected by the School of Education ICT Committee and interviews. The main objective of this study is to determine the teacher trainers' digital identities and their relationship to the use of ICT in teaching and learning. Purposive sampling is used to get opinions of targeted groups and information that is readily accessible. The findings suggest that using digital resources allows teacher trainers to prepare material for teaching and learning and they are able to adapt it and personally develop in professional learning, thus promoting equality of educational opportunity. Finally, the findings seem to be consistent with a large scale Pan-African study (PanAf, 2011) research which showed that not every teacher trainer considers Information and Communication Technologies central to teaching and learning purposes. The data from each interview reveals the skills, expertise and professional knowledge of each teacher trainer acquired through practice and pedagogical content knowledge. Findings are not representative of the entire population of teacher trainers at the School of Education but are important for consideration. The findings have important implication for management because they suggest that there are occurrences that may need to be discussed and managed. Teacher trainers' habitus reflects the social position in which it was constructed, the structured structure, and individual digital identities include a set of attributes, practices, skills and the norms to which they are conformed to within a digital environment. This study contributes to the discussion of digital identity and the use of ICT in teaching and learning.