Learning in different contexts: Indonesian students’ Internet use in Australian universities

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Introduction

- Higher education has the largest number of international student enrolments in Australia which has been increasing every year (AEI, 2009).
- 7,968 Indonesian students were enrolled in Australian higher education institutions (AEI, 2008).

Participants

- 94 Indonesian students at Victorian-based universities.
- 61.7% of participants had home Internet access in Indonesia before coming to Australia, however, rarely used for pedagogical or learning experiences.

Research Questions

- How do Indonesian students use the Internet for academic purposes in Australia?
- What are their online activities?
- To what extent has Internet usage contributed to their learning activities?

Methodology

Measures

- Students' new media ownerships, main Internet access, Internet usage and expenditure, previous experience, recent online activities, confidence in using the Internet, examination preparations were measured using questionnaire adapted from the UK Children Go Online and Young People and New Media in UK (Livingstone & Bober, 2004; Livingstone & Bovill, 1999).
- Online activities: e.g. send and read e-mails; look for information in relation to study; use Internet news groups, chat rooms, instant messaging, bulletin boards; find information on careers and further education; e.g. no questions to ask, preferred asking friends, no previous reply from lecturer.

Findings

- Mixed method (Survey, n=94; In-depth interviews, n=10).
- Data collection: June-August 2007.

Analyses

- Chi-square test for independence.
- Independent-samples t-test.

Most Useful Study Resources by Level of Study

- Most popular activity was to send or read e-mails.
- The majority (40.4%) used e-mail more than 40 times in the two week period of the survey, but they rarely sent e-mails to lecturers or tutors for various reasons, e.g. no questions to ask, preferred asking friends, no previous reply from lecturer.

- Joining friend-based mailing list was preferred than online discussion forum organised by lecturer.

- The mailing lists were formed based on the students’ club, organisation, interest, hobby, religion, and living area.

Summary of Findings

- The findings support Rice’s claim (2001) that university students tend to be more literate, creative and socially skilled because of their early familiarity with the Internet.
- The students experienced learning with technology as an active and incremental process during their study.
- Student practices are influenced by their experiences, needs and motivations both in the past in Indonesia and at the time of their study in Australia.

References


Monash Education Research Community

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