

Teachers online – a resource in students' learning

On various social media, teachers produce and share teaching material with students, who they don't meet regularly in class. In contrast to traditional teaching, where an individual teacher builds relations to and is responsible for specific students, teachers online constitute a different kind of didactic contract that does not build on a teacher-student relation. Instead it can be regarded in terms of e-professionalism (Cain & Romanelli, 2009; Fenwick, 2016). This presentation seeks to investigate and deepen our understanding about this new professional teaching practice and its relevance for students in their schoolwork. A previous pilot study (Randahl et al., 2020) indicated that these teachers are a natural resource among others for today's students. Based on an extended survey, the aim of this presentation is to investigate this phenomenon further from the students' perspective focusing on students' needs and usage.

The empirical data consists of a web-based survey with six close-ended and three open-ended questions. The survey, that was carried out in classrooms during lessons, included students from Swedish compulsory school, primary and lower secondary, and students from grade 2 in upper secondary school. In total 75 students in primary, 468 students in lower secondary and 584 students in upper secondary school chose to participate. Preliminary findings indicate that teachers online is a well-known phenomenon among students and used frequently, first and foremost on the platforms YouTube and TikTok and most frequently in the subjects mathematics and science. Primarily students seem to find it helpful for getting clear explanations of specific teaching content, but not to the same degree helpful in relation to getting a deeper understanding of subject content. Most students find these resources through internet searches on their own, but seldom through suggestions from teachers or parents. Moreover, boys seem to be the most frequent users of the material that online teachers produce.

References

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