Cheating or legitimate support? Student-Teachers’ attitudes toward digital tools in school

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# Abstract

Sweden has easy access to digital technology, and the majority of the country’s teachers have good digital skills. Despite this, in comparison with teachers in other European countries, there are few teachers who integrate digital tools on a daily basis into their teaching. It is not uncommon for computers and word‐processing programmes in the realm of schooling to be regarded as compensatory aids for pupils who need special support. For written examinations, usually the only implements permitted are pencil and paper, and at most schools to use the computer requires special certification. The present study has investigated future teachers’ attitudes toward digital tools and their willingness to allow pupils to use these to help them read and produce texts. How do student‐teachers regard digital artifacts? Do they see these as compensatory aids or daily, legitimate tools? Are there any significant differences in their views depending on the type of teacher education programme or how far the student has advanced in his or her education? To investigate these questions, an online survey was conducted in which 247 students from five different teacher education programmes participated. The results show that future teachers’ acceptance of digital tools is varied. Roughly, one can divide the respondents into three groups, where the first group, making up more than a third, has clearly a positive attitude toward the use of digital tools in instruction. The second group, which makes up a smaller proportion, has an ambivalent stance towards the use of digital tools and expresses uncertainty in questions regarding their use in instruction and during examinations. The third group is much more reserved about ICT‐use in school and in several cases openly negative. Based on these results, it is critical to discuss how the different types of teachers can ensure equivalence in the school mission. If teacher education wants to work towards encouraging and legitimizing the use of digital resources, there must be a clear effort made in their education and application. That knowledge and skills open up for change is one of the most important results shown in this study.

# Outcome

"The results show that future teachers’ acceptance of digital tools is varied. Roughly, one can divide the respondents into three groups, where the first group, making up more than a third, has clearly a positive attitude toward the use of digital tools in instruction. The second group, which makes up a smaller proportion, has an ambivalent stance towards the use of digital tools and expresses uncertainty in questions regarding their use in instruction and during examinations. The third group is much more reserved about ICT‐use in school and in several cases openly negative." (Authors, in Abstract)