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Ute Rademacher

University of Applied Sciences Emden/Leer (Germany), Department of Business Studies

Zusammenfassung

Dieser Beitrag analysiert die Lehrerfahrungen in digitaler Lehre im Bereich von Media Management. Die Analyse vergleicht zwei studentische Praxisprojekte an einer deutschen Hochschule für angewandte Wissenschaften, welche jeweils eine Fragestellung eines unternehmerischen Kooperationspartners untersuchten. Der Vergleich des Präsenzprojektes mit dem strukturell vergleichbaren digitalen Projekt gibt wertvolle Hinweise auf die Herausforderungen der digitalen (und hybriden) Bildung im Bereich des Media Management sowie Anregungen für Verbesserungen in der zukünftigen Lehre.

Keywords: Digitalisierung, Media Management Lehre

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Summary

This contribution analyses experiences with digitised education within the realm of media management. The comparison focusses on two practice-oriented research projects conducted by students at a German university of applied science in cooperation with an entrepreneurial cooperation partner in each case. The analytical comparison of the analogue versus almost exclusively digitised project provides valuable indications of challenges for digital and hybrid educational formats and indications for areas of improvements in future media management education.

Keywords: Digitisation, media management education

1. Introduction

Globalisation, along with the advent of innovative technologies and alterations in media consumption patterns, has engendered a profound transformation within the realm of media. Journalism and media management scholars see a need for a transformation of higher education. Educators now find themselves often bereft of the personal rapport that traditional, in-person interactions afforded, as learners manifest as mere "tile images" within the virtual expanse of online classes and lectures. In lieu of the customary chalkboard depictions, digital whiteboards have progressively assumed the role of visual scaffolds, a trend that augments the educational experience. The acquisition, creation, and dissemination of content occur synchronously, facilitated by the immediacy of digital platforms. Furthermore, hybrid formats enrich face-to-face teaching and facilitate the portfolio of teaching formats. These transformative shifts raise some questions for journalism and media management scholars: What are the latent opportunities and risks inherent in digitised education? What requisites shall be incumbent upon participants and educational institutions alike? How can they meet these challenges to be able to continue to guarantee the quality of teaching and education?

2. The comparative educational analysis of media management research projects

The covid pandemic has pushed schools and universities to switch from in-classroom to online teaching to hybrid formats. Research has revealed that social media can increase student satisfaction and foster students' engagement (Hamid, 2020; Bal, Grewal, Mills, & Ottley, 2015). In so doing, they enhance the resulting learning experience (Moghavvemi, Sulaiman, Jaafar, & Kasem, 2018). However, the potential of a fully digitised learning experience compared to in-classroom learning based on face-to-face-interactions has not yet been assessed empirically. Thus, this contribution introduces a comparative educational analysis of two student research project.

2.1 Empirical Basis: The Projects

Both projects took place within the framework of the University Competition, which the Fair Trade City of Hamburg and the Innovation Contact Point Hamburg jointly launched to strengthen fair trade and to engage cooperatively for it. The program includes an official opening event for all participating university teams with their entrepreneurial project partners, a Fair Trade workshop, the presentation of results before a jury, and a solemn closing event with an award ceremony. The project goals of both projects were individually coordinated with the cooperating companies: one project developed a target group segmentation with the help of personas for marketing communication, the other analysed the conditions under which customers of stationary trade engage in e-commerce of fair trade products.

Student teams carried out their project in a self-organised manner during one semester, supported by a professorial mentor. The process of project implementation is comparable even if the objectives differ due to predefined milestones (kick-off meeting, hypothesis generation, data collection, analysis, presentation of results and pitch to the jury). The project in 2019 took place entirely in presence, the second project in 2020 was carried out almost exclusively in digitised form. Even if hybrid teaching and learning can also be expected in the future, indications for the fundamental differences between digitally and analogue mediated education can be gained.

The experiences from both research projects can be structured amongst the themes structure, strategy, and culture to derive analytical implications for digitised teaching.

2.2 Analysis of Structures: Responsibility, Governance, and Project Management

Responsibilities and powers are critical to ensure the governance of digitised teaching and learning. Assessments and grading are a critical aspect in each curriculum. In both research projects, compulsory attendance was waived. For the performance assessment, not only the presentation of the results was graded, but also the way to the goal in the form of pre-defined milestones. The virtual collaboration took place in groups throughout the digitised project, in contrast to the face-to-face project. Thus, individual performances were not assessed at the request of the students, which would hardly have been possible in a regular curriculum, as examination formats are not usually determined in a participatory manner.

Another responsibility in digitised education concerns

the handling of data protection. This gained practical importance for the students in both projects when conducting an online survey. However, the responsibility for data protection issues when using messenger services and video conferencing in a business context were more relevant for students in the digitised project. Despite this gain in responsibility, compliance with the data protection laws and regulations should not be transferred entirely to the students, as they do not have the complex knowledge about the technical possibilities and limits and ultimately the teachers and management are responsible for compliance with the law. Accordingly, it can be assumed that in the long term, closer coordination with internal or external data protection experts will have to be set up in schools and universities. The different interests of those involved could prove to be a challenge, as data protection tends to prescribe conservative and protective rules, while practice-oriented, digitised teaching requires flexible solutions. In addition, digital ecosystems of educational institutions, public authorities and private-sector companies are currently still not very connectable (Seufert et al., 2019). Teachers often must do without didactically useful online tools that would be stable, powerful, interactive and entertaining for reasons of data protection. The official online tools, on the other hand, often suffer from poor performance and limited possibilities.

A greater flexibility of the curriculum and a shift towards agile competence acquisition is considered a prerequisite for digitised teaching (De Haan, 2008; Lugmayr et al., 2014).). This demand ties in with the development towards competence-oriented teaching and lesson design (Müller et al., 2016). In the in-class project, the interactions mostly encompassed the alignment of goals, delegating tasks and giving feedback. Students chose more traditional project management tools to manage their progress in the project flow. In the digitised project, the student-teacher-interactions represented sharing and coaching, and students developed a more agile working style themselves. In both projects, the students were guided by a rough timetable and set themselves individual deadlines for the development of sub-goals, discussions, and decisions. In the face-to-face project, they used classic tools (e.g. Gantt charts), in the digitised teaching they used agile project management tools. Using a digital Kanban Board (see Fig. 2.1), they structured outstanding activities (backlog), activities in progress (in progress) and completed activities (done) for both working groups in an agile way, depending on

the current progress.

Agile project management tools appear to be more suitable for maintaining an overview, documenting project progress, and controlling it in a targeted manner, regardless of space and distance. The equipment of (higher) education institutions must accordingly ensure that all students have access to supporting tools to allow participation in an agile and digitised way (Breitenbach, 2021). In addition to media competencies, skills in project management and self-organised learning must be developed more strongly so that the potential of the technical tools can be realised.

2.1 Analysis of Culture: Innovation, Participation, and Communication

In this context, culture is defined as "the overt and covert rules of a culture stabilise reality like a social memory and thereby limit the potential for change that is possible in principle as long as they are not questioned" (Kruse, 2020, p. 110). The research projects were embedded in the framework programme of the Fair Trade University Competition. To successfully shift these events into digital formats, the students had to develop a highly flexible culture. While a face-to-face kick-off meeting was still possible at the beginning of the digital project, the team meetings had to be held purely digitally in the further course due to hygiene regulations. For this purpose, it had to be agreed which options for video conferencing the students, company partners and programme leaders could use to exchange information. Flexibility was also required regarding the preparation of the results, because the students did not know for a long time during the project whether the presentation of the results (and thus one of the examinations) would take place in person, digitally or in a hybrid format.

The digital implementation of the research project exemplifies the imponderables and the need for clarification in the context of digitised education. The use of Zoom conferences has often not been permitted for reasons of data protection in schools, some authorities, and companies, while not all universities use Microsoft Teams. In addition, not every German has a high-performance internet connection or reliable WLAN to ensure video conferences involving many participants with stable sound and images. A digital infrastructure was only made financially possible in

many German schools by the Digital Pact and was urgently needed because of the Corona crisis, but the process of implementation is still ongoing for many. The establishment of a national education platform (German Bundestag, 19.04.2021), which enables seamless access to various digital education offerings, is an important political initiative of the federal government with funding of 630 million euros, even if access to this offering is not expected until the end of 2023 at the earliest.

Currently, projects still have to work flexibly with "work arounds". According to Lohrmann (2017), curiosity and an affinity for risk are required in the digitised world of work. to be able to deal constructively with uncertainty. These characteristics hardly represent the prerequisites for pedagogical training or university teaching. Another cultural dimension is greater transparency and and decision-making participation of digitised teaching. New types of role and task distributions are required of teachers and learners alike. For example, students in the digitised project were more empowered to agree on the content and responsibilities of the individual work steps in the student team and to make decisions together. Appropriate guidelines and values are needed to promote this kind of communication and teaching in the long term, not only regarding the teachers, but also in the teacher-learner relationship. In addition to the opportunities, it is important to take a critical look at the challenges for developing learning cultures that promote creativity and innovation (Malycha & Maier, 2017) and how they can be overcome to achieve the goals of digitised education.

Implicit and explicit rules of interaction determine the culture in which digitised teaching and learning takes place. Digital communication tools allowed for more informal interaction in the digitised research projects than the face-to-face projects. The implementation of virtual team meetings, the joint development of ideas on a digital white board and the quick, informal exchange via a messenger service facilitated the joint processing of tasks or the prompt feedback on partial solutions during the project.

This requires new competences and rules for all participants. For example, after a short period of "anything goes", the students in the digitised research project agreed independently on rules about which communication channel (private or university e-mail, messenger post, phone call) to choose for which content or goals, so that they do not communicate twice or bypass each other. This was not necessary to a comparable extent in the presence research project. Expectations regarding appropriate latency between a request to the group and a response were negotiated to avoid too much pressure to respond in the digitised research project. (Zinn & Rademacher, 2019) and at the same time to move forward swiftly in the project process. Since there were no explicit communication rules at the beginning of the project, the students had to work together in the team phases of "storming" and "norming". of "storming" and "norming" (Kleina & Than, 2019) to be able to exchange information smoothly and promptly during the course of the project. At the same time, digital techniques made it easier for learners to approach complex topics in a playful way, to juxtapose different perspectives visually as well, and to develop shared perspectives. Instead of the reception of given content, there was more joint negotiation of possible solutions.

Low-threshold communication carries the risk that the boundaries between teaching, learning and private life become increasingly blurred (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2015). Digitised teaching therefore requires new rituals and rules for communication to avoid psychological overload, stress and conflicts (Zinn & Rademacher, 2019).

2.3 Analysis of Strategy: Collaboration, Infra-structure, and Social Practices

A comprehensive digitisation strategy is required from universities going beyond the hardware. The acceleration of digitalisation in the Corona pandemic offered the opportunity to develop a more unified set of goals for educational institutions. Collaboration has proven successful in realising the change from presence to digital and hybrid teaching formats. Practical cooperation and collaboration with other (higher) education institutions and education providers can also make a positive contribution to the greater individualisation of study programmes and curricula, particularly in media management education (Seufert, Guggemos, & Moser, 2019; Lowe & Picard, 2020). The comparison has shown that collaborations with external entrepreneurial cooperation partner create an urgency to use digital media and tools more flexibly and risks leading to a cultural clash in educational institutions. The implementation competence must be critically reflected upon, as clear difficulties in implementing data protection-compliant,

stably functioning and didactically suitable solutions for digital teaching and learning are emerging (Huber et al., 2020).

A strategic goal for digital transformation must go beyond the perspective of "bits and bytes" (Hagel et al., 2011). Empirical findings on higher education development demonstrate the potential of holistic digitisation strategies that encompass the areas of organisation, economy, organisational culture, and leadership (Seufert et al., 2015). In addition to digital sovereignty, it will also be necessary to change the infrastructure in the future and, in the next developmental step, the social practices of education and teaching. Informal and formal rules alone will not bring this about as long as the possibilities of digital technologies do not lead to a change in one's own working style (Orlikowski & Yates, 2006.; Rademacher, Weber & Zinn, 2021). Only changed social practices lead to sustainable digitalisation and the building of a digital ecosystem. The accompanying profiling of individual study programmes and the attractiveness of educational institutions could have a motivating effect on those involved.

educational institutions in such a way that teachers and learners are motivated to adapt continuously and proactively to changes in the curriculum, teaching formats, examination modalities and the processes and structures of their educational institution. To motivate learners and to support participation in the long term, a comprehensive set of pedagogical measures, digital tools, edutainment, netiquette, and regulations is needed, which can be supported through interventions such as interactive school development days, information events and training measures (Schmitt, 2017). This is the only way to counteract the risk of greater social inequality, as currently unequal frameworks and learning conditions reinforce the digital divide and future-oriented competences are not made accessible to all learners (Azionya & Nhedzi, 2021; Coleman, 2021; Soomro et al., 2020).

The Corona pandemic has given digitised teaching for sustainable development a strong push forward. It is to be hoped that the challenges mentioned can be overcome and that the digital transformation can be anchored wisely in media management education.

3. Conclusions

Media management education particularly benefits from the possibility of entering into cooperative ventures with other institutions, authorities and companies. Innovative formats can contribute to the professional and personal development of learners and teachers. Competencies such as self-organisation and self-regulation (Fischer, Fischer-Ontrup, & Schuster, 2020) as well as openness to innovation can be promoted just as much as technical-functional media skills, which have been shown in empirical studies to be lower among learners than the image of "digital natives" would suggest (Senkbeil et. al., 2019).

At the same time, digitised education for sustainable development places multiple demands on educational institutions and teachers. The technical infrastructure which goes far beyond the acquisition of hardware, must be ensured comprehensively and sustainably. Continuous planning, implementation and evaluation of administration, maintenance and cybersecurity of digital information technologies are required.

In addition to the technical-functional requirements, it is also necessary to change the learning culture in

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