

Identifying University Students' Emotions in an Online Course

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Abstract

Distant education and online courses offer many advantages such as balancing work, family and studies, access to training without constraints of place and time, and experience a variety of pedagogical formats. However, it also presents some challenges related to perseverance. Students can feel isolated from their peers, have difficulty to remain attentive and active, and receive less direct teacher supervision. A growing number of studies are looking into the role of emotions felt by students when taking online courses. For O'regan (2003), online learning is reinforced when negative emotions are minimized and positive emotions maximized. In this regard, our research aims to identify the emotions university students feel when taking an online course. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven undergraduate students from a French speaking university in Quebec, Canada. Results show a positive and negative valence regarding the emotions experienced by the students. Positive emotions were mostly related to synchronic and interactive online learning activities. Whereas negative emotions were mainly related to an absence of teacher communication and feedback.

Keywords

Emotions, online course, university students.

