

# On-line quizzes and games: Is the outcome student engagement, enlightenment or entertainment?

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On-line and blended units aim for student engagement through active learning, participation in challenging academic activities, formative communication with academic staff, involvement in enriching educational experiences, and feeling validated and supported by university learning communities (Coates, 2007). Coates (2007) noted that there is variation in how students integrate online learning into face-to-face campus-based study. With the increasing use of mobile electronic devices there is increasing opportunity for students to engage with online learning. However, the efficacy of the online learning experiences in units using quizzes and interactive activities in terms of student engagement leading to learning, still needs to be established. Engagement is a process with many dimensions (Krause & Coates, 2008), and the dimension of learning through activities perceived by students as “fun not study” requires further examination. This project aimed to gain deeper insights into student engagement in online interactive quizzes, quizlets and activities in a quantitative study with a sample of approximately 2000 students. Data was gathered at both student as well as group level. The number of student attempts at each quiz or interactive activity, and its correlation with their continuous assessment results and final grades was examined with respect demographic variables such as age, gender, mode of study, and course of enrolment. Results indicate that external students engaged with the quizzes and activities more frequently than internally enrolled students, and international students engaged more frequently with the online activities. Data analysis shows trends towards positive and significant correlation between number of attempts on online activities and quizzes and student assessment results, with approximately every 10 additional ‘hits’ registered by a student being associated with an expected increase of 1% on their final grade for external students. Schools adopting a genuinely exploratory learning approach to their teaching and learning procedures will be particularly interested in the findings impacting on student learning. Higher education can only be shaped for

the future through teaching and learning practices based in evidence from the contemporary student experience.