

# Comparison of Internet Usage Habits in Two Generations of Higher Education Students. A Case Study

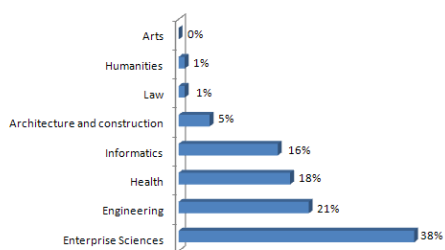
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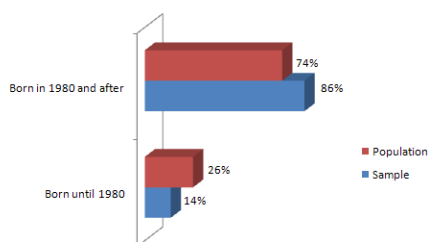
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This study aims to understand the importance of technologies like the Internet and Learning Management Systems on Higher Education students' learning activities. We investigate how much and how students use the Internet and how important these technologies are to Polytechnic of Porto (IPP) students. This population's habits were obtained through a questionnaire that was answered by 11% of all IPP's students. Our analysis is focused not only on the global Internet usage profile of IPP's students, but also on the differences between the students born before and after 1980. International trends are confirmed in this Portuguese Higher Education institution.

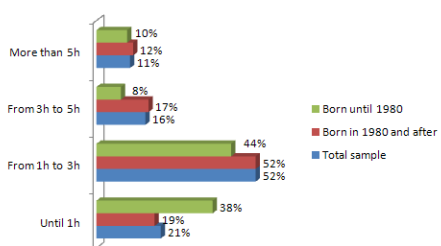
## Sample distribution across scientific fields



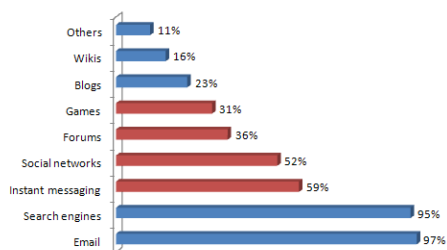
## Distributions across generations



## Daily average connection to Internet



## Most Used Internet's Tools



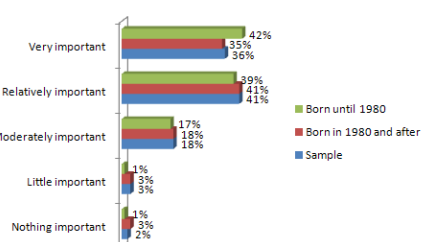
■ (These tools are, statistically more used by students born after 1980: Instant messaging ( $p=0,000$ ), Social networks ( $p=0,000$ ), Forums ( $p=0,009$ ) and Games ( $p=0,000$ ) use).

## Internet usage main reasons

older and younger students: web 1.0 vs web 2.0 orientation

Reasons for using internet	Total	Born < 1980	Born >=1980
Research concerning class works / study	91%		
Access documents in Moodle or another LMS	75% $p=0,001$	85%	73%
Email exchange	73% $p=0,000$	87%	70%
Connect with friends	71% $p=0,000$	8%	63%
Read newspapers, magazines and portals	51% $p=0,000$	68%	49%
Download music or films	50% $p=0,000$	17%	55%
Search info (other than school issues)	44% $p=0,000$	56%	42%
Share information (documents, music, films, etc.)	27% $p=0,001$	3%	25%
Access friends social networks	24% $p=0,000$	2%	21%
Games	18% $p=0,000$	1%	17%
Forums usage (post or read)	17% $p=0,031$	2%	15%
Shop	11% $p=0,019$	2%	9%
Blog usage (post or visit others)	9%		
Search new friends / acquaintances	6%		
Others	2%		

## Moodle's role in learning process



## Final Remarks

### IPP's students profile usage of Internet

- Internet is accessed 1 to 3 hours a day; Email and synchronous communication are the tools used daily; this last one, is more frequently used among the younger students
- Internet is primarily used to search information, access Moodle eLearning platform, exchange emails, and to talk with friends
- Most students have, at least, profile at one social network, and 33% usually meet new people through these platforms

### LMS's platform students usage (Moodle as 98% coverage in IPP)

- Daily accessed; Students find no difficulties in the use of Moodle and think this LMS is an important tool in their learning process
- Web 2.0 tools (wikis, forums or blogs) are scarcely used by teachers

### Future research

- Replicate this study every 2 years, and use these data as an Internet Usage Observatory
- To study Internet's usage habits of all IPP's population and establish orientation guidelines to a successful exploit of Internet technologies in the Higher Education learning process