HELP IS AT HAND. THE FUNCTIONALITY OF WEBCT TO FACILITATE MARKETING STUDENT LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

Online self-testing via WebCT is currently being used in most tertiary institutions as a tool to enhance the learning environment. The current study focuses on on-campus students enrolled in an undergraduate marketing subject that had access to WebCT Courseware Management System (CMS) and within that system over ten dedicated functions including online self-testing multiple choice questions to facilitate their learning in a core marketing unit. The database used consisted of 1606 records from undergraduate marketing students (across two semesters).

In brief, the results of this exploratory study reveal that students appear to be increasingly disinclined to avail themselves of learning technologies. The uptake of functions within WebCT is explored using the Technology Adoption Model and suggestions are provided for further research.

This initial exploratory study showed that the functions within WebCT (with a more detailed look at the online self-testing facility) is definitely a viable, innovative teaching resource to facilitate marketing students' learning especially if it is clearly associated with a piece of assessment. Without such a connection the data indicates that students are unresponsive at least to the self-testing functions.

A limitation is that the study was restricted to one tertiary institution in Australia, across only two time periods, using only undergraduate enrolment data. The Technology Adoption Model proposed by Davis (1989) provided a solid grounding for an exploratory study but a more comprehensive examination of such models would strengthen research in the use of technology in tertiary education.

It is envisaged that future research will be undertaken in this area. Further data needs to be collected and analysed which explores students' perception of the usefulness and the ease of use of the many functions within WebCT (with some attention on online self-testing) in the WebCT environment.

References Available on Request