Evidence-Based EdTech Diagnostic

EDUCATE Programme: Research Materials

Communicating Research Findings

*To find out how **you** can benefit from examining your EdTech through a **'research and evidence mindset'**, contact our **Accelerator Team** at hello@educateventures.com*

- Communicating your research and findings effectively to stakeholders can boost the benefits of having conducted research in the first place. It is a very important part of the process and should receive careful attention
- Any communication of your research findings should include the following components:

1. **Some background and context.** What did you know starting out? Refer to insights from prior research by yourself or by others that can establish your starting point
2. **A clear statement of the research question(s):** what did you set out to find out?
3. **Research hypothesis:** what did you expect to find out?
    - a) If your research is concerned with the effectiveness of your product, this should be in line with your theory of change. Remember, your theory of change is supposed to address the change that your product or service is trying to promote, and how it is expected to do so. Effectiveness research has to establish that using your product or service was associated with the desired change.
    - b) Exploratory research does not require a hypothesis. However, from narrative considerations, describing an initial perception from which you started your exploration can be helpful. If it has changed during the process of exploration – even better- your explorative research tells a story of discovery
4. **A description of the research design.** The level of details needed here depends on your audience, but the recipients should be able to understand, at least broadly, how the research was conducted – What was the target population? Did you sample and how? What was the response rate or how easy/ difficult was it to find respondents? What methodology was applied?

Communicating Research Findings, continued:

5. **Main findings:** the findings should support the answer to your research question. They may or may not support your research hypothesis. If they do not support it, you have to explain why you think that happened – was the hypothesis wrong in the first place? Were preliminary assumptions refuted? Refine and describe the conditions under which your hypothesis does prove true. Maybe the desired change only occurs for specific populations. Maybe the product/service wasn't used as planned or expected in some cases
6. **Discussion and future research plans.** Based on the findings, refine and describe the conditions under which your hypothesis does prove true. Maybe the desired change only occurs for specific populations. Maybe the product/service wasn't used as planned or expected in some cases – this is the place to tell the story of how you interpret what you have found. For exploratory research, discuss what you've learned, and what are the remaining question marks that you might be able to fill in the future
7. **The conclusion:** you might want to add a conclusion, a take-home message from the research and how it advanced what you know about your product/service, its implementation or its target audience

Identify your Audience

- Different stakeholders are interested in different aspects regarding your product. When thinking of research questions, try to consider in advance who might be the audience for what you discover:
- Inner-company needs such as product development and improvement, conceptualizing or testing out new products, or even pivoting altogether

Evidence in EdTech

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- Evidence of the **impact** of EdTech on teaching and learning is often at the forefront of **demands,** particularly from those who dictate the **funding** available to pay for technology within education. As has been shown in numerous **meta-level investigations,** (see for instance Cox et al., 2003), evaluation of the impact is a **challenge.** This is magnified when evaluating **emerging innovative technologies**
- **Pedagogical change** is at the core of these technologies, both because their design evolves over **time,** but also, arguably, their raison d'être is to **transform the learners' experience** (Cukurova & Luckin, 2018)
- The increased challenge is at least partially due to the **unwritten expectation** that, in traditional impact evaluations, evidence regarding the impact of an intervention is considered as a **shield against change.** The generation of **scientifically robust evidence** can be used by stakeholders, such as policymakers, for an educational intervention's **standardisation** and **scaling**
- **Change** is the essence of emerging technologies, though. Three years after an original report reviewing emerging technology innovations in education (Luckin et al., 2012), there was evidence that only **39 of the 150 innovations** (26%) were still in active use. Therefore, in the context of emerging technologies, more **value** is to be found in the careful consideration of different **types** and **sources** of evidence that are appropriate to the **current state of the technology** as well as in the use of **robust research methods** to generate **new evidence**
- This requires an **evidence-informed decision-making process** for the **design and use of EdTech,** rather than only considering evidence as the **outcome of the evaluation**
- Taking into account the peculiarities of the **local context,** the accumulated experience and judgment of **educators,** and the perspectives and values of **users,** and combining these three with the fourth source, **the best available research evidence,** can provide a more productive way forward in the attempt to bring evidence into **educational practice**

- Excerpt from 'Evidence & the Golden Triangle of EdTech, (EDUCATE, 2021)' by Professors Cukurova, Luckin, Clark-Wilson

Who can help me?

*We are specialists in **educational research** and **evidence-based technological development** for schools and education and training businesses*

The EDUCATE Programme promotes **excellence** in the EdTech community by providing **training** and **mentoring** to support and promote the use of **evidence-informed EdTech.** Our research-focussed programme, based on the **Golden Triangle,** bridges the gaps between **EdTech designers** and **developers, researchers in education and EdTech,** and **users,** to ensure that EdTech products live up to their **promises.**

To find out how you can benefit from examining your school or business through a **'research and evidence mindset',** and focussing on **'what works',** contact the **Accelerator Team** at EDUCATE Ventures Research today:
hello@educateventures.com

Thanks for reading!

- The EDUCATE Ventures Research Team

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