Public Abstract

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Title:WILLINGNESS TO RETURN TO DIGITAL LEARNING RESOURCES:
INFORMATION ENVIRONMENTS OF STUDENTS
FOLLOWING ONLINE COURSE COMPLETION

Due to the fact that many universities have now moved considerably beyond brick-and-mortar walls and
into the realm of online learning, the idea of learning â€œanywhere, anything, anytimeâ€• is truly becoming more o
a reality. It is now suggested that universities could move beyond the clock and calendar boundary
associated with a traditional course by providing ongoing access to the learning materials after the course
is completed.
This study used a mixed-methods research design that combined qualitative (in-depth interviews) and
quantitative (survey; access log analysis) methods at two higher education institutions in order to inductively
develop an understanding of the characteristics of the information environment and the influence of the
environment and information quality on willingness to return to digital learning resources upon completion of
an online course.
The findings of this study suggest that in an established environment for willingness to return (EWR),
learners have the willingness and even an expectation to return to digital learning resources following
course completion. This study also seems to indicate that in an emerging EWR learners are likely to return
to resources even when they do not remember the resources available from an online course if they are
provided access to return, are reminded of the availability of resources, and have a need for these
resources. However, it is not clear how the characteristics of the information environment or perceptions of
quality influence willingness to return. Further study is needed to better define perceptions of information
quality, understand the influence of the information environment, and determine other influences on
willingness to return.