



"This is of course the Students' World ..." ICT and Media - Use and Attitude among Danish Teachers at the Upper Secondary Level in Iceland

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Abstract

The objective of this Masters Degree research study was to investigate the use of information technology and communication (ITC) and media among teachers of Danish at the college level in Iceland. It also examined their attitude towards computer-assisted learning and the factors that affect their attitudes. The attitudinal factors selected for research were based on a theoretical framework and previous studies, in particular the 4E model developed by Betty Collis and her colleagues (Collis, Peters and Pals, 2001). This model includes factors connected to the teachers' belief in the educational value of ITC and media, how enjoyable and how easy they themselves find working with IT, and finally several environmental and institutional factors pertaining to social and cultural issues, as well as various technical developments.

A sample of 64 Danish teachers, listed as such on their College home page, was sent an e-mail requesting their participation in the study. Thirty Danish teachers, or 46%, responded and their answers were analysed. The research design consisted of a digital survey in the WebCT distance learning environment. The survey and the research questions were based on the factors in the 4E model developed by Betty Collis and her colleagues (2001).

The main results of the study are that there is considerable and diverse use of ITC and media among the teachers of Danish in Icelandic colleges. They have a generally positive attitude towards the use of ITC in their work and believe that it has a positive effect on student achievement, with the exception of oral ability. They themselves enjoy using the technology and all consider themselves proficient ITC users. On a five-point rating scale based on the framework proposed by Lyn Dawes (2003), they rate themselves from 3-5, where one is the least use of ITC and five is the most. They also consider the management in their schools to be supportive of the use of ITC, and the facilities within their schools to be generally good. The obstacles they mentioned, however, included the difficulty of booking enough computers for large groups of students, and the shortage of teaching material to support ITC-based learning. The research confirmed the importance of the internal and external factors identified in the Collis model and provided an insight into the use of ITC and media in the first decade of the twenty-first century in Icelandic colleges. Further to this research, it would be interesting to investigate the use of ITC and media among a different teacher group to discover whether the results are comparable.