

Students' Perceptions on the Use of E-Portfolio for Learning Assessment: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

E-portfolio is implemented in Indonesian universities to build learners' capacity in monitoring and managing the learning in a technology-enhanced environment. In this regard, it is substantial for the institutions to acknowledge the learners' perspective in using the e-portfolio for the purpose of continuous development. This study was aimed at probing students' perceptions of utilizing e-portfolio for learning at the university. The study was qualitatively conducted as a case study. The subjects were 16 undergraduate students of the seventh semester in a university. The data were obtained by conducting interviews and disseminating a questionnaire. The results of the study revealed that most participants demonstrated positive views towards the use of e-portfolio. Further, the participants acknowledged some crucial benefits of utilizing the e-portfolio. They were extended to; increasing the motivational beliefs and self-efficacy, learning new things, accomplishing the English tasks effectively, giving beneficial effects for the learning, and improving students' ability in English. The findings are expected to bring light to stakeholders to consider the use of e-portfolio to encourage students' learning enthusiasm and engagement.

Keywords: E-portfolio Assessment, Qualitative Research, Students' Perception

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INTRODUCTION

The portfolio has been widely used as one of the alternative assessments in language learning. Kovacek & Bode (1996) asserted that a portfolio is a students' collected work aimed to monitor the students' improvement in a certain period. In addition, Weigle (2007) considered a portfolio as a series of students' work indicating both students' improvement and achievement. A portfolio facilitates the students to observe their learning development so that students can take action regarding their learning. As the demand for the implementation of the technology for teaching and learning activities increases, there is a shift from the portfolio into an e-portfolio (electronic portfolio). Barrett (2007) certified that an e-portfolio assists teachers to manage students' work into various formats by engaging the

integration of electronic technology. The integrated portfolio with information and communication technology allows teachers to access the students' work more easily.

A portfolio becomes an effective assessment tool to assess the students' work. Like the paper-based portfolio, an e-portfolio gives advantages in assessing language skills. It helps to develop students' writing performance, develop teachers' roles, support learning, encourage students' participation, enhance the testing process, improve students' autonomous learning, and maintain lifetime learning (Barrot, 2014, 2015; Cheng, 2008). Regarding its objectives, this study focuses on the use of e-portfolio at the university level since portfolio has been particularly applied for language assessment.

In the context of higher education, generally, teachers or lecturers have been utilizing e-portfolio. Several previous studies about the implementation of e-portfolio reveal that e-portfolio is beneficial for the teaching and learning process. Research conducted by (Barrot, 2016) exhibited that e-portfolio allowed students to reflect upon their learning, check the learning progress, and motivates students in learning. Also, Hung (2012) attained that e-portfolio created a positive wash-back. Moreover, it facilitates learners to conduct peer feedback, support learners' professional development, and develop learners' critical thinking. Hung (2012), however, affirmed that e-portfolio could also initiate negative wash-back, such as anxiety to have more viewers pertinent to ICT, writing, and students' autonomous learning (Thang et al., 2012). Furthermore, Cheng & Chau (2013) conveyed that self-regulated learning strategies play an important role in the students' e-portfolio achievement.

Although there have been many studies revealing the benefits of integrating the e-portfolio for students' assessment, little has been known about how students view the use of e-portfolio for assessment. To fill this gap, therefore, this study explored the students' viewpoints towards the use of e-portfolio assessment in university.

METHOD

The study was qualitatively conducted as a case study to scrutinize an in-depth detail of the issue based on the real circumstance (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The elemental consideration in employing the qualitative method is because the study attempted to disclose the particularities, instead of merely summarizing narrow views. Also, the study employed a case study to enable the researchers to develop an in-depth analysis of the issue (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2017).

a. Population

A population is a group of people representing similar characteristics. For instance, all educators would compose the population of educators, and all secondary school directors in a school region would comprise the population of directors. Therefore, a population can be small or large. You have to choose what group you might want to think about (Creswell & Poth, 2016). With regard to the purpose of the study, the population of the study was the students of the English Education Department in the seventh semester of the university.

b. Sampling Procedures

The sample is known as the representation of the population in research. (Creswell & Creswell, 2017) expressed that a sample is a subgroup of the chosen population that specialist researcher intends to examine for making speculations. In an ideal circumstance, the researcher can choose a sample of people depicting the whole population. To begin with, purposive sampling is applied. In short, purposive sampling can be defined as purposively picking a specific sample based on the requirements (properties, traits, characteristics, and criteria). The researcher, for the purpose of the study, picked the students from one class. There were four classes at that university. A total of 16 students completed the questionnaire. However, only three students were involved in the interview session.

c. Data Collection

The data of the study were obtained from both interviews and questionnaires (Phellas et al., 2011). A questionnaire was disseminated to students to discover their perceptions of the use of e-portfolio in the teaching and learning process. Moreover, the data obtained from the interview were used to intensify the data obtained from the questionnaire.

d. Data Analysis

The data of the questionnaire were analyzed and investigated by utilizing a few stages to characterize and depict whether or not the students are in agreement about using e-portfolio for their learning. Besides, the interview session was recorded to assist the researchers in the data transcription. The interview data were used to strengthen the information acquired from the questionnaire.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This section elaborates the encountered finding and discussion pertinent to the study focus. The details are interpreted to elaborate the proportion of students' perception of the use of Google classroom as an e-portfolio for undergraduate students. The majority of students indicated an identical belief that the integration of the e-Portfolio did affect their motivational beliefs of learning English. A participant indicated that she got valuable or enjoyable experiences from the e-portfolio. Of the 16 respondents, 70% of them responded that they were happy in completing their assignments from the lecturers. In contrast, 30% of the subjects demonstrated their disagreement regarding the utilization of e-portfolio.

Furthermore, more than three-fourths (88%) of the subjects confessed that they enjoyed learning new things from the assignment as they were given the experience to provide an explanation for their classmates. Fourteen participants postulated that they would get a better achievement if learning by using an e-portfolio. In addition, only two students were still hesitant of getting a good mark. This finding is affirmed by Brown et al. (2009), asserting that cooperative learning with assessment method can assist students to achieve better results.

Also, the participants believed that making use of an e-portfolio for learning significantly affected their self-efficacy. Respondents were asked if they could follow the lecture well, three-fourths (75%) of them responded that they felt glad and were able to follow the lecture. With this regard, four participants contradicted that they hardly could understand the lecture. They expressed their discomfort due to unstable internet connection. Two students, even, reported that they got into trouble with the online submission due to internet disruption. Compared with others, nine students admitted that they could understand the lectures comprehensively. Of those who indicated that e-portfolio assessment affected their self-confidence levels, 81% thought that it helped them to solve the challenge in doing the assignment or the task. However, 19% answered that they did not feel engaged with such challenges.

Regarding the participants' level of test anxiety, 50% of the participants responded that they were confused and worried about answering the questions. In other words, they acknowledged that the instructions were not clearly delivered. During the test, almost all participants (99%) disclosed that they thought they had difficulties in answering the queries. This validated that any imperfections or mistakes can adversely induce their actual identity (Back et al., 2010). However, five students were confident and positively thought they could solve the questions. Finally, eleven students were upset about the queries since they could

not provide the demanded answers. Uniquely, five students affirmed that they were still able to be happy even though they could not answer the queries.

Commonly, most of the students demonstrated positive perceptions related to the integration of e-portfolio for their learning. Most students considered that e-portfolio has good effects on their learning achievement. In addition, the students confessed that the e-portfolio is user-friendly. Besides, the students found that an e-portfolio is helpful to improve their ability in learning English. These findings are in line with Barrot (2015), elaborating that a portfolio helps the students to develop their performance in writing, develop the teachers' roles, support learning, encourage students' participation, enhance the testing process, improve students' autonomous learning, and maintain lifetime learning.

The students thought that the e-portfolio (Google classroom) has positive effects on students' English learning. The study revealed that 88% of the participants agreed that an e-portfolio is effective to utilize in learning English. Meanwhile, only 12% of the participants disagreed with the effectiveness of the e-portfolio to facilitate them in learning English. Furthermore, about the role of the e-portfolio to assist the completion of the task, 81% of the participants demonstrated positive responses while 19% of them displayed their disagreement. These percentages indicate that the majority of the students admitted that the e-portfolio is beneficial to use in learning English. This finding is in line with the previous study conducted by Hung (2012) revealing that e-portfolio constructed positive wash-back.

This study also revealed students' positive attitude towards the use of e-portfolio in learning English. The percentage shows that 69% of the participants felt that e-portfolio increases their English ability, meanwhile, 31% of the participants did not share similar views. In addition, with the same proportion, 69% of the participants are keen to use the e-portfolio (Google classroom) both for learning English and for other purposes. These findings are also in line with Barrot (2015) about the benefit of e-portfolio in that it develops students' performance and supports the students' learning.

In addition, the students' felt that e-portfolio is easy to manage. The study findings showed that 81% of the participants agreed that an e-portfolio is easy in terms of usage, and they were able to use it independently after the first instructions. On the other hand, 19% of the participants considered that Google classroom was not user-friendly. Moreover, 94% of the participants thought that they were familiar with e-portfolio since the first time they used the e-portfolio. There are 88% of the students accepted that it was an easy-to-memorize learning platform, while 12% of them had difficulty in recognizing it. Thus, the findings imply that most of the students considered e-portfolio a simple platform. To sum up, these

results signal the advantages of e-portfolio in maintaining practicality and matching the learners' current learning style.

Besides, concerning the learning task of the e-portfolio, the students found that e-portfolio is helpful to improve their ability in learning English. There were 75% of the participants perceived that the e-portfolio-based task enhanced their interest to learn English, while 25% of them postulated different perceptions. Moreover, 94% of the participants felt that the learning activities have improved their ability in English. 88% of the participants considered that the learning activity helped them to increase their knowledge about English. Meanwhile, 12% of the participants did not consider it meaningful. In short, students are in a common perception that e-portfolio is fruitful in improving the students' ability in learning English. This finding corresponds with H. D. Brown & Abeywickrama (2010) affirming that the portfolio emboldens student-teacher interaction, accommodates self-assessment, proposes peer-assessment and collaboration with peers.

CONCLUSION

The findings indicated students' positive perceptions of the use of e-portfolio on learning English. This kind of portfolio allows them to mirror their skills and accomplishment, track their progress, and rehearse practical English skills. Also, Google classroom as an e-portfolio encourages students to do better as well as to embellish their ICT skills. It is considered a valuable tool for students to appraise their learning progress. Besides, it is an effective and beneficial tool to improve learners' ability in learning English. Unfortunately, some problems emerged during the implementation of the e-portfolio. Nonetheless, such problems are considered temporal and remediable through sufficient training, teachers' resourcefulness, and a more well-organized procedure.

Furthermore, as attained by Jonassen (1991), knowledge is actively composed by students. For this reason, it is fundamental to encourage or motivate students to be more responsible for their learning and become self-regulated learners. Integrating e-portfolio implementation with a student-centered approach is meaningful to revamp their motivation. That is to say, universities should consider the e-portfolio implementation on the basis of students' viewpoints to extend their learning enthusiasm engagement in active learning with e-portfolio. Also, it is necessary to consider strategies designed at promoting the concept of learning with an e-portfolio. Though not all educators would directly agree with the idea of using e-portfolio as the assessment tool, there has been a great calling for teachers to

integrate technology into teaching-learning activities. At last, it is ineluctable that teachers should embrace such a situation.

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