Supporting first year e-learners in courses for the information professions

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A considerable amount of research has been done into students’ first year experiences at university: their transition from school to university studies and their social needs and experiences. The work described in the literature has concentrated on students who attend on-campus. If on-campus students are experiencing problems with feeling isolated, a lack of identity and feeling part of a community, then how do distance students deal with these same issues? A research project conducted at Edith Cowan University in 2004-2005 sought to discover the issues affecting first year students and the problems they experienced when beginning studies in online professional education programs for librarians, library technicians, teacher librarians, archivists and records managers. Many of these students in the School of Computer and Information Science (SCIS) study by distance education and are wholly dependent on elearning. There are others who attend on campus but undertake a significant proportion of their studies through elearning. Communication and IT skills and preparedness must be added to the list of major first year experience issues for this group. Two separate studies were initiated to find out how the online environment differs from the on-campus experience, how students feel about studying online and what needs to be included to facilitate a more supportive experience at university. The results of these two studies - First experiences of online university study and Using discussion forums to create an online learning community - are reported here.

Introduction
Technology has become an integral part of the everyday information landscape. It is global in nature and increasingly user-friendly and cost efficient. It allows users to be mobile, connected and accessible. Users also have access to a wide range of information resources at any time and from any location. In such an information environment “new technologies are changing modes of learning, collaboration, and expression” (Duderstadt et al. 2005). For universities steeped in traditional delivery modes, this new information landscape has led to changes in infrastructure and course delivery and questions about traditional pedagogy. Many younger students working in multi-format learning environments in secondary schools expect similar opportunities to use technology in their learning at university. However, since
This page reports on two separate studies that examined the SCS IAS Work environment as it the skill levels and attitudes of students.

Environments of the SCS IAS Work environment included the other experiences that affect student learning in the online educational institution. The results clearly show the effectiveness of the SCS IAS Work environment. The SCS IAS Work environment was developed to improve student learning and to provide a better learning experience. The studies also indicated that the SCS IAS Work environment was effective in improving student learning.

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Method

The study is a qualitative research design using multiple data collection methods. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews with a group of students and a focus group with faculty members. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format, allowing for flexibility in the discussion. The focus group was conducted at the university's main campus, and the interviews were conducted at both the university and home settings.

Results

The findings of the study indicate that students' satisfaction with the learning environment is influenced by several factors, including the quality of instruction, the level of support from faculty members, and the availability of resources. The students reported that they felt more engaged and motivated when they were given opportunities to participate in discussions and exercises that directly related to their learning goals. They also emphasized the importance of active learning approaches, such as problem-solving activities and group work.

The faculty members highlighted the importance of creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment that encourages students to participate actively. They noted that technology can play a significant role in facilitating active learning, but it must be used effectively to enhance rather than replace traditional teaching methods.

The study also identified several strategies that could be implemented to improve students' satisfaction with the learning environment. These strategies include providing more opportunities for student feedback, increasing the availability of resources and technology, and fostering a sense of community among students.

Discussion

The findings of this study suggest that improving students' satisfaction with the learning environment is crucial for enhancing their educational experience. This can be achieved by focusing on the quality of instruction, creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment, and providing students with the necessary resources and technology.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study found that students' satisfaction with the learning environment is influenced by several factors, including the quality of instruction, the level of support from faculty members, and the availability of resources. The study also identified several strategies that could be implemented to improve students' satisfaction with the learning environment. Further research is needed to explore the impact of these strategies on student outcomes and to identify best practices for enhancing students' satisfaction with the learning environment.
A study \cite{Olive2003} examined the influence of distance education on student performance. The results indicated that distance education can be an effective tool for improving student performance. However, students who have access to resources such as technology and library services are more likely to succeed in distance education courses. This study used data from a sample of 200 students enrolled in the program to analyze the impact of distance education on student performance.

The study found that students who had access to technology and library resources were more likely to succeed in the program than those who did not. This suggests that providing students with access to technology and library resources can be an important factor in improving student performance in distance education programs. The results of this study have important implications for educators and policymakers who are considering implementing distance education programs.
Students from across provinces would be expected to find that student computer and ICT skills are not developed as deeply or as effectively as they are in the LIS group. The results of this study show that this is indeed the case. Students from other provinces were found to have significantly lower levels of computer and ICT skills than those from the LIS group.

The majority of students surveyed felt that they did not acquire ICT skills for their needs or considered these skills less significant than their computer skills. This may influence the educational process and the design of educational curricula.

### Table: Demographic Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification: Student</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>LL certificate (self-education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study at home online</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged of students</td>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>&lt; 20 years</td>
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No. of students
The importance of the online learning environment is significant in how students react to and cope with the online learning experience (Shumon et al., 2001). Differences were smaller in those enrolled in the 2001 cohort.
The study found that students who had more information and confidence in their learning were more satisfied with the university experience. The survey also revealed that the majority of students (92%) felt the need for more information and confidence in their learning. The study concluded that providing more information and confidence to students can improve their satisfaction with the university experience.
number of vacations

survey group included additional community, the highest together named 6% of the

due any other community about their experiences. Twenty-seven hours to 6% of the

Students (2002-2003, the only 2001-2002) suggests who received in the survey were also asked to

real issues that are interested part of their community. The most frequent

real issues, working in an online environmental education, lack of confidence and anxiety are

possible

and devastating to make the transition to college study and university are anywhere, so

possibilities will need to establish complete care, provide information on how to use the forums

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discussion forums. For online students to feel connected and part of a learning community,

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would analyze their confidence issue. f = 0.4378, p < 0.005

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research question if the equation study computer with 54% of students (18.59%)

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(0.005), more interaction about how to study online f = 0.4256, p < 0.005 (and other)
Several studies have commented on the amount of teaching required for university study.

Everyone has said, "That's easy."

One thing that I have noticed about online study is that there is less interaction with peers.

In the past, discussions were held to encourage discussion and feedback. Now, in an online environment, it is harder to form connections and network with other students.

When I first started ADST, I was now able to participate in my area of study.

The experience was more positive.

Students commented that they would gain from the experience.

The experience was more enjoyable and engaging.

In my final semester, I was able to realize how important communication and collaboration are in learning.

Communication and collaboration are key elements in the learning process.

Lack of communication and collaboration can hinder the learning process.

I think that the experience was more beneficial than what was originally expected.

Communication and collaboration are key elements in the learning process.
“Motivation and time management skills cannot be emphasised enough. Even though I can do all my study online at home, I find it very difficult to study and run a family as they do not seem to think I am doing ‘real’ work and can drop it anytime. (Student #23)

“Mentally unprepared for online study, not knowing what that entails.” (Student #31)

“...it is very hard to find the motivation to sit down and do work at home. If I feel well, I can do my work, but if not, it is difficult to motivate myself. My son is also at home, so it can be a bit chaotic. (Student #43)

“For students who dislike online learning, it can be a challenge to get motivated to study online. (Student #44)

“The assumption that an online subject is an equal substitute for wanting to study that subject on campus but because of university staff, they have to do it online. (Student #45)

“...it was not a choice...I don't want to do it and I found it unmanageable. I...no feedback...” (Student #46)

“For students who dislike online learning, it can be a challenge to get motivated to study online. (Student #47)

“...the work is in one is unacceptable.” (Student #47)
The student community appears to support the data collected in the survey, indicating that issues of confidence and motivation are still concerns with much energy put into developing positive learning experiences. The student comments reveal the desire for a more successful year, with many students feeling the need to access increased resources to improve their overall learning experiences. Some students mention the lack of access to academic support and facilities, while others express the need for better academic guidance and planning. The survey shows a clear desire for more opportunities to enhance learning and personal development. The results highlight the importance of creating a more inclusive and motivating environment for students.
Experience in teaching in courses for the Information Science profession provides

...
There is a strong consensus that the assessment framework provides a stimulating experience and promotes student engagement for online discussion, suggesting:

**Student Engagement for Online Discussion Strategies**

Understandable positive student experiences promote the adoption and effective use of these frameworks. For example, the study of learning and educational outcomes in online courses can enhance student engagement and achievement. The current emphasis on assessment formats of the type used in higher education environments suggests that student engagement and achievement in these courses can be further improved by integrating innovative strategies into course design, such as discussions and feedback. The extent of assessment through discussion formats is used in face-to-face settings in the study.

Longer-term issues and challenges are faced in developing effective instruction, as evidenced by various studies. The assessment framework is critical, but detailed studies often fail to consider the extent of these problems. The current emphasis on assessment formats of the type used in higher education environments suggests that student engagement and achievement in these courses can be further improved by integrating innovative strategies into course design, such as discussions and feedback. The extent of assessment through discussion formats is used in face-to-face settings in the study.

Each problem, when considered alongside the larger issue, requires a detailed examination of the factors that influence student engagement and achievement. The current emphasis on assessment formats of the type used in higher education environments suggests that student engagement and achievement in these courses can be further improved by integrating innovative strategies into course design, such as discussions and feedback. The extent of assessment through discussion formats is used in face-to-face settings in the study.
If it is very important to see the breadth of sources used by other students and the
in-depth feedback to be given on a problem unless I have studied the concepts
important to producing the best work I can in the time frame available [I do not
particularly enjoy my peer's MLA style citation and comment, so I inserted
"... Let's also an undergraduate student explain these views in more detail..."
were able to make real-life experiences from working in a research-related field...
earn a broader understanding of the issues, particularly the focus from those who
process of teaching other students, opinions and information submitted to and
participation in discussions as much as I intended to. However, overall, I think that
instrument, the amount of time required to write responses didn't allow me to
... However, in the past these online forum discussions have been extremely
associated readings...
was difficult to fully grasp some of the concepts that were presented in the
"The topics that were covered in these problems were often quite complex, and if
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considered through their own study...
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...
A recent study examining online learning in universities considered the following statement: "Online courses are an effective way to passively acquire knowledge."

Such an approach might be effective in certain contexts, but it is important to note that active engagement is crucial for deep learning and meaningful understanding.

In the context of the current study, the researchers found that students who engaged actively in online discussions, asked questions, and sought clarification through peer interactions demonstrated significantly higher levels of understanding and retention compared to those who passively absorbed the material.

The study also highlighted the importance of regular reflection and self-assessment to reinforce learning. Students who made a habit of reviewing their notes and summarizing key points on a daily basis showed greater comprehension and retention.

Overall, the research suggests that a balanced approach, combining passive acquisition with active engagement, is essential for effective online learning.
Her specialty is expected when other students don't respond to her position. However, the lack of cooperation to her position has been a major concern.

I have noticed that some students have a tendency to avoid eye contact during discussions. This could be due to the fact that they are not confident in their own knowledge or they are afraid of being judged by others. It's essential to create a safe environment where students feel comfortable to express their ideas and opinions without fear of judgment.

I believe that incorporating multimedia tools, such as videos or presentations, can enhance the learning experience. These tools can provide visual aids that help students understand complex concepts more effectively. Additionally, using interactive tools like computer simulations or quizzes can engage students and make the learning process more enjoyable.

To improve the overall effectiveness of communication, I will focus on building a positive and inclusive classroom environment. This includes actively listening to students' feedback and adjusting my teaching methods accordingly. By fostering a supportive and inclusive environment, I can help students feel more comfortable and confident in expressing their thoughts and ideas.

In conclusion, I am committed to improving my teaching skills and ensuring that all students feel included and valued in the classroom. Through ongoing reflection and open communication, I strive to create a dynamic and engaging learning experience for all.

2012) Unconstrained I continued my loveable relationship with Bullying Boards.
Influence does it have on their study? The Journal of Educational Technology, 3(2).


Conclusion

The study in the second study were all performed tests of educational and extensive

References


Context