

Studying with Technology

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ABSTRACT

The lack of the proper use of technology among students of Dhofar University caught serious attention and led to this research. The main objective was to investigate the actual issue pertaining to the proper and advanced use of technological skills. Do the faculty and students realize that there is an issue? Will highlighting the issue change their attitudes and improve them in their technological skills after the practical implication of the skills taught to them? Would they continue using it further? were the main research questions of this research. A research questionnaire including both Y/N and open-ended questions was given to 21 students of Dhofar University ranging from all the different majors for an expressive feedback. The students' response was overwhelmingly positive as expected. All of them agreed that there is a lacking support from the institution and student themselves are unaware of the new technological skills hence they do not achieve international standards of a Techno-Student. In order to cope with the issue not only a solution was recommended but also 6 students from Different majors of Dhofar University were in fact taught new technological skills and applications in accordance with Bloom's Taxonomy model of learning so that they can incorporate the use of technology at each step of learning with ease, enthusiasm, full involvement and positive attitude attaining utmost creativity in their studies.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

Technology can simply be defined as, 'A manner of accomplishing a task especially using technical processes, methods, or knowledge.' This word was coined quite recently almost two hundred years ago in 1829. Mechanical advancements of man made it possible to achieve tasks in a specialized manner almost in every field of social life which is upgraded time to time. (Merriam Webster, 2017).

'Studying with Technology' encompasses technical processes, scientific methods, use of different scientific mediums, applications, trials in order to enhance student's learning and productivity. There is a conflict of opinion in excessive use of technology in order to enhance student's learning. It is suggested that creativity, group tasking, team orientation, deep understanding of project based learning can be aided by the use of technology but never be a total replacement for human interaction.

On the other hand, it is observed that the use of technology is predominant in institutions resulting in more concentration, focus, and engagement of students. Students who involve the use of technology in their studies invest more hours in collaborative work, participate more in project based instruction, write more productively and effectively, have more access to information, research skills are enhanced, invest more hours working on digital apps for home works and assignments (Devlin, Feldhaus & Bentrem, Fall 2013, p.2).

Each student has different learning style. In order to accommodate that teachers use various teaching techniques. No matter how diverse and up to date the teaching style is one thing is certainly observed in higher education institutes in U. S that some students still follow old studying methods, some are visual learners, some are silent studiers, some are good in group collaboration, many prefer to use new methods and techniques to study. According to a research, available technology and access to knowledge facilitates both faculty and students and in turn better learning is observed (BNC, 2013).

The 2016 *Digital Study Trends Survey*, on 'The attitudes of students towards technology in classroom' claims a fair increase of 22% as compared to 2014 which was just 13 %. Students prefer using technology as it improves their grades. Their favorite technical devices are smartphones and laptops (Straumsheim, 2016).

Statement of the problem

Today the world is rightly called a *Techno-World*. Technology dominates every field of life. The next generation of students is expected to build networks, develop apps, secure devices, analyze data, stand out from the mob, attracting job market and empower work with purpose. Globalization demands a workforce prepared with digital skills to cope with technology (Raymond, 2017).

Students in Dhofar University lack knowledge pertaining to the use of Technology. Not only that they simply disregard its use even though they are aware of it. Those who use technology are only restricted to smartphones or laptops. This lack of commitment to technology and upgraded learning does not fit them to international standards of a techno student.

So many researches are made on different issues but it is surprising that no research has been conducted on such an empirical topic so far in Dhofar especially in Dhofar University.

It was about time to conduct a proper research. Students from different departments enrolled in different majors and different study years would be involved in the research. Firstly, the students will be assessed about their knowledge of technology followed by their interest in the use of technology. They will be asked to fill up a questionnaire. Lastly, they would be made aware through a practical use of technology. Their experiences and responses would be recorded.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study is to educate students and equip them with latest technological skills so that they face job markets nationally and internationally meeting all the standards. None of the students should be underrated in their abilities to work progressively, productively, technically and skillfully.

Objectives of the study

- To draw student and faculty's attention pertaining to the issue that our students lack technological skills.
- To involve many students from different departments of DU
- To highlight the issues related to the lack of use of technology while studying which would help us put direct focus on those issues.
- To involve students learn the use of technology practically.
- To improve their technical skills.
- To change their perspectives.
- To inculcate the use of technology. One student taught successfully would be the fruit of the whole research.

Research questions

- Do DU students and faculty realize that our students lack technological skills?
- Does highlighting the issues, involving different students on DU will make any impact?
- Are our students well equipped and well trained technologically?
- Does the use of technology make any difference in their performance?
- Is there perspective changed after the practical implication of the use of technology?
- Are they willing to apply it in their studies and real-life?

Significance of the study

I believe this research would bring a significant change. Firstly, it will draw attention of both faculty and students towards the lack of use of technology. Secondly, the involvement of different majors of students will bring them close to technology that would enhance their technical skills and improve their studying techniques too. For those who disregard the use of technology would find it helpful after the practical application and continue to use afterwards. This will be beneficial for them in every genre of life especially the over demanding international job market.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Technology means the different processes and technologies used by human beings to accommodate their needs. It has been claimed that technology enhances creativity, deepens understanding, improves project based learning and students are more accustomed to this as compared to the past (Devlin et

al., 2013, p.2). This research focuses on the Importance of studying with Technology.

Several studies have been conducted over the years on the ways students study. One study proposes that “Students are choosing to learn, study and take notes using the most current devices and programs which help faculty to understand what should go on during precious class time” (BNC, 2013).

In another research done by Graw and Hill, (2016), on collegiate varying from fresher to Ph.D., 82% of them claimed that technology makes studying more feasible. 81% claimed that it helps them acquire good grades. 62% claimed that it boosts their spirits and they pay more attention to their studies.

Straumsheim (2016) emphasizes that “the next generation of students” must know networking, synthesizing apps, protecting devices and analyzing data which would help them with stand the technological pressures of the job market as the employment of labor is estimated to grow by 31% in U.S from 2014-2024.

In a workshop on “Teaching with Technology” emphasis was put on the fact that integrating technology with teaching and studying engages student more in the studying and facilitates peer collaboration too. It was further explained that it is observed that technology produces more successful learners. Although, more time and effort is needed to learn the use of technology and incorporate it but the results are satisfying. Additional emphasis was on using online videos before, during and after lecture which keeps the students involved and as a suggestion “TED Talks, TED ED, You tube, and Teacher Tube” for best online videos were recommended (Personal communication—Reif, A. October11, 2017).

METHODOLOGY

An overview is provided on the design of the study; Descriptions on population, participants of the study, the instruments and methods that are employed by which data is being collected and analyzed.

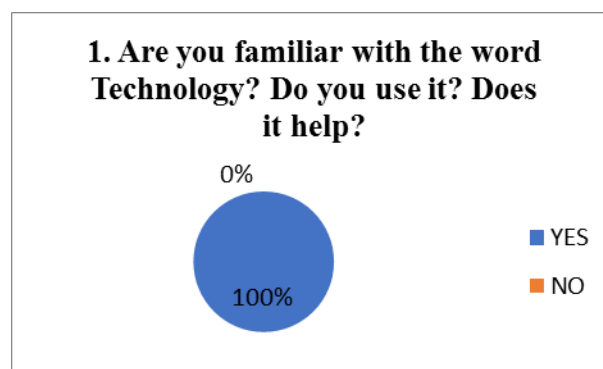
A questionnaire will be used as an instrument to the students of Dhofar University ranging from all the different majors. Different majors will be English Language and Translation, Business, Foundation, Social work and Engineering. The questionnaire must comprise of both Yes/No and open ended questions.

The population of students will include Foundation students, First year to graduating students. At least 20

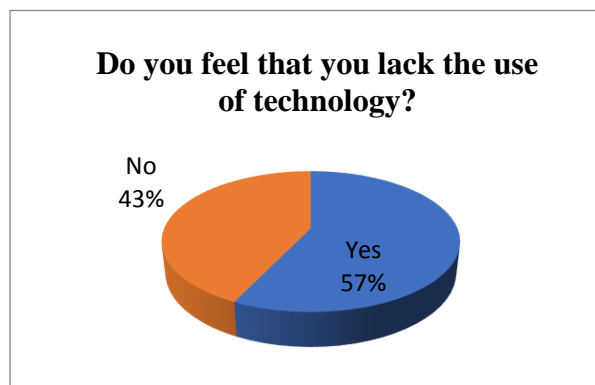
students will be questioned on both Yes/No and open ended questions.

RFESULTS AND FINDINGS

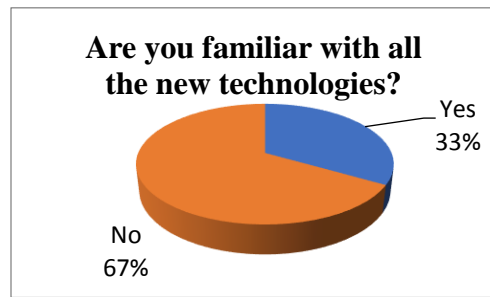
- 1- Are you familiar with the word “Technology”?
- 2- Do you use technology while studying?
- 3- Does using technology make your studying easier?



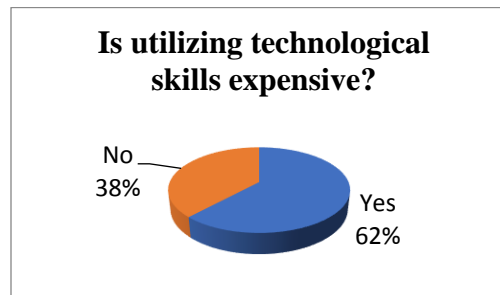
Twenty one students were asked and all of them responded that they are familiar with the word Technology. All of them agree that they use technology while studying and it makes their studying easier.



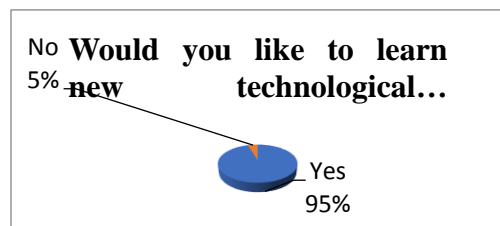
When they were asked whether they lack the use of technology 57% of student agreed to the fact that they do lack the use of technology. 42.8% responded that they don't lack the use of technology.



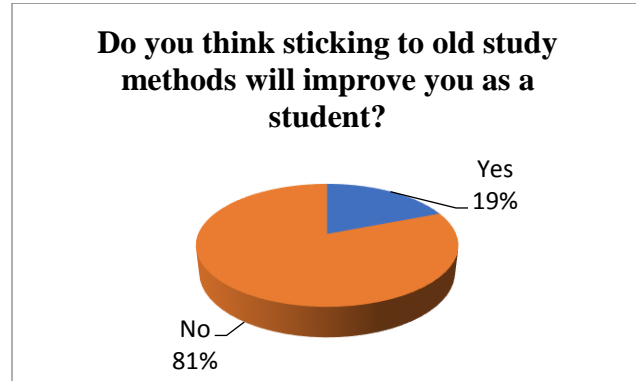
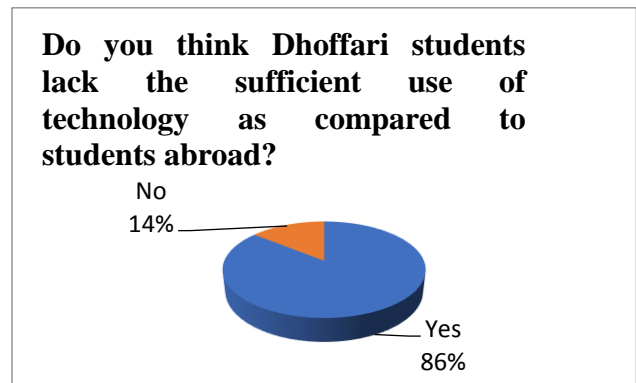
33% of students agreed that they are familiar with all the new technologies. 66.6 % responded that they are unfamiliar. It is contradicting the answer where they responded 100% that they use technology. The reason behind that is that they use basic technologies like using phone, laptop or Google for searching and dictionary use simply. They are not familiar with other advanced apps or technologies.



More than half of the majority, nearly 61% agreed that using technology is expensive. 38% responded that it is not expensive.



Almost 95.2 % students agreed that they would like to incorporate new technological skills in their studies because there is a lack of support from the institution on how to learn and use new technologies.



80.9% of students agreed that sticking to old methods of studying is not beneficial for them as students and 85.7% admitted to the fact that *Dhofari* students lack the sufficient use of technology as compared to the students living abroad.

OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS:

- What kind of technologies do you incorporate while studying? Does it make your task creative and interesting?

From the open ended questions 90% of students mentioned that they use basic technology such as, “mobile phone, laptop, I pads and desktops”. For searching and working for assignments they use internet and Google mainly. They affirmed that it does make their task creative and interesting. One of the students claimed that, “using technology allows me to get more knowledge and new ideas and concepts which make me creative”.

- Compare old traditional methods with the new technological methods. Purely your opinion!

In answer to that almost 85% student agreed that new methods are interesting and helpful. Few students disagreed and one student mentioned that, “Using technology can make people stupid as they are over dependent on the use of technology. Thinking on our own can make us more creative and innovative”.

- How do you feel when you see that Dhoffari students lack behind the students abroad? Are you ready to learn new technological skills? What is your expected outcome?

Although all the students are familiar with the basic use of technology, they still believe that they lack than the students abroad. 90% of students were submissive to the fact. One student however mentioned that “This isn’t the case. It is stereotyping Dhofari students”. 98% of students were willing to learn new technological skills and were expecting a positive out-come. One student explicitly mentioned, “I am eagerly waiting to learn new technological skills”.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

The findings adamantly affirm that there although students were familiar with the word technology and knew the importance of it but they did not focus on learning new technologies. Moreover the institution or the faculty did not aid or pursue them to learn new technological skills. Those who were familiar with the basic use of technology gave a positive response as expected that yes technology helps them to be creative in their tasks and aids them while studying. Those who were not familiar with the use of technology were ready to learn new technological skills. They knew that sticking to old studying methods would not be beneficial for them so all of them were eager to use new technological skills.

The students who were already familiar with the basic use of technology were incorporating basic technological devices like laptop, smart phones and few even used I-pad. This did not serve the purpose.

to find out the lack of technological skills but also to involve different students and make them familiar to different technological skills.

Keeping that in mind, six students were chosen from each major i.e Finance, business, management, social work, literature and translation to teach them new technological skills. The purpose was to design something in teaching which all of them can easily grasp, understand and apply later.

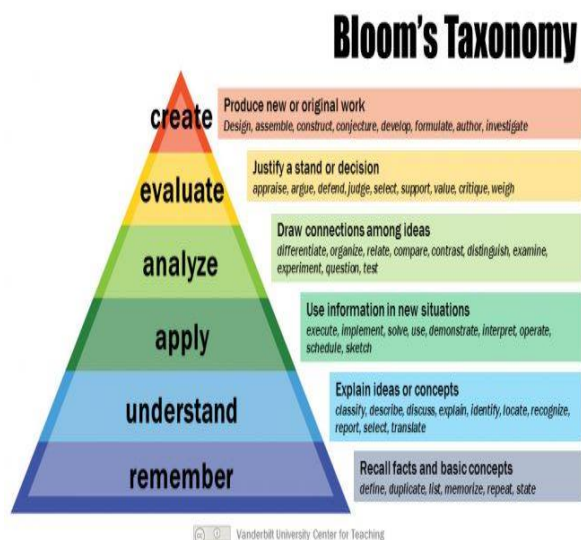
For that purpose I utilized Bloom’s taxonomy model incorporating different technological applications for an enhanced learning and studying techniques.

Armstrong (2001) states that teachers must use Bloom’s Taxonomy model for teaching as it sets objectives for both the teachers and the students. Objectives are important to establish as it will let students and teachers both work in an organized manner and both the studying and teaching would be purposeful and fruitful.

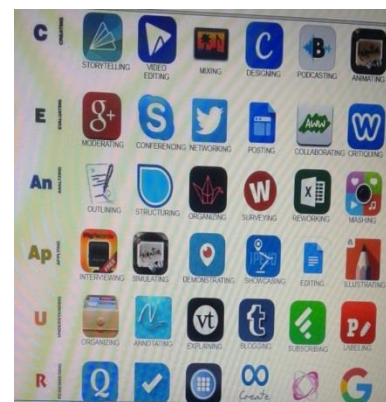
Before we commence the utilization and integration of Bloom’s Taxonomy with technology practically it is imperative to clarify the basics of Bloom’s Taxonomy model which is useful for teachers, peer tutors and students equally.

It is a model which is a hierarchy, a way to classify thinking according to six cognitive levels of complexity. It has six levels starting from Remembering, to Understanding, to Applying, to Analyzing, to Evaluating, and to Creating. For those who need to understand must remember things, for applying they must understand, for analyzing they must apply, for evaluating they must analyze, and for creating they must evaluate. This is a hierarchical process. For the last step of creativity the student masters all the steps mentioned before this step (L, 2014).

This model was utilized by integrating technology and practically applied to the chosen six students from different majors of D.U. Shrock (2011) in her “Kathy shrock’s guide to everything” recommended many Bloomin’ apps which are easily accessible to all android, I-pad and online users. Among all the applications only the android apps were downloaded and utilized for teaching technological skills to the selected



Also, the main objective of this research was not only



students.

Each student was assigned different apps in accordance with the bloom's taxonomy hierarchical studying levels. They worked as one unit so that they can enjoy the learning process.

The first student was assigned two apps "Listening" and "Searching" which would help him remember things while studying. The second student was assigned three apps "Organizing", "Annotating", and "Labeling" app for understanding things while studying. The third student was assigned "Editing" and "Illustrating" apps for applying what is remembered and understood. The fourth student was assigned "Surveying" and "Outlining" apps for analyzing. The fifth student was assigned "Moderating" and "Critiquing" app for evaluating. The sixth student was assigned "Story telling", "Designing" and "Animating" apps for creating.

Although, the initial learning process was quite time taking and accompanied errors but eventually it turned out to be a fun and creative task. They worked as a unit and were interested in everybody else's progress too. This helped them changed their perspective and they were eager to learn new technological skills too in future. This collaboration helped the students to learn from each other too. They also got familiar that studying can be a fun part and can be divided into a hierarchical process the way Bloom's Taxonomy model proposes. So each stage can be equally fun and learning process while studying.

COONCLUSION

Thus it is proven that there was a lack of support and lack of using technology among D.U students. This research not only highlighted the issue pertaining to the lack of use of technology but also gave an appropriate applicable solution which is quite feasible to use for all the different majors and age groups.

All the objectives of the research are being met proficiently. Both faculty's and student's attention is being drawn towards the issue. More than twenty students participated in the research ranging from all the different majors of DU. Issue was being highlighted and majority of them admitted that they lacked the use of new technological skills. Six students participated in learning the new technological skills. New apps were being introduced in accordance with Bloom's Taxonomy of learning. So they not only learnt and used technology but also learnt new methods to improve their studying skills. It changed their perspective towards the use of

technology and they were willing to learn more skills in future which would enable them to cope with over demanding international job markets.

This research helped us understand through the findings that the issue is not with the students. If the faculty helps them with proper instruction and guidance students would actively learn and utilize technology. As everybody affirmed that they want to learn new technological skills and in no way want to compromise being an excellent student matching the international standards.

Thus it is recommended that faculty must take proper initiatives in guiding, instructing, and helping students how to learn new technological skills. The easiest way would be to incorporate Bloom's Taxonomy of learning with different applications available on android, i-phone, i-pads. They would be extremely cost effective. It will allow students to be creative and enjoy their learning process. It would indulge students in group tasking and each one of them would learn from everybody else too. Mutual cooperation, fun and creative learning would improve their morals and new technological skills can be learnt affectively.

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APPENDIX

Name:

Majors:

Year:

Questions	Yes/No
1. Are you familiar with the word "Technology"?	
2. Do you use Technology while studying?	
3. Does using technology make your studying easier?	
4. Do you feel that as a student you lack the skill of using technology?	
5. Are you familiar with all	

the new technologies?	
6. Is utilizing technological skills expensive?	
7. Would you like to learn new skills and technologies to incorporate in your studies?	
8. Do you think sticking to old study methods will improve you as a student?	
9. Do you think there is a lacking support from the institution to urge students to use technology?	
10. Does your professor guide you on different uses of	

technologies?	
11. Do you consider Dhoffari students lack the sufficient use of technology in their studies as compared to students abroad?	

12. What kind of technologies do you incorporate while studying?
13. Does incorporating technology make your task creative and interesting? Explain.
14. Compare old traditional and new technological studying methods. Purely your opinion please.
15. How do you feel when you see that Dhoffari students lack behind the students abroad in the use of technology?
16. Are you ready to learn new technologies?
What is your expected outcome?