



Academic Advantages of Weblogs: A Study of Lecturers at Teachers Training College in the Western Province of Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

The utilization of ICT in teacher inculcation programs has been gaining interest throughout the world. This interest places pressure on faculties of edification to prepare an incipient generation of graduates capable of integrating a variety of technological implements into their personal and professional lives. Weblogs are considered to be one of the best ways of cumulating Information Communication Technology (ICT) with edifying and learning practices in a lecture theater. The application of weblogs in higher edification, concretely in edifier preparation programs, has been studied in western context but in Sri Lanka it has never been researched afore.

The main aim of the study is to assess the Insight towards the Academic Advantages of weblog among the Teachers Training College Lecturers of Western Province of Sri Lanka. Survey method is employed for this study. The researchers have culled 150 Teachers Training College Lecturers as a sample for the study in a desultory sampling technique. Mean (M) and standard deviations (SD), Percentage analysis and 't' test for determining the significance of difference between means of two sub-groups were used as statistical methods.

Results reveal that; (a) There is average level Insight towards Academic Advantages of weblog among the Teachers Training College Lecturers. (b) There is no paramount difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturers Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with reference to their gender, age, subject, marital status, years of experience and scholastic qualification. The study findings will avail edifying experts, cogitators, edifiers and all those who are fascinated with the field of edification to focus their attention on the present quandaries. By applying these results, the quality of edifying cognition process will ameliorate.

KEYWORDS: ICT, Teacher Education, Teachers Training College Lecturer, Pedagogy, Weblog

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1. Introduction

The term blog is a shrinkage of "web log" (Armstrong and Franklin, 2008), which suggests that blogs were initially conceived as online log books where the author could put their log ingresses, and if they opine publish them. Blogs, like log books, are cumulative and each incipient ingression is appended to the antecedent ones (conventionally with the most incipient ones at the top). They withal offer a variety of features not found in log books. Ingresses can be "tagged" with felicitous key words (or phrases) so that cognate items can facilely be assembled (Lam, Paul, Mc Naught and Carmel 2007). With many blog systems, the publication of individual ingresses can be controlled to private, to friends / colleagues only or to the public. Most blogs withal sanction the reader to post comments, and these may require mitigation afore they become public (the choice being left to the administrator of the blog)(Armstrong and Franklin, 2008). Blogs can be published utilizing "RSS" which sanctions readers to facilely visually perceive when incipient postings have been made, so that they do not have to go to each blog that they are intrigued with, but can optically discern them all in a single news reader or aggregator.

A blog is an 'easy to utilize website' where you can expeditiously post information and have other people comment on that information. Weblogs provide edifiers and Philomath's with the opportunity to communicate and collaborate in incipient and exhilarating ways. A blog is an interactive web page where individuals can post ingresses, articles, hyperlinks, and images, and ask others to join into conversations (Littlejohn, Allison. et al. 2009). For educators, they are a way to expand the boundaries of cognition. Edifiers can post ingresses for Philomath's, parents, and for professional development purposes. Philomaths can engage with others in their community or around the world. Work can be published to an authentic audience. Blogs are facilely adaptive into most curriculum areas. They are relatively simple to utilize, can be accessed by anyone, anywhere with web access, and content can be published online in a matter of minutes (Morice, Jenny 2002).

2. Objectives of the Study

1. To discover the caliber of Teachers Training College Lecturers' Insight of Academic Advantages of Weblogs
2. To ascertain the year of experiences in internet utilization among the Teachers Training College Lecturers.
3. To ascertain the frequency of the Teachers Training College Lecturers experience with internet.
4. To ascertain the year of experiences in weblog utilization among the Teachers Training College Lecturers.
5. To ascertain the frequency of the Teachers Training College Lecturer's experience with weblog.
6. To ascertain whether there is any consequential difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with reference to their gender, age, subject, marital status, year of experience and inculcated qualification

3. Method Adopted in the Study

In the present study, the researchers have employed the 'survey method'. Survey method is a method for accumulating and analyzing data, obtained from sizably voluminous number of respondents representing a concrete population accumulated through exceedingly controlled and comprehensive questionnaire or other techniques (Best, J.W., 1983).

4. Population and Sample

In this study, all the Teachers Training College Lecturers working in colleges located in Western Province of Sri Lanka, have been taken as the population for the study. A good sample must be representative of the entire population for this study. Thus data have been amassed from 150 Teachers Training College Lecturers utilizing arbitrary sampling technique.

5. Hypotheses of the Study

The hypotheses of the research were constructed as follows:

1. There is no paramount difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with reference to their gender.
2. There is no consequential difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with difference to their age.
3. There is no paramount difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with reference to their subject of specialization.
4. There is no consequential difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with reference to their marital status.
5. There is no consequential difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with deference to their year of experience.
6. There is no consequential difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with reverence to their scholastic qualification.

6. Instrument

As there is no congruous instrument available for the present study, the researchers have constructed and validated a scale to quantify Insight of Teachers Training College Lecturer's towards Academic Advantages of weblogs. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the researchers utilized a self-prepared questionnaire (ITAAW = Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog). The researchers referred to sundry books and journals to have pellucidity of concept and in integration to their information's he consulted some subject experts about the content for the development of the implement. The Academic benefit of weblog's Insight implement prepared by the researchers was utilized for the present study. The implement was yare by the three-point scale.

7. Statistical Techniques Used

Statistical techniques accommodate the fundamental purport of the description and inferential analysis (Aggarwal, Y.R, 1986). The following statistical techniques were utilized in the study:

- Mean (M) and standard deviations (SD)
- Percentage analysis
- 't' test for determining the paramount of distinction between denotes of two sub-groups.

8. Data Analysis and Presentation of Findings

The researchers personally visited the Teachers Training Colleges with the sanction of the concerned head of the Institutions. The researchers prepared a letter mentioning the purport of the research and the institution under the investigation. The intention of the questionnaire that has been given is to ken the caliber of Insight towards Academic Advantages of weblog among the Teachers Training College Lecturer's. The items in the implement arranged in to compose of a ranking scale and the participants are expected to circle or tick their caliber of confidence along a scale of 1-3 for each of the weblog categorization questionnaire. The marks were then formulated for statistical analysis. The marks gained through the questionnaires along with the personal data are consolidated and formulated on consolidation sheet for the purport of analysis. The data thus accumulated and analyzed are presented in 12 tables (1-12). Brief interpretation of table content is given after each table, for accommodation.

Table 1. Analysis of the Sample in terms of the Length of Experience with the Blogs

Length of experience with Blogs	No. of Teachers Training College Lecturer's	%
Below 1 year	37	24.7
1-2 years	31	20.7
2-4 years	37	24.7
4-6 years	29	19.2
6 year & above	16	10.7

Table 1 presents the analysis of sample in terms of the length of experience with Blogs. As seen, 37

Teachers Training College Lecturer's (24.7%) have less than one-year experience with the Blogs, 31 Teachers Training College Lecturer's (20.7%) have 1 to 2 years of experience with the Blogs, 37 Teachers Training College Lecturer's (24.7%) have 2 to 4 years of experience with the Blogs; 29 Teachers Training College Lecturer's (19.2%) have 4 to 6 years of experience with the Blogs and 16 Teachers Training College Lecturer's (10.7%) has 6 years and above experience with Blogs.

Table 2. Analysis of the Sample in terms of the Frequency of the Internet Use

Frequency of Internet use	No. of Teachers Training College Lecturer's	%
Daily	45	30.0
on alternate days	44	29.3
Once in a week	22	14.7
Once in a fortnight or so	5	3.3
Once in a month or so	27	18.0
Never	7	4.7

Table 2 delivers the analysis of illustration in terms of the frequency of internet usage. 45 Teachers Training College Lecturers (30.0%) utilize the cyber world every day, 44 (29.3%) utilize it on alternate days, 22 (14.7%) utilize once in a week, 5 (3.3%) use jaggedly once in a fortnight, 27 (18.0%) use one time in a month and only 7 (4.7%) Teachers College Lecturers use no internet at all.

Table 3. Analysis of the Sample in terms of the Profile on blog

Weblog Profile	No. of Teachers Training College Lecturer's	%
Yes	40	26.7
No	110	73.3

Table 3 demonstrates the investigation of respondents in relations to the profiles on blog. It is visually perceived 40 Teachers Training College Lecturer's (26.7%) have a profile on blog, while 110 (73.3%) do not have any.

Table 4. Analysis of the Sample in terms of Reason for neglecting weblog profile

Reason	No. of Teachers Training College Lecturer's	%
I do not have time for them	44	40.0
I don't want my personal details published online	41	37.27
I don't want to have an online presence	31	28.18
I consider them to be a waste of time	22	20.0
I don't know about web 2.0 tools	26	23.63
I have technology phobia	14	12.72

Table 4 demonstrates the outcome of investigation for the reasons for disregarding web 2.0 profiles like blog. Out of 150 participants only 40 are having a profile on blog. Continuing 110 have no profile on blog. They neglect the weblog for the subsequent explanations: 44 (40%) of them do not have adequate time for utilizing web 2.0 implements; 41(37.3%) don't relish to apportion their personal details published online; 31(28.2%) don't relish to be online; 22 (20%) consider web 2.0 implements to be a waste of time; 26 (23.6%) don't ken about web 2.0 implements and 14 (12.7%) expressed a technology phobia. The second part of the questionnaire of the survey was "Insight on the Academic Advantages of weblog". The purport of this element was to decide which Web 2.0 application is widely habituated with Edifiers Training College Lecturer's. This could avail to find the most implicitly

used implement(s) by them. The respondents were able to cull multiple answers. Table 5 portrays the investigative consequences on this.

Table 5. Analysis of the Sample in terms of Academic Advantages of weblog

NO	STATEMENTS	AGREE		NEUTRAL		DISAGREE	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
B1	Blogging can be useful in acquiring various kinds of knowledge and information.	128	85.3	21	14.0	1	0.7
B2	Blog is a powerful tool to enable scaffold learning	99	66.0	48	32.0	3	2.0
B3	Blog is an effective forum for collaboration & discussion	106	70.7	29	19.3	15	10.0
B4	Blog is an excellent opportunity for students to read and write.	119	79.3	26	17.3	5	3.3
B5	Blog can promote critical and analytical thinking	101	67.3	39	26.0	10	6.7
B6	Blogs being used as brainstorming tool	99	66.0	41	27.3	10	6.7
B7	Blogging can help me realize the importance of it as a collective activity in a community.	114	76.0	29	19.3	7	4.7
B8	Using a blog makes learning independent of time and place	103	68.7	36	24.0	11	7.3
B9	Blog fosters the learning bonds between teachers and students	100	66.7	42	28.0	8	5.3
B10	Blogging helps teachers develop professionally	101	67.3	42	28.0	7	4.7
B11	Blog fosters the development of writing and research skills as well as digital skills.	97	64.7	41	27.3	12	8.0
B12	It gives a chance to shy students to participate with their peers and get their voice heard.	94	62.7	51	34.0	5	3.3
B13	Blogging makes the students into subject matter experts	92	61.3	35	23.3	23	15.3
B14	Blogging can make me communicate with the world and can influence every area of my life.	75	50.0	65	43.3	10	6.7
B15	Blogging can help me develop my own expertise in some areas.	102	68.0	35	23.3	13	8.7
B16	Blogging can help me engage more actively in my fields of interests.	78	52.0	65	43.3	7	4.7
B17	Blogging can provide me opportunities to grow by looking back on my own thoughts & views.	107	71.3	35	23.3	8	5.3
B18	Blogging can be useful to describe and/or express my thoughts and views.	80	53.3	54	36.0	16	10.7
B19	Blogging can help me gain new awareness and set up plans on the basis of it.	96	64.0	46	30.7	8	5.3
B20	Blogging can be useful to build up some social networks around me.	82	54.7	58	38.7	10	6.7

Table 5 provides results of the investigation of opinion of respondents on the Insight towards the Academic Advantages of weblog. Most of the respondents are expressing a constructive view about

each verbal expression of the Academic Advantages of weblog, given in the questionnaire. It signifies that most of the Edifiers Training College Lecturers maintain a positive Insight on the Academic Advantages of weblog.

9. Objective Testing

Find out the level of Insight towards the Academic Advantages of weblog among the Teachers Training College Lecturer's.

Table 6. Level of Insight towards the Academic Advantages of weblog among Teachers Training College Lecturer's

Variable	Low		Medium		High	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Insight towards the Academic Advantages of weblog	8	5.3	54	36	88	58.7

Out of 150 respondents merely 88 (58.7%) respondents have a high caliber: 54 (36%) respondents have moderate level and remaining 8 (5.3%) of respondents have a low caliber of Insight towards the Academic Advantages of weblog.

10. Hypotheses Testing

10.1 Null Hypothesis: 1

There is no paramount difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with reference to their gender.

Table 7. Difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of weblog with respect to their gender.

Web 2.0	Gender	N	Mean	Std	df	't' value	Remarks at 5% level
Weblog	Male	53	50.79	7.44	148	1.51	NS
	Female	97	52.49	6.09			

(At 5% level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.97)

Table No. 7 demonstrates that the calculated 't' value 1.51 is less than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level and hence it is not paramount. Subsequently, the null hypothesis is to be accepted. And it can be said that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with respect to their gender.

10.2 Null Hypothesis: 2

There is no consequential difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with deference to their age.

Table 8. Difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with respect to their age.

Web 2.0	Age	N	Mean	Std	df	't' value	Remarks at 5% level
Weblog	Below 35	99	51 .41	6 .14	148	1.23	NS
	Above 35	51	52 .82	7.44			

(At 5% level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.97)

Table 8 demonstrates that the calculated 't' value 1.23 is less than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level and hence it is not significant. Subsequently, the null hypothesis is to be accepted. And it can be said that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight

towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with respect to their age.

10.3 Null Hypothesis: 3

There is no paramount difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with reverence to their subject of specialization.

Table 9. Difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with respect to their subject of specialization

Web 2.0	Basic Subject	N	Mean	Std	df	't' value	Remarks at 5% level
Weblog	Arts	61	51 .15	7.27	148	1.14	NS
	Science	89	52 .40	6.14			

(At 5% level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.97)

Table No. 9 demonstrates that the calculated 't' value 1.14 is fewer than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level and hence it is not consequential. Subsequently, the null hypothesis is to be accepted. And it can be verbalized that there is no paramount difference in the mean scores of Edifiers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with reference to their fundamental subject.

10.4 Null Hypothesis: 4

There is no consequential difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with reference to their marital status.

Table 10. Difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with respect to their marital status.

Web 2.0	Marital Status	N	Mean	Std	Df	't' value	Remarks at 5% level
Weblog	Married	89	52 .53	6. 77	148	1.42	NS
	Unmarried	61	50 .97	6. 35			

(At 5% level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.97)

Table No. 10 demonstrates that the calculated 't' value 1.42 is fewer than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level and hence it is not paramount. Subsequently, the null hypothesis is to be accepted. And it can be verbally expressed that there is no paramount difference in the mean scores of Edifiers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with respect to their marital status.

10.5 Null Hypothesis: 5

There is no consequential difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with deference to their year of experience.

Table 11. Difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of weblog with respect to their year of experience.

Web 2.0	Year of Experience	N	Mean	Std	Df	't' value	Remarks at 5% level
Weblog	Below 5	97	51.87	6.07	148	0.06	NS
	Above 5	53	51 .94	7.61			

(At 5% level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.97)

Table No 11 demonstrates that the calculated 't' value 0.06 is fewer than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level and hence it is not significant. Subsequently, the null hypothesis is to be accepted. And it can be said that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with respect to their year of experience.

10.6 Null Hypothesis: 6

There is no consequential difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with reverence to their scholastic qualification.

Table 12 . Difference in the mean scores of Teachers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of weblog with respect to their educational qualification.

Web 2.0	Educational Qualification	N	Mean	Std	Df	't' value	Remarks at 5% level
Weblog	Without MPhil/PhD	113	51.75	6.13	148	0.45	NS
	With MPhil/PhD	37	52.32	8.04			

(At 5% level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.97)

Table No. 12 demonstrates that the calculated 't' value 0.45 is fewer than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level and hence it is not consequential. Subsequently, the null hypothesis is to be accepted. And it can be verbalized that there is no consequential difference in the mean scores of Edifiers Training College Lecturer's Insight towards Academic Advantages of Weblog with respect to their inculcative qualification.

11. Discussion

The results of 't' test point to the following findings in respect of different contributors tested for their role:

11.1 Gender

The 't' test result demonstrates that, there is no consequential difference in the mean scores of Insights towards Academic Advantages of blog and weblog among the Edifiers Training College Lecturer's with respect to their Gender. This may be due to their curiosity to the innovative and incipient things and their environments and additionally their keen watch about the update & day-to-day information of incipient fashion of all the male and female Edifiers Training College Lecturer's.

11.2 Age

The 't' test shows that there is no consequential difference in the mean scores of Insights towards Academic Advantages of blog and weblog among the Edifiers Training College Lecturer's with reverence to their age. This may be due to the fact, that today all pupils have opportune edification in all aspects. Western Province all people were well inculcated and they are vigilant of the paramountcy of technological world. All the age group Edifiers Training College Lecturers are updating their potential and agog to get the erudition from the electronic contrivances.

11.3 Subject Stream

The 't' test result demonstrates that, there is no paramount distinction between arts and science Edifiers Training College Lecturer's in their Insight towards the Academic Advantages of weblog. This can be attributed to the universality of technology in its applications. Both arts and science edifiers got some exposure of utilizing computers in their school days and likely enhancement of vigilance on technological instruments. They have equal opportunity to interact with the society through technology and develop further interest.

11.4 Marital Status

The 't' test result demonstrates that, there is no consequential distinction between espoused and unmarried Edifiers Training College Lecturer's in their Insight towards the Academic Advantages of blog and weblog. This may be due the fact that, marital status does not affect the alacrity and curiosity of the edifiers to ken about the advanced technological contrivances.

11.5 Year of Experience and Educational Qualification

The 't' test shows that there is no consequential distinction between M.Ed., only qualification and MPhil or PhD. qualification Edifiers Training College Lecturer's in their Insights towards Academic Advantages of weblog. Similarly, the result is coinciding in the year of experience additionally. It may be due the fact, that in higher edification level, all the edifiers are utilizing the computer and internet for sundry purposes without age norms and edifying qualification. All the Edifiers Training College Lecturer's visit their respective Training College website for updating subsidiary promulgations and information on scholastic is consequential.

12. Conclusion

In future research of weblog use, we inspirit accumulating data and tracking individuals' contributions so that research might associate individuals' occurrence and type(s) of weblog activity with individuals' Insights of the weblog's role in fortifying collaboration and learning (Rachna Rathore 2009). In that way, the research might identify concrete profiles of utilize that lead to more preponderant gains in learning. Edifying methodology will shift from edifier-centered inculcation to learner-centered edification. Teacher's ascendancy will be superseded by the cognizance ascendancy (Aharony, 2011). So students now learn through computer edifier, television edifier and internet edifier. In future, another edifier who applies these technologies in the classrooms will supersede an edifier who does not apply these technologies. The study and its findings will avail scholastic experts, ruminators, edifiers and all those who are fascinated with the field of edification to focus their attention on the present quandaries. This findings and results are not the cessation of the quandary, but just a commencement of the search for innovation. By applying these results, the quality of edifying cognition process will amend.

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