

Blogs as an E Learning Strategy in Supporting Economics Education Students during Teaching Practice

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KEYWORDS Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Students. Open Distance Learning. Teaching Practice Education. Surveys

ABSTRACT Advances in technology, changing funding regimes and student profiles, and developments in learning theories, among other things, result in more and more higher education institutions embracing blended approaches to teaching and learning. In this changing landscape, many traditional assumptions and beliefs regarding teaching and learning are being questioned. Conducting and sharing research assists in redefining and re-imagining open distance learning (ODL) teaching and learning in the 21st century. Over the past few years, greater attention has been paid to the new generation of social media, especially Web 2.0 technologies. Recently, blogs have facilitated the formation of online communities and have thus come to fulfil more extensive functions in education. This paper explores the use of blogs as a Web 2.0 e-learning strategy in supporting postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) students who were learning to teach economics and management science education in ODL teaching practice ecologies. Data was collected through student teachers' (n=474) completion of five surveys on ODL teaching practice experiences. The findings revealed that blogs assisted students with reflective practice and reasoning, and added value to their learning experiences. Strategies were formulated for strengthening ODL teaching practice education.