
Competition Forum

A Global Business Journal

Competition Forum



ASC

**American Society for Competitiveness
Publication**

Vol. 15, Number 2, 2017

ISSN# 1545-2581

COMPETITION FORUM

Volume 15(2)

2017

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Competitive Advantages with the Use of ICT (Moodle) in the New Curriculum at the University of Guadalajara, Mexico

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the research is to identify the impact of competitive advantages obtained through the use of Information Technology and Computing (ICT) and the Moodle platform. These are now used in the new curriculum by the superior levels at the University of Guadalajara in Mexico. We considered the results of ICTs using platforms and new tools, analyzing if the curriculum is adequate with the help of Information Technologies and Computing in a mixed form (face-to-face and the use of the Moodle platform). The purpose of this change is to make students more competitive in the research area so that they can face required labor demands at international levels.

Keywords: ICT, Competitiveness, Moodle.

INTRODUCTION

Educational practices have always demanded the existence of a mediating element between the teacher and the student. Generally, this mediator has been a technology that has evolved over time. We refer to conventional mail, which was once used to establish an epistolary relationship between the teacher and the student and that over time evolved with the introduction of new technologies. These, due to cost and accessibility, have allowed us to develop distance relationship (Bates, 1995).

At the speed that the world is going, all the advances in technology have increased the challenges. In speaking of generation of knowledge, i.e. teaching-learning as a whole, the new trends and innovations in ICT and the platform Moodle have been advantageous for the Superior Degree Plans or curricula.

Information Technologies are not only forms of social communication, but also resources for the use of learning in or outside classrooms. The use of the Moodle platform is a support for teachers and helps students interact in a virtual form. The new changes in the millennium have helped transform education to self-learning and motivate students in the superior grades.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several relevant authors in the use of technologies are:

Aparici	1997
Tella	1998
Martinez de Toda	1998
Hernández Diaz	2001
Hart y Süss	2002
Duncan & Tyner	2003
Domaille y Buckingham	2001

Since Masterman (1985) questioned the different means of teaching in schools, other authors have theorized about possible approaches to integrating new plans of study in superior degrees. It has been observed that with new incursions of technologies in and outside the classrooms and the use of the different platforms that allow them to communicate with other universities and be able to share their investigations, chats, video conferences at the precise moment that an event is taking place, learning has evolved and students are more competitive.

We analyze how technological evolution advantages complement study plans or new curricula that are evolving along with ICTs, which allow us to compete and be able to internationalize our students so they can accomplish technological innovations.

Gutierrez (1997) states that there are three important dimensions for teacher training in ICTs:

1. Knowledge and competences of ICT possibilities as didactic resources in a mixed education that includes both electronic media (online courses) and face-to-face traditional courses.
2. Potential educational knowledge of ICTs.
3. Knowledge of various contexts.

Moodle is a software that is used to support the quality and environment of virtual learning. It also helps establish modalities in a new curriculum with dynamic learning environments and objectives and activities to be carried out, such as complementary ones like research, conferences, videos related to the subjects included in study plans and with integrative reviews. The use of the moodle platform is flexible as it can be used for face-to-face courses and be able to complement them with online courses.

COMPETITIVENESS

According to Porter (2014), the possibility that citizens have to reach an increasingly better level of life is through the raise of productivity.

In addition, Ayala del Rey (2012) mentions, regarding the operational structure of management and support of universities to become competitive, "The University-Enterprise-Government committees should increase their efforts and work in an articulated way, in the same way, it is necessary for private companies to review their strategies and to reconsider the resources they dedicate to innovation."

In this discussion about competitiveness and its contribution on education, Cordeiro (2008) reports that:

The only way a country can follow to achieve a positive future is integral development. A progressive nation is built on three fundamental pillars: first, education; second, economic-political-social systems, and third, the vision of country and society. Development, productivity and competitiveness are not concepts that are understood or applied isolated; rather, they represent the systemic result of using all the preceding elements, the three closely related to each other. (p.25)

Competitiveness is not a well-defined concept because it has no set limits. The operative definition of competitiveness depends on the analysis point of reference (nation, sector or enterprise) and from the analyzed product (chain of production, stages of production, basic needs) and objective of investigation (short-long term, market operation) (Pineiro, 1993).

JUSTIFICATION

The changes in the new curriculum and the use of ICTs will provide better results and increase the competitiveness of the superior grades. This will give us an advantage, facilitate the alumni exchanges and also generate interest in the students to participate in academic research projects.

The use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) is not conditioned by time and space. It also provides methods for individual and collective learning. Almost every university in the world has a web page and behind most of them are available thousands of pages, most of them with informational intentions.

There are universities that use ICTs as communication instruments almost in real time.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The use of mixed resources within the curriculum will make competitive students. ICT are tools for performance in higher grades in conjunction with the Moodle platform.

OBJECTIVES

Identify if the use of ICT and the Moodle platform and the change of curriculum will give students a comparative advantage.

METHODOLOGY

A survey was applied to 373 higher education students that are using the new curriculum with the new modifications of mixed courses at the University of Guadalajara, Mexico with a margin of error of 95%. The enforcement was from January of 2013 to June 2017. The statistical universe was 1800 students.

Statistical Model ANOVA: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was applied to test the hypotheses.

In our hypothesis

H1: Greater knowledge of the platform leads to greater competitiveness

H2: The longer the platform is used the more the investigation level

H3: The more use of forums, the more critical the student will be

H4: The less use of social networks the more formal the use of the platform is

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used as proof of mean for two or more populations. Null hypothesis generally indicates that means are the same.

- The analysis of the variance of a factor only includes a variable or a categorical factor. The difference in the preference of frequent, sporadic, and non-users can be examined with one factor unidirectional ANOVA.
- Measuring instrument: The Likert scale method (Likert, 1976) consists of a set of articles presented as statements or judgments. The subjects choose one of the five points of the scale. Each point is assigned a numerical value. Therefore, the subject obtains a total score of the scores obtained in relation to all the claims. For data collection, the following activities should be performed: select a tool or method of collection, apply the selected instrument and prepare comments, record and measure results (Hernández Fernandez, & Baptista, 2006).

SAMPLE DESIGNED

Sample of research for this work: 373 students from different disciplines at the University of Guadalajara, México.

Statistic model Anova: The analysis of variance was applied to verify the linear hypothesis of dependence between the dependent variable and the independent variable, comparing the exposed variable of the model and the residual variable. A significance level of 95% was used.

The analysis of variance was used as a measure of proof for two or more populations. Null hypothesis in general showed that all the measurements were the same.

The analysis for one factor variable only includes a categorical factor. The differences in the preferences of frequent, middle, sporadic and non-users may be evaluated with a one factor ANOVA.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Of more significant Intergroups are those of greater importance in the H1. Greater knowledge of Moodle means greater competitiveness.

TABLE 1: ANOVA

		Suma de Cuadrados	gl	Media Cuadrática	F	Sig.
C8.5	Inter-group	12.549	4	3.137	2.752	.054
	Intra-group	25.081	22	1.140		
	Total	37.630	26			

Table 1 Own elaboration with SPSS.

Table 2. In H3, the more the use of forums, the more critical the student will be. The results showed that for students the interaction in forums with the Moodle platform helps with intercommunication with their groups or other groups or different points of view of a particular subject.

TABLE 2: OF MORE SIGNIFICANT INTERGROUPS

		Suma de Cuadrados	gl	Media Cuadrática	F	Sig.
B7.9	Inter-group	14.467	4	3.617	2.822	.050
	Intra-group	28.200	22	1.282		
	Total	42.667	26			

Table 2. Own elaboration with SPSS.

Table 3. H2. It is proved that the longer time of use on the platform's investigation level creates interest to be able to interact and to accomplish integrative activities.

TABLE 3: OF MORE SIGNIFICANT INTERGROUPS

		Suma de Cuadrados	gl	Media Cuadrática	F	Sig.
D9.4	Inter-group	21.750	4	5.438	3.121	.035
	Intra-group	38.324	22	1.742		
	Total	60.074	26			

Table 3 Own elaboration with SPSS

LIMITATIONS

It was verified that H4 was proved, i.e. the less use of social network, the more formal the use of the platform. It is necessary to teach students to use more formal resources to be more competitive with the new curricular changes and this might help to improve their knowledge .

CONCLUSIONS

The change of the curriculum in higher education includes the use of ICT and the Moodle platform. While the first results of using ICT and platforms in 2013 were not favorable, in 2017 a change of interest and participation has been perceived in all aspects of the use of technology in the classroom.

Another challenge completed was the interaction with other groups or guest teachers from other universities that provide conferences, i.e., H1 was confirmed. One of the purposes for being accomplished in the use of ICT and the Moodle platform is to create interest for research.

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