

ONE OF THE BEST PRACTICES IN THE INSTITUTION

1. Title of the practice:

Development of Information System on E portfolio Based Knowledge Generation and Sharing for Teacher Professional Development.

2. The context:

The practice was initiated because by developing an e-portfolio following benefits will be achieved which will be a great leap in making the whole teaching-learning process ICT oriented.

- Provides students with an authentic evaluation
- Documents students' growth
- Identifies strength and weakness in students
- Documents progress towards established benchmarks related to standards.
- Allows for reflection on progress within the program
- Provides the student with ownership over his/her own learning.
- Allows for expectations to be understood by all.

Educational leadership preparation program benefits are derived because the e portfolio process

- Assists the faculty in assessing and evaluating the students and the program.
- Includes ongoing assessment
- Encourages communication among faculty members and between faculty and students.
- Promotes reflection on the purposes of the program
- Offers a structure for monitoring program components.
- Provides a standardised means of evaluating reflections and artefacts.
- Documents student growth.

3. Objectives of the practice:

1. To study/analyze the possibilities of information and communication technologies/technology tools for professional development of teachers of all levels.

2. To develop online interaction platforms for learning, assessment, and professional growth of pre-service and in-service teachers.
3. To develop information system for e-portfolio based knowledge generation and sharing for professional growth of teachers.
4. To equip pre-service and in-service teachers of all levels to create and use e portfolios to professionalize teaching and learning.
5. To build a digital multimedia database for web based data management
6. To help minimize the 'digital divide' of deprived sections of teachers like, women teachers, rural and remote working teachers by providing necessary ICT inputs and support.
7. To provide government and non governmental agencies with teacher data in their efforts to improve the quality of education of various levels.

4. The Practice:

E – portfolio system developed

We are proud to introduce an electronic portfolio system in our college (Peet Memorial Training College, Mavelikara, Kerala), which is first time in India by making the teaching professionals involve in creating their own portfolios, through which they can upload their project works, teaching philosophies, class room videos, lesson plans and much more. The purpose behind this creation is not only to make the students engaged in an e-environment which is quite unfamiliar to most of them but also to assess their skills and ideas relating to the teaching field and get proper feedbacks on their posts.

The proposed portfolio system includes eleven B.Ed. colleges in Kerala. All the student teachers from these participating colleges are provided with their e-portfolio accounts in which they are advised to upload their intellectual works and activities. These uploaded works will be evaluated under the guidance of teaching experts using various assessment rubrics and proper feedback will be provided to the student teachers. Based on the feedback of the experts, students can make improvements on their works. This portfolio account will also serve as a recruiting platform for the teaching professionals, as their profile will be viewed by employers who register with the system. Thus employers can view the resume, works uploaded by the student teachers and even

their teaching videos which help the recruiters in assessing the teaching skill of a particular student teacher.

Portfolios can be used simply to store and organise information, For example, e portfolios can allow students to arrange materials for assessment. However, e portfolios are not simply repositories and can be to support reflections on assessment outcomes. The construction of a student portfolio by a student teacher in a teacher education programme is now universally regarded as an essential step in the process of teacher certification. The idea of building a teacher portfolio came from Lee Shulman who was a professor at Michigan State University in the 1970's and deeply involved in research on teaching.

5. Obstacles faced if any and strategies adopted to overcome them:

It is not enough to cite the benefits of portfolio development without recognizing that there are dilemmas in this process.

Time consuming preparation

One of the major problems in creating the portfolio is that the process is labour intensive and time consuming. Many pre service teachers feel overwhelmed at the thought of having to develop a portfolio. Unfortunately many of the teacher candidates do not bring their collection of evidence until they enter their student teaching semester. The demands and expectations of student teaching compound the stress associated with the development of the portfolio. Many in service and pre service teachers may feel that they need to document everything they have accomplished. This is an unreasonable, self imposed expectation. Identification of a realistic set of professional goals or standards with a small number of artefacts that best support the goals or standards will make the task more manageable.

Quality of presenting documents

Teachers who are very artistic or have access to superior technical resources are able to easily assemble a visually pleasing and impressive product. This places the teacher without the talent or resources at a disadvantage and may affect the scoring process when the portfolio is used for evaluation purposes.

Giving training for the users

Giving training for the users, i.e. teacher educators was really challenging because most of them were not well versed in ICT. It needed much time to make the teacher professionals to get involved in this e portfolio system.

Determining rubrics for assessment

Another major concern is the identification of an acceptable method of assessing then portfolio. The more diverse the documentation, the more difficult it becomes to compare and evaluate the portfolio. A solution to this problem that is often chosen is the use of a rubric that includes the aspects of performance to be measured and the criteria for rating those aspects.

6. Impact of the practice

A portfolio tells a story. It is the story of knowing. Knowing about things... Knowing oneself... Knowing an audience... Portfolios are students' own stories of what they know, why they believe they know it, and why others should be of the same opinion. A portfolio is opinion backed by fact... Students prove what they know with samples of their work.” (Paulson & Paulson, 1991, p.2). The purpose of development of such an e portfolio is knowledge generation and sharing, professional development and reflective learning. This project envisages that student teachers upload the best of their creative works such as lesson plans, project works, reflective diary, and a number of other artefacts. Provisions for self reflections and peer comments are provided a greater focus in this project. The works of teachers are assessed by the faculty members or experts and the student teachers can make changes in their work based on the assessment and feedback. Thus the system turns as a base for continuous professional development.

The electronic portfolios can be presented in various forms of electronic multimedia like audio, video, graphics, art clips and so on. However, the wide range of media through which electronic portfolios can be developed adds to their sophistication and consequently the effort involved in their development and maintenance. Information security is also an area of concern since portfolios accessible through the internet are open to the general public. Some teachers look at an electronic portfolio as just another student webpage. Unless it has clearly defined aims and goals, an electronic portfolio can easily become a student webpage instead of a powerful learning and assessment tool.

The student teachers, once they get out of the institution can continue their page and can add more works to their page. Therefore this is a continuous process. Thus a digital culture can be

developed among the teachers through this project which can change their attitude towards technology, professional skill and development. This is needed for future teachers, since we are going to live in a technology drawn society.

There are many purposes:& goals for the portfolio which determine the content: Learning/Process, Assessment, and Marketing/Showcase. Learning/Process Portfolios involve the focus on the Greek Philosophers' directive, "know thyself" which can lead to a lifetime of investigation.

The use of portfolios in teacher preparation programs has gained in prominence within teacher education in recent years. In particular, the use of electronic portfolios is being widely promoted in many teacher education institutions in line with an increased focus on digital technology integration into the teacher preparation curriculum. When implemented effectively, electronic portfolios are being used to promote reflection, facilitate self-directed inquiry, document student learning, growth, and development, and determine initial licensure readiness among pre-service teachers. There is little to be gained, however, from implementing electronic portfolios without attending to the many challenges that face this particular format choice. Similarly, deciding to use electronic portfolios as a major assessment piece in a program will not guarantee successful implementation. Ensuring that all participants are offered ongoing support in the required technology presents quite a hurdle, although it is an essential component of working with electronic portfolios. Furthermore, it is important that systems for support, management, and assessment of electronic portfolios be developed prior to implementation on a wide scale. Ownership of the portfolio among the faculty is crucial to promoting a successful electronic portfolio initiative and it would be unwise to expect the electronic portfolio process to be embraced by all faculty, students, and departments initially. Collectively, the research to date recommends starting with a thoughtful planning process and beginning the implementation process on a small scale. This same body of research also reminds teacher educators to remain ever mindful that at the heart of the portfolio initiative is the portfolio's purpose. Everything, including the data collection and documentation process, the support and mentoring offered to the students, and the assessment of their efforts, stems from the *purpose* of the portfolio. The benefits of using electronic portfolios represented within the literature are many and the challenges resulting from using this format are equally so. While sensitive to the process/product dichotomy that portfolios foster, future research must focus on how, in what context, and to what

degree electronic portfolios facilitate student growth and learning. It is with this future focus that teacher educators and the students with whom they work will realize the true potential of electronic teacher portfolios and how best to implement them within teacher preparation programs.

7. Resources required:

The practice requires a team of experts for assessment, the developed system, wi-fi facility and students who are willing to digitize their best works and to upload it.

8. Contact person for further details:

Dr. Mariamma Mathew
Associate Professor
Peet Memorial Training College
Mavelikara
Kerala- 690101
Mobile: 9447463483