Perceptions and Impacts of Local Education Within The ICT Field

By Jade Vella and Frankie Inguanez

ENGAGING INNOVATIVE KNOWLEDGE THROUGH APPLIED
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH
MCAST 2nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

MCAST   HEALTHY MINDS WORK   Malta Chamber of smes

This study **aims** to shed light on any <u>misconceptions or old perceptions</u> which may not be in line with facts and reveal the benefits with regards to each <u>learning style</u>.

The **context** of this research was to primarily focus on the local perceptions and impacts of educational styles within the local ICT sector.

- What is the **student opinion** before and after taking each educational path?
- What is the perception of **ICT organisations** on the two different educational styles?
- How does the difference in impact of the educational styles **ware** off?
- Is there a correlation between an educational path and job or **entrepreneurial opportunities**?

ENGAGING INNOVATIVE KNOWLEDGE THROUGH APPLIED
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH
MCAST 2nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

MCAST HEALTHY MINDS WORK Malta Chamber of sme s

LinkedIn → Web scraper → Cleaned Data (CSV) → Data Analysis

Perceptions and
Impacts of Local
Education
Within The ICT
Field

General Perception

Specific ICT Professional
Experiences

ENGAGING INNOVATIVE KNOWLEDGE THROUGH APPLIED
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH
MCAST 2nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

MCAST · HEALTHY MINDS WORK · Malta Chamber of smes

Researcher

Profiles of 100 LinkedIn UoM graduates

Profiles of 100 LinkedIn MCAST graduates

All with current ICT jobs

Data was extensively cleaned, coded and analysed in different ways, MaxQDA & FAMD.

Initial themes were extracted in order to further analyse in subsequent viewpoints

General

Two independent quantitative surveys were conducted with different cohorts.

Both surveys were sectioned into 4 different sections:
- Demographic information and details about Participants' education background
- Participants' employment background
- Reflection on their experiences and perceptions

Professional

One-to-one qualitative interviews were conducted as the third viewpoint of data collection.

These interviews offer flexibility in research as questions can be adapted based on the participant's responses.

All interview participants were ICT professionals from diverse backgrounds and experiences.

The interviews aimed to gain insights and a deeper understanding of participants' perspectives on ICT-related topics.

Researcher's Perspective
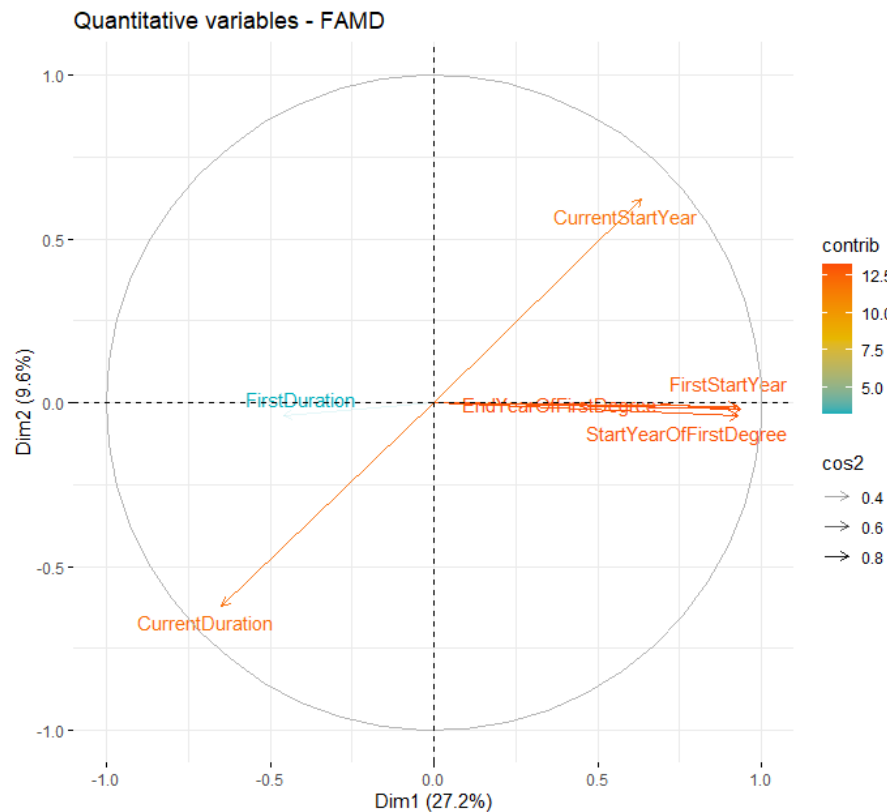
ENGAGING INNOVATIVE KNOWLEDGE THROUGH APPLIED
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH
MCAST 2nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

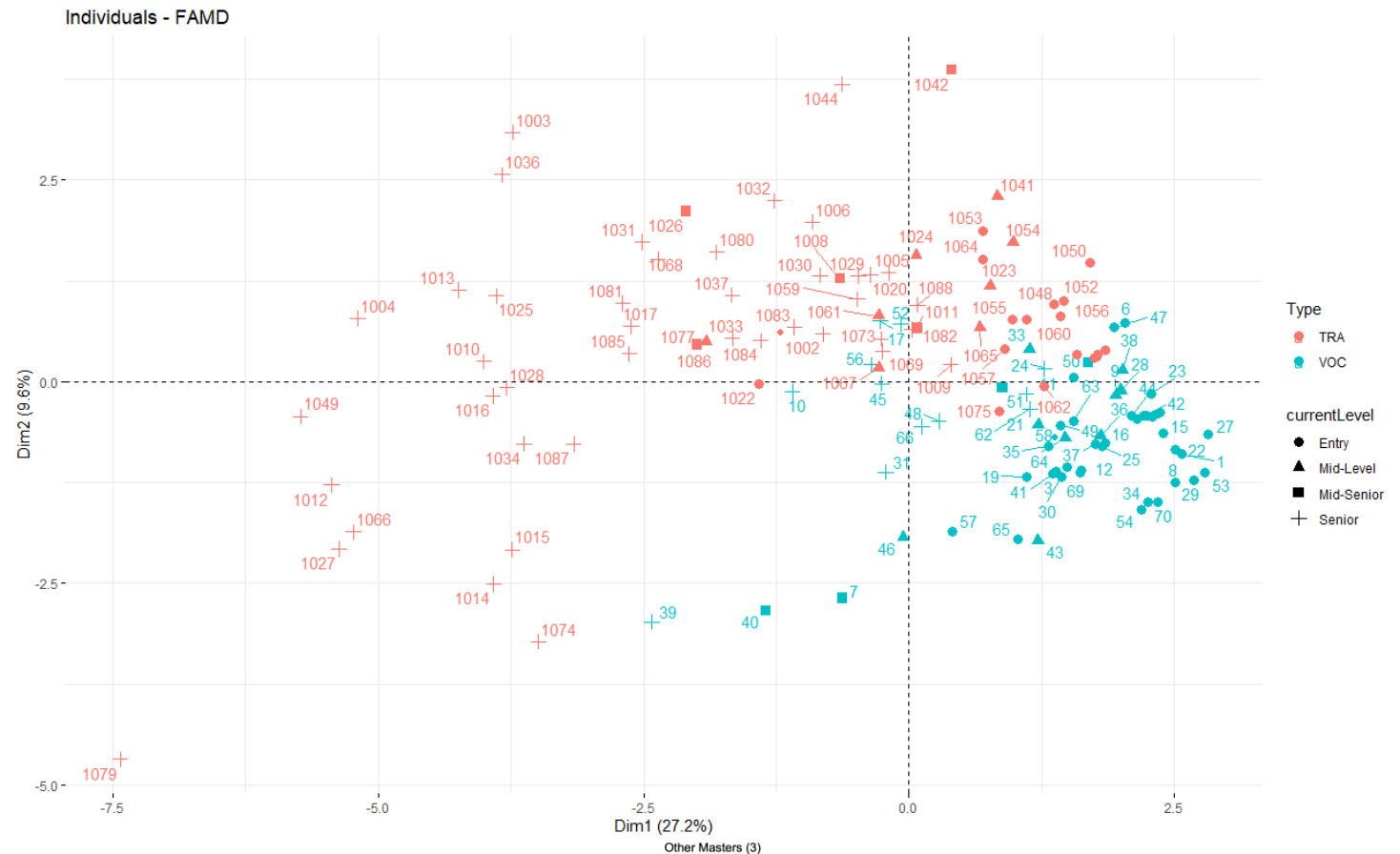MCAST   HEALTHY MINDS WORK   Malta Chamber of smeˢ

Public's Perspective

Survey Targeting Current ICT Students	Survey Targeting Current ICT Professionals
Majority of students experienced a traditional learning approach during their bachelor's degree.	Majority of participants strongly agreed that gaining practical experience while pursuing their degree was beneficial.
70% of respondents have also experienced vocational learning.	They recognized the significance of bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom and real-world application.
Participants highly value vocational learning and believe it is beneficial to combine practical skills with theoretical principles.	Participants emphasized the need to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings to enhance their understanding and skills.
Vocational learning helps individuals to be more prepared for their first position.	

Single-Case Model (Code Hierarchy)

Professional's Perspective

Interviews

Reflection (0)

Perception on Education (1)

Perception on Employees (0)

Setbacks of Traditional (6)

Benefits of Traditional (6)

Communication - Both Approaches (2)

Perception on employees who are vocational (1)

Individuality (6)

Value Experience (5)

Setbacks of Vocational (1)

Benefits of Vocational (8)

No Industry Preparation (2)

Technical Gap (1)

Research & Self-Taught Proficient (2)

Equipped with Practical Skills (2)

Easier Application of Theory (1)

Practicable Coding Skills Not Learnt (1)

Struggle in Research & Long Writing (2)

Preparation for Masters (3)

Aware of Tools & Applications in Industry (2)

Quick Learning/Research Approaches (2)

ENGAGING INNOVATIVE KNOWLEDGE THROUGH APPLIED
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH
MCAST 2nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

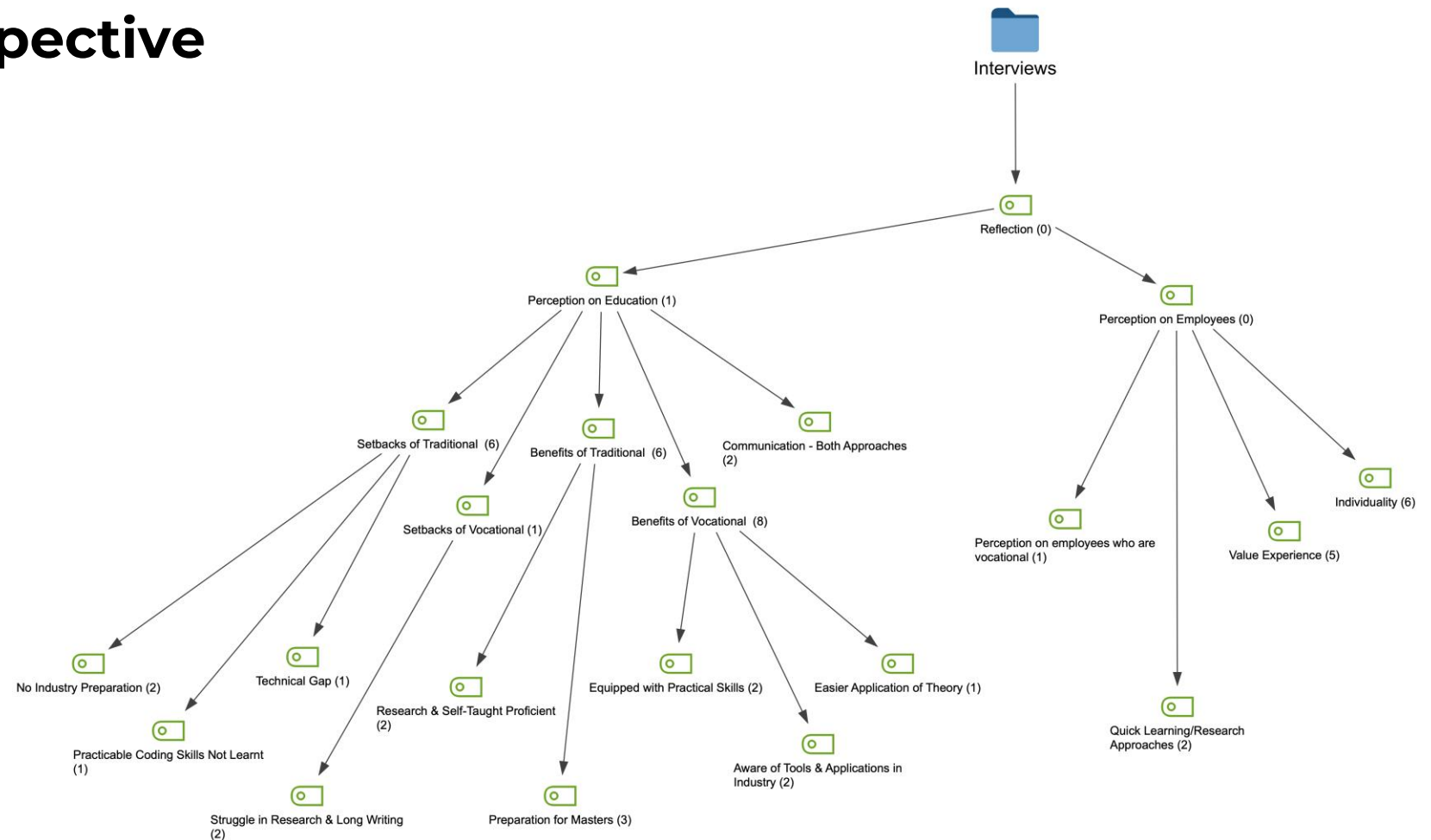MCAST   HEALTHY MINDS WORK   Malta Chamber of smes

Answering the Research Questions & Hypothesis

- Students value practical experience and recognize the benefits of gaining practice while pursuing their first ICT degree.

- Both traditional and vocational education paths are perceived positively, with UoM graduates showing a strong foundation for career growth and MCAST graduates achieving career progression and venturing into entrepreneurship.

- Organisations value candidates with a vocational background for their practical skills and industry knowledge, while candidates from a traditional educational background tend to grasp new approaches and engage in research more efficiently.

- The initial impact of the educational path may diminish over time as experience and career progression become more influential factors.

ENGAGING INNOVATIVE KNOWLEDGE THROUGH APPLIED
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH
MCAST 2nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

MCAST   HEALTHY MINDS WORK   Malta Chamber of sme[s]

Conclusions

Students value practical experience alongside their ICT degree.

Both educational paths are both positively perceived. Graduates have a strong foundation for career growth & entrepreneurship.

Employers value vocational education graduates for practical skills and industry knowledge.

Traditional education graduates excel in grasping new approaches and research.

Experience and career progression become more influential over time.