

Abstract

This quasi-experimental action research study used a mixed-method model. It answered 2 questions: what impact does gamification have on adult online learning, and how do learners feel about having gamification in their learning unit? It investigated why adults struggle with focus and retention of online learning, and what possible solutions exist to overcome these challenges. Learner tasks in this study measured skills in survey building by 4 female, college educated professionals, with little or no background in survey design. They were enrolled in a distance learning online unit in Canvas LMS: "Designing Online Surveys". It had an instructor available via text and email. The pre- and post-assignments created a survey and used RUBRICS for quantitative scoring. Post learning, qualitative data were collected about learner "feelings", positive and negative. Learner "responses" to those feelings led to self-reported descriptions of study strategies toward obtaining "success" in "winning the games".

During the COVID-19 crisis, the place of adult online learning, and its implementation in the workplace and higher learning has been examined and evaluated. Data in the area of the non-traditional classroom instruction may prove helpful to future educators and learning organizations, when making budget and resource decisions for their learning programs.

Conclusion

The quantitative measures indicated that gaming elements had a positive impact on the learning in the unit, in that the numeric POST scores from the survey building activity were higher than the PRE scores, on average by 35%. This demonstrated that learners' scores were connected to the use of game elements to improve their comprehension and application of concepts learned in the unit to build a survey, which had characteristics avoiding survey respondent abandonment.