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Gender and Equity in e-Learning

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Abstract

Literature to date suggests contrary indicators of acceptance of the use of technology to support learning by females. With the increasing adoption of information technology to support teaching and learning, it is imperative that factors which may impede student learning are identified. The research reported here is of a large-scale survey of the perceptions of university students about eLearning and their use of the online learning environment. The aim of the survey was to gather data to inform about online learning practices at the University. The results were explored, amongst other factors, by gender. Findings include no significant differences between the female and male students with respect to being able to use the online learning environment confidently and effectively. In general the female students were more willing to participate in online discussions. However, there was no difference between the female and male students regarding their willingness to voice their opinions online. An unexpected result was the greater value placed by female students on using the online environment for communicating and collaborating with students of diverse background.

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