

## Online learning: Perceptions of useful and challenging characteristics

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## Purpose of the Session

- To report a continued study on adult learners' perceptions of useful and challenging characteristics.
  - Review year 1 study
  - Report year 2 results
  - Compare year 2 results with year 1 results
  - Discussion

## Research Questions & Research Methods

- Research Questions
  - What components of online learning do students perceive as helpful?
  - What components of online learning do students perceive as challenging?
- Research Design
  - Questionnaire
  - Interview

## Results of Year 1 Study: Challenging Components

Challenging components	Overall satisfied	Overall unsatisfied	Experienced learners	Novice learners
Technical problems	60%	54%	49%	59%
Lack of community	43%	90%	59%	54%
Difficulty understanding goals/objectives of the course	43%	63%	48%	40%
Time management	28%	27%	25%	36%

## Results of Year 1 Study: Helpful Components

Helpful components	Overall satisfied	Overall unsatisfied	Experienced learners	Novice learners
Design of the course	82%	90%	86%	83%
Time management	81%	45%	81%	78%
Comfort with online technologies	81%	63%	76%	77%
Motivation of the student	77%	72%	77%	75%

## Results of Year 2 Study: Challenging Components

Challenging components	Overall satisfied	Overall unsatisfied	Experienced learners	Novice learners
Technical problems	68%	36%	65%	46%
Lack of a sense of community	31%	82%	40%	42%
Difficulty understanding goals of course	9%	55%	16%	17%
Time management	17%	9%	16%	17%

## Results of Year 2 Study: Helpful Components

Overall satisfied	Overall unsatisfied
1. Well-organized content	1. Well-organized content
2. Clear objectives	2. Clear objectives
3. Motivation of the student	3. Comfort with technology
4. Comfort with technology	4. Time management
5. Time management	5. Motivation of the student

## Discussion

- Similar results in year 1 and year 2 studies
  - Course design and organization are most helpful.
  - Students' are concerned with course planning and implementation.
  - Technical problems and sense of community are challenging.
- Future directions for online education
  - Need for effective instructional design
  - Be prepared for technical problems (because they are not likely to disappear)
  - Roles of instructors and learners in building online learning community