

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF ONLINE LEARNING ACTIVITY TYPES AND ENGAGEMENT

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Introduction



- Background of project
- Graduate education
- Online education
- Engagement with
 - ▣ Course content
 - ▣ Faculty
 - ▣ Peers
- Professional community

Context of Course



- Discussion Board
- Online Chats
- Shadowing/Interview
- Video Presentations
- Leader Assessments
- Online Chapter Quizzes
- Audio Bridge

Research Design

- Embedded Case Study (Yin, 2003)
 - Mix-Methods
 - Describe, features, context, and process
- Participants
 - Census
- Instruments
 - Likert scaled questions
 - Open-ended “tell me a story”
- Data Collection
 - Online survey
- Data Analysis
 - Descriptive
 - Qualitative (Creswell, 2007)
 - Read text, took notes, formed initial codes, described case and context, used categories to establish themes, & presented in-depth picture

Research Questions



- What was the level of to engagement of students with
 - ▣ Course material
 - ▣ Other students
 - ▣ Faculty
- What did students perceive as the most engaging activity
- What did students perceive as the least engaging activity

Engagement with Course

Activity	M	SD
Shadowing Activity	3.60	1.19
Online Chat	3.43	1.27
Discussion Board	3.40	1.29
Leader Assessments	3.33	1.01
Video Presentations	3.00	1.14
Audio Bridge	2.91	1.10
Online Chapter Quiz	2.38	1.24

Engagement with Peers

Activity	M	SD
Synchronous Chat	3.83	1.30
Discussion Board	3.43	1.47
Audio Bridge	3.09	1.02
Video Presentation	2.14	1.17
Shadowing / Interview	1.73	.83
Leader Assessments	1.73	1.03
Online Chapter Quizzes	1.18	.50

Engagement with Faculty

Activity	M	SD
Audio Bridge	3.36	1.14
Synchronous Chat	3.09	1.234
Shadowing / Interview	2.72	1.35
Discussion Board	2.48	1.44
Video Presentation	2.00	1.02
Leader Assessments	2.00	.93
Online Chapter Quizzes	1.55	.80

Most Engaging Activities



□ Online chats

“I could read and take a minute to reflect then type and edit my response while watching the discussion continue. “

“They were fast moving and probably would have been more beneficial to me if fewer students were online at one time, but I remember the chat sessions as stimulating engagement”

Most Engaging Activities



- Described as:
 - “live chats” and “book talks”
 - addresses learning style
 - the most engaging activity and it required my group to “plan the questions for the chat”.
 - “forced engagement”

Online chats created student interaction on various levels with the material, the faculty member, and other students.

Most Engaging Activities



Shadowing/Interviewing Leader

■ Experience

- “provided a time to see how a leader works and then reflect”
- “a professional working in the field of education and talking to them about their job, background, aspirations, and outside interests was exciting for me”
- “Shadowing a leader required me to observe a proven leader in action”

Most Engaging Activities



Shadowing/Interviewing Leader

■ Knowledge

- “ I liked shadowing the leader, because you can see theory in 'real world' practice”. In terms of adult learning theory, this ‘real-world’ situation helps students understand the importance of the course material. This provides students with engagement in the outside community.
- “The structured interview questions made it possible to compare what was learned with what other students learned in their experiences.”

Most Engaging Activities



Shadowing/Interviewing Leader

- ▣ Knowledge

- “Also, evaluating the leader's style required application of learning. “
- “helped me learn the leadership information in an applied way. “

Most Engaging Activities



Shadowing/Interviewing Leader

▣ Networking

- “I also enjoyed the fact that you have the opportunity to network and find out if your research interests are in sync or important with your professional field. “
- “the opportunity to network and find out if your research interests are in sync or important with your professional field”.
- “I went on to do an Internship with Monica* the following semester”

Most Engaging Activities



Leader assessments

- ▣ I think the Northouse Leadership Questionnaires were the most engaging piece in the course. It showed me how the theories work in an applied process.

Most Engaging Activities



Video Presentation

- “The video activity was great because it was my first class in the program and I was able to put a face and voice to the names online. I felt like I knew my classmates.”

Most Engaging Activities



Discussion Board

- ▣ “most benefit to me”
- ▣ “We shared experiences and challenges from diverse perspectives. “
- ▣ “There was a free exchange of ideas centered around relevant themes of interest.”

Most Engaging Activities



Audio Bridge

- ▣ “...felt to be the most engaging component since we were able to share our experiences and research during the course.”
- ▣ I enjoyed hearing the other students and knowing they were having similar experiences as I.”
- ▣ “Audio bridge sessions were often too short to become too engaging and it was difficult to all share adequate information.”

Least Engaging Activities



- “I feel like I communicated with both my peers and instructor in relation with every of my assignments.”
- “I don't have a least engaging activity.”

Least Engaging Activities

Online Chapter Quizzes

- ❑ “...frustrating”
- ❑ “many errors”
- ❑ “least engaging piece”
- ❑ “simple rote memory information”
- ❑ “just busy work.”
 - “we are all too busy in a doctoral program to just do busy work. but the rest of the class was great!”
- ❑ “represented basic information and knowledge of the concepts, but offered no opportunity to apply, analyze or evaluate concepts. “
- ❑ “just a knowledge check.’
- ❑ “missed the most pertinent information of a particular chapter. “
- ❑ “I learned to figure them out without reading the book”

“...everyone knows you can hit the “back” button to get the right answer. I refused to do that, but it was still frustrating to get some wrong. The questions were worded to trick you instead of gauge your understanding.”

Least Engaging Activities (cont.)



Video Presentation

- ▣ “ very educational and good practice for me personally, however it didn't seem to add to the course significantly, or create engagement as I understand the word.”

Audio Bridge

- ▣ “I could not connect with voices over the phone.”

Least Engaging Activities (cont.)



Discussion Board

- ▣ “ For the most part students would regurgitate from the reading material. Would be more engaging if we each had to find pertinent recent articles / studies and post a summary and why it is relevant.”

Shadowing/Interview

- ▣ “Due to my current professional position....it didn't yield much new information. This experience could be due to the person I chose to shadow.”

Peer Engagement



“Some of the most engaging moments with other students occurred while we waited for the instructor to join the audio-bridge.”

We:

- ▣ “clarified assignments,
- ▣ inquired about family and background, and
- ▣ stated our views about the course.”

“informal audio-bridge conversations (prior to the official start, seemed to be a strong student to student bonding experience.”

Conclusions



- Shadowing a leader and online chats were perceived as most engaging
- Online chapter quizzes were unanimously found as least engaging
- Students Perceive engagement level of activities differently
- Just as data triangulation uses several different research methods to make your findings stronger.... Using several different types of course activities can enhance student engagement.

Future Research



- Study engagement from a quantitative perspective
 - ▣ Examine future behavior intentions
- Community College Survey of Student Engagement
 - ▣ Active & collaborative learning
 - ▣ Student effort
 - ▣ Academic challenge
 - ▣ Student-faculty interaction
 - ▣ Support for learners
- Examine teacher evaluations in relationship to engagement
- Examine the differences between level of students
- Context of the course

THANK YOU!!