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Alshahrani, Saeed and Ward, Rupert

The influence of internet use in the classroom environment

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Abstract

The aim of the research is to assess the influence of a student's access to the internet for the purpose of looking for academic information and how this impacts on their relationship with the lecturer in the classroom environment, including the Expert and Referent relationships. The study also assesses the impact on students, especially the academic engagement within the classroom. Academic engagement in this study includes self-confidence, self-reliance and connectivity.

Definitions

- Expert Relationship** is the relationship between the lecturer and the student, based on the student's needs to the lecturer's knowledge.
- Referent Power** is the relationship between the lecturer and the student, based on student's respect to the lecturer as a role model.
- Academic Self-Confidence** is the student feeling that they have information they can share with others.
- Self-Reliance** is the student's ability to find solutions to academic issues decently.
- Connectedness** is the use internet technologies such as e-mail and blackboard messaging system to communicate with lecturers

Methodology and data collection

A questionnaire was distributed to students from 30 universities/ educational institutions in higher education to gather data about their experience of using web technology in their education. In total, 1361 participations have been accepted as valid. Out of these, 969 were males, 377 were females and 15 did not mention their gender. Figures below were generated by analysing the data by using PASW software, Predictive Analytics Software.

Results

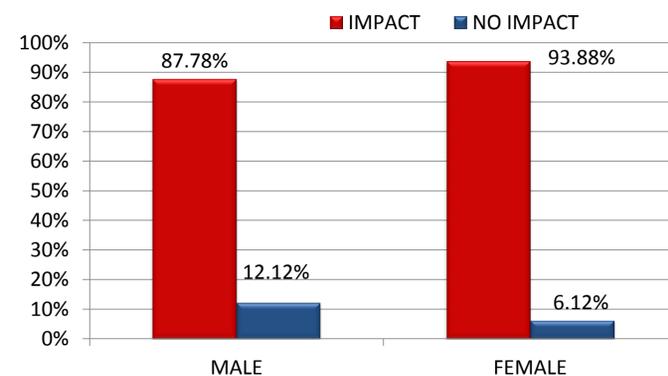


Fig.1 Influence of the internet on expert relationship

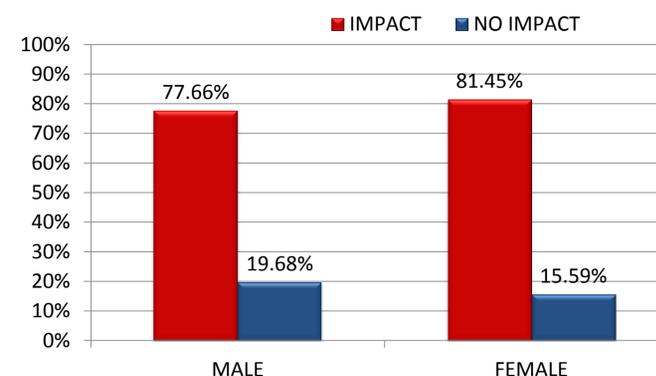


Fig.2 Influence of the internet on referent relationship

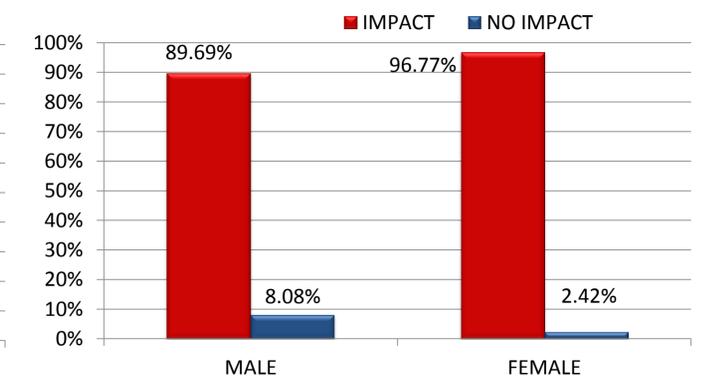


Fig.3 Influence of the internet on self-confidence

Results

Students' access to the internet have had a varying impact on student-lecturer expert power and referent power relationships. Internet websites have increased the gap between students and their lecturers in both aspects. The results also show that internet websites have improved students' academic self-confidence and academic self-reliance.

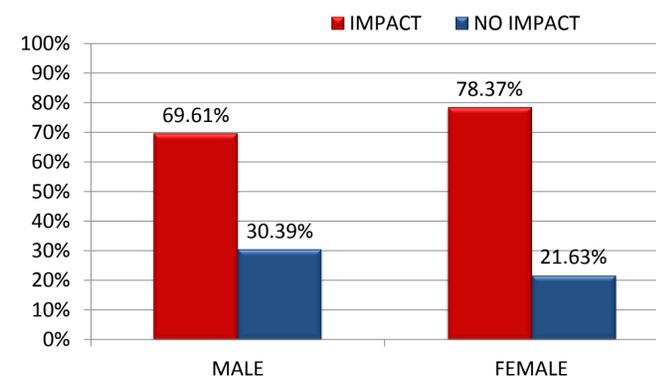


Fig.4 Influence of the internet on self-reliance

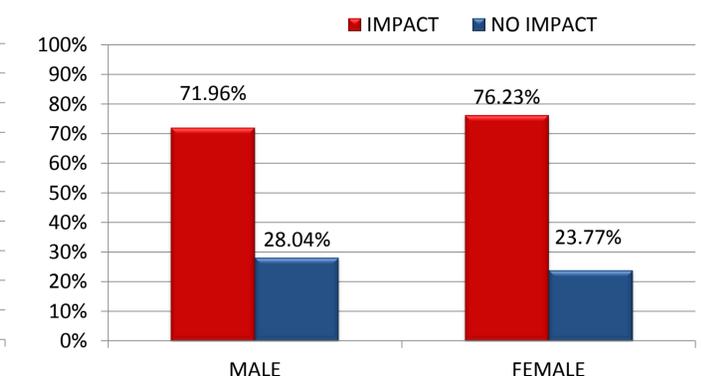


Fig.5 Influence of the internet on connectedness

The student provided reasons why their access to the internet has had a negative impact on their relationship with the lecturer but a positive impact on their academic engagement. Below are the main, and most common, reasons the students provided:

- The students feel that information obtained from the internet is more organized and easily delivered.
- The students felt that some lecturers excessively use their authority that either he/she has.
- The students feel that obtaining information from the internet is far quicker and easier than asking the lecturer.