Utilizing ePortfolios to Achieve Deeper and Reflective Learning in a Graduate Adult Education Capstone Course

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SECTION 1

Introduction
Purpose

● How can you really tell what students have learned in a graduate adult education program?
  ○ More than examination scores and course grades.
  ○ Provides instructors with wider and deeper perspective of student learning.

● Research Question: “Did students achieve deeper reflective learning through the development and utilization of an ePortfolio?”
  ○ Students describe what learning meant to them.
  ○ Students use concrete examples of their learning.
Definitions

● The ePortfolio
  ○ Collect, store and share information electronically (Abrami & Barrett, 2005).
  ○ More than collection of artifacts or a learning log.
  ○ Students interpret their own learning.

● Reflective and Deeper Learning
  ○ Cornerstone of ePortfolio practice (Landis, Scott, and Kahn, 2015).
  ○ Deeper learning- Critical thinking, collaboration, communication, feedback, self-directed learning, content mastery.
  ○ Students make their learning and thinking visible.

● Capstone Course
  ○ Semester long course.
  ○ Student selection of artifacts.
  ○ Reflect about artifacts and receive feedback from instructor and students.
SECTION 2

Method
Data and Research Design

- 36 adult education Capstone ePortfolios (2016-2018)
- Documented experiences using a **chronological order** (past-present-future)
- **Personal narratives** of experience (Riessman, 2008)
- **Narrative Design** Methodology (Creswell, 2012; Riessman, 2008)
Data Analysis

- Inductive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006)
- Divided each reflection into four categories:
  i) Overall Summary [How would you summarize the story your ePortfolio told?]
  ii) Surprising Facts [What surprised you?]
  iii) Evidence of Self-Efficacy [What have you learned about yourself?]
  iv) Future Plans [Excluded this category]
- Narrow-down to two codes for each category (total 216 codes)
- Iterative analysis led to reach three main themes
### Most occurred codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Summary</th>
<th>Surprising Facts</th>
<th>Self-Efficacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Growth</td>
<td>• Self discovery</td>
<td>• Lifelong learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Personal growth</td>
<td>• Personal growth</td>
<td>• Finding self confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Integration</td>
<td>• Affirmation of learning theories</td>
<td>• Finding discovering self-identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Transformation</td>
<td>• Self-empowerment</td>
<td>• Self-awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Affirmation</td>
<td>• Personal transformation</td>
<td>• Transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reflection</td>
<td>• Discovering self-identity</td>
<td>• Re-affirmation of career choice</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reflective practitioner</td>
<td></td>
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<td>• Visual representation</td>
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</tbody>
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SECTION 3

Results
Theme One

Students became more reflective learners who frequently experienced transformative learning.
Personally, I have gone through a transformation myself while in this adult education program. What I learned in this program far exceeded what I initially expected. As a student in this adult education program, it felt like I found another part myself that I want and need to fulfill.”
"This portfolio documents my growing capacity for reflecting on my teaching and focusing on instructional improvement."
Theme Two

Students were surprised by greater self-discovery and significant personal growth exceeding their expectations.
"I was surprised that when I reflected on my most memorable learning experiences as a young adult and most successful teaching experiences, they were almost unanimously experiences that involved self-directed and hands-on learning, two characteristics of adult education theory."
There was also a bit of a surprise and realizing just how far I have come. I could tell I was growing and changing as an individual, but not until I had really taken a step back and look through my artifacts and reflected on them and myself have I realized my true growth.”
Theme Three

Students found new strengths.
I entered the program a very frightened, insecure, aging adult, from a marginalized background. I emerge with pride, confidence, roots and wings. Through the course of my studies I have found an inner strength and pride in the work that I do and have learned that I am more resilient than I gave myself credit for.”
“I have learned that I can be more creative than I thought I could. I believe the most important thing I have learned about myself during the program is that I can achieve any goal I set my mind to through hard work and perseverance.”
Conclusion

● There was evidence of deeper reflective learning through the student statements that demonstrated
  ○ Critical thinking
  ○ Collaborative engagement
  ○ Effective communication
  ○ Constructive feedback
  ○ Academic content mastery
References


Thank you!

Questions or Comments? Email: hnadir@indiana.edu