

## **USA and Asia Hospitality & Tourism Students' Perceptions and Satisfaction with Online Learning versus Traditional Face-to-Face Instruction**

**David Mc.Arthur Baker \***

College of Business (Hospitality & Tourism)

Tennessee State University

Avon Williams Campus, Nashville, USA

Email: [dmbaker@tnstate.edu](mailto:dmbaker@tnstate.edu)

\*Corresponding author

**Ramaprasad Unni**

College of Business (Marketing)

Tennessee State University

Avon Williams Campus, Nashville, USA

### **Abstract**

*The purpose of the study is to compare undergraduates' preference for, and academic performance on, class material and assessment presented online vs. in traditional classrooms. This study examined these issues in the context of hospitality and tourism majors at Midwestern USA universities as compared to similar students attending universities in Asia. Data for this study was the undergraduate student survey responses from these programs. The sample consisted of 356 students with about 66% from USA (n=234) and 34% from Asia (n=122). Analysis of the means using the Kruskal-Wallis test and standard deviations were conducted to evaluate if there were any differences in USA vs. Asian student learning perceptions and level of satisfaction with online learning compared with traditional instruction. One-way ANOVA was used to compare means between the two regions. Differences between online and face-to-face learning environments in the two regions were tested with a series of two-factor ANOVAs with region as between-subjects factor and mode of learning as a within-subjects factor. The results revealed that there were no statistically significant difference in learning preference and both USA and Asian students were very satisfied with both modes of instruction. Based on the results of this study, and given the trends in online courses, there are implications for faculty; the results should give some faculty members a reason to move some of their courses taught to an online platform and reflect on the teaching methods used when teaching online.*

**Key words:** *Online education; e-Learning; Hospitality & Tourism; face-to-face teaching; student satisfaction.*

**JEL Classification:** G20

**PsycINFO Classification:** 3550

**FoR Code:** 1303; 1503

**ERA Journal ID#:** 35696

## Introduction

The development of the information and communication technology has marked everyday life for all of us. Our work, or even our day, usually begins by switching on the computer, checking the e-mail box and news on the internet. We mainly communicate with friends via social networks, and the business contacts are transferred to the Internet. These changes could not be avoided in the field of education. Also in this area an innovative new form of education has emerged. This is distance learning or, as it is often called, e-learning or online learning. The term e-learning (electronic learning) refers to methods of learning through the use of any electronic medium. It is also known as virtual education, online training, open training/open-learning, open-courseware and web-based learning. The Internet is the main tool in implementing e-learning (Davoud, 2006). Online learning has roots in the tradition of distance education, which goes back at least 100 years to the early correspondence courses. With the advent of the Internet and the World Wide Web, the Webification of instruction offers greater flexibility and applicability to students of hospitality and tourism programs worldwide (McDowall & Lin, 2007; Sigala, 2002). Terms such as computer based education, computer based instruction, computer supported learning, distance education, ICT based learning, online learning and web based learning seem to be used interchangeably by different authors; all are claimed to describe e-Learning (McFarlane *et al.*, 2003). For the purposes of this research we will focus on online learning. A wholly online course can be defined as a course that has no face-to-face interaction; all communication and interactions between instructors and students, educational content, learning activities, assessments and support services are integrated and delivered online.

The use of information technology has led to a solution for educational institutions or multinational organizations in the sense of expense and quality issues (Malik, 2009). The concept of e-learning is not a new thing since it has been used worldwide for several decades, and, as the development of technology for e-learning, it is one of the greatest advances of information and communication technologies (Wang, 2003). Distance education has been developing the last 30 years and it is well recognized today. As it is becoming increasingly important and represents a phenomenon, it is a topic of many discussions (Hannum, 2009). Selim (2007) argues that many university programs have included e-learning into their programs as it has emerged from information technology. In the last decades the institutions in the higher education area are making significant efforts in this field. Therefore, students have modified their learning and teachers their teaching methods (Malik 2009). White (2005) argues that in sense of technological and pedagogical shift, distance education represents new challenges in the transition from face to face teaching to more flexible mode of education. Many authors stated that one of the most modern methods is e-learning. By e-learning, the teacher and students participate in the work at different places and usually at different times. Collopy and Arnold (2009) indicate that many studies show that the content of the same lectures can be understood in the online environment, similarly as in the case of conventional lectures in the classroom (Aragon, Johnson & Shaik, 2002; Meyer, 2003).

Between 2000 and 2011, the number of international students has more than doubled. Today, almost 4.5 million tertiary students are enrolled outside their country of citizenship with 17% studying in the USA. During 2011 the largest numbers of international students were from China, India and Korea. Asian students account for 53% of all students studying abroad worldwide. The purpose of this study is to measure USA and Asian students' learning perceptions related to hospitality and tourism majors who would have experience taking courses using the traditional face-to-face mode of instruction and the online mode of instruction. The other purpose is to explore students' level of satisfaction with the learning instructional modes. The approach for this study is

to replicate prior research procedures and use the survey instrument developed by Fortune, Shifflett, and Sibley (2006) that measured learning perceptions of students enrolled in business communication courses in the two different learning environments; online and face-to-face.

## Literature Review

Since the present research focuses on hospitality and tourism students, it is necessary to first discuss this particular group of students' learning styles. It has been assumed that hospitality, tourism and travel management majors tend to have different learning styles from students of other programs as the subject matters are more vocational in nature (Barron & Arcodia, 2002; Dale & McCarthy, 2006; Hsu, 1999; Loo, 2002). The knowledge acquired by teachers who use online and face-to-face methods can be of great use in improving both types of teaching, which is the reason why researchers nowadays study issues related to these teaching methods, e.g. Urtel (2008) and Georgouli et al. (2008). It is not simply a question of retaining traditional teaching methods such as the master class and applying the tools of e-learning techniques to gain access to more information. Nor does it mean involving the students in the same learning methodology using a different medium.

Considerable progress must still be made to enable today's society to take full advantage of the potential of online teaching. Several researchers (Wilcox & Wojnar, 2000; Mason, 2003; Rovai, 2004; Salmon, 2004; Kearsley, 2005; Cabero, 2006; García Aretio et al., 2006) have reported on the peculiarities in design, contents, activities, interaction, tools and evaluation processes in face-to-face and online modes of teaching. On comparing the two methodologies, people may mistakenly regard the two processes as similar when in fact they should be seen as different from the outset. However, it is useful to carry out comparative research which might lead to improvements in each type of learning model. Coates et al. (2004) have pointed out that it is negative to explain only the differences between face-to-face and online methods and not the basic attitudes which form the starting point for each model.

Overall, results from Bernard et al. (2004) and other reviews of the distance education literature (Cavanaugh 2001; Moore 1994) indicate no significant differences in effectiveness between distance education and face-to-face education, suggesting that distance education, when it is the only option available, can successfully replace face-to-face instruction. Findings of a meta-analysis of job-related courses comparing Web-based and classroom-based learning (Sitzmann et al. 2006) were even more positive. They found online learning to be superior to classroom-based instruction in terms of declarative knowledge outcomes, with the two being equivalent in terms of procedural learning. However, a general conclusion that distance and face-to-face instruction result in essentially similar learning ignores differences in findings across various studies.

Based on the research performed over the last several years, it has become a foregone conclusion that there is no significant difference in student learning outcomes between face-to-face versus online delivery modes (Russell, 1999; Swan, 2003; Newlin et al. 2005; McCutcheon et al., 2015). Additionally, the website <http://www.nosignificantdifference.org> contains hundreds of articles showing that there is no significant difference between face-to-face and online delivery modes. Another delivery method, blended, is emerging as a new mode of delivery and must pass this same test. In the past, face-to-face delivery methods were considered the standard against which other delivery methods were measured. Now, given the research on online delivery, we can use both or either face-to-face or online delivery methods as the measure of other techniques such as blended. Blended learning combines multiple modes of delivery for delivering course content to students. Typically, and in the context of this study, the multiple modes are face-to-face and online (Osguthorpe & Graham,

2003). The idea is to use the best or most appropriate features of each method to help enhance the student experience and maximize the possibility of student success.

Teaching has experienced rapid change in the last 20 years with the advances in the study of learning (Dervan, et al. 2006). Additionally, the shift in strategy for educational delivery has been driven by external forces beyond the influence of the institutions as well as by their internal dynamics. According to Deming et al (2012), the growth in for-profit education and the increased number of public universities in the online sector has had a significant impact on course delivery methods. In addition, the intense competition among these institutions seeking greater enrollment has become another important factor for strategy determination in academic planning. For example, the number of institutions that offer very similar degree programs is strikingly high. Since that time a number of institutions have faced numerous challenges, including budget cuts, declining enrollment and the emergence of a variety of new educational opportunities for students. Giroux (2015) addresses some of the issues “the future of higher education is in a state of crisis and many of the challenges include budget cuts, diminishing quality, the downsizing of faculty, and the revamping of the curriculum to fit the needs of the market.” The number of college level distance learning classes offered online is increasing every year and part of that increase is driven by demand. The economic slowdown, the crash of the stock market, the meltdown of the real estate market, and high unemployment levels have all contributed over the past decade to stagnating or declining enrollment in many colleges and universities around the country.

On the other hand, the institutions of higher education have steadily been facing mounting costs for new technologies, campus renovation, employees’ compensation, at the same time, they have experienced severe budgetary constraints as a result of dwindling revenue and endowment. Adding to these impediments is the threat to many institutions posed by the spread of massive open online courses (MOOCs), that is, the free online college courses for the public around the world. Consequently, the influence of these external and internal forces have made it imperative for the great majority of the institutions to rethink their traditional educational strategy by “going online” and adopting technological innovations that help accommodate greater enrollment through a more manageable cost structure. It is assumed in this paper that the more favorable students’ perceptions towards online learning, the greater the tendency of potential learners to enroll in programs of study. The offering of online courses/programs coupled with increased enrollment could help reduce the overall cost of education to many institutions. Numerous studies have been published (Brown, 2016; Pai, 2013; Summers, 2005; Clark, 2001) that compare traditional and online programs in majority institutions. Additional research (Fedynich, 2015; John et al, 2015) has also examined students’ perceptions about online education. However, little research has been done to investigate students’ perceptions of traditional versus online education in the hospitality and tourism discipline.

The Internet’s role in changing the form of teaching is transformative (Franzoni & Assar, 2007, Greenhow, et al., 2009). Some disciplines were early adopters of online mediated teaching and the hospitality and tourism program was one of them. The differences in perceived learning between learning in an online or face-to-face environment have been discussed for several years (Batts, D. 2008, Atan, et al., 2004). Fortune, Shifflett, & Sibley (2006) found that students enrolled in several online and face-to-face sections of a business communication course were similar with respect to their perceptions of skill development and learning, while differences were observed in the area of face-to-face interaction; the online students felt a lesser need for a face-to-face classroom setting and were satisfied with what they were learning regardless of the teaching modality. Supporting this finding, Larson and Sung (2009) determined that there are no differences in learning perceptions between the online and face-to-face delivery modes and that blended classes, e.g., ones that combine online and face-to-face instruction, do well when measuring learning effectiveness and student and faculty satisfaction.

Comparing the face-to-face and online learning modalities in the hospitality and tourism curriculum is needed to determine whether students can develop and grow as hospitality and tourism professionals with the desirable skills in leadership, interpersonal relationships, and customer service in a cutting-edge, high tech teaching environment with little or no physical contact. The advent of wholly online courses has meant that the student base has increasingly changed from a majority of local students to a combination of both local and international students (Lanham and Zhou, 2003).

Most Asian students have different learning styles and cultural backgrounds compared to their American peers. It has been long established that Asian students are more comfortable with lecture-based learning than with online learning because the concept of online learning is still new in many Asian countries. However, in recent years, there have been increasing numbers of Asian students enrolling in online courses at universities in the United States. These students need to deal with many layers of cultural novelty. *Cultural novelty* is a term that reflects the degree to which norms of the host culture differ from those of the international student's home culture (Mendenhall & Wiley, 1994). Differences exist between different cultures in the way that students learn as well as their preferences and approaches to learning. Conlan (1996) suggests that the approach to learning that is adopted by students of Asian cultures generally involves memorizing study materials and content for the purposes of reproducing them when required. Conversely, many Australian students and those of Western culture, have 'been encouraged to learn through the questioning of facts and understanding of concepts' (Conlan, 1996). Although each person has a cultural background informed by their educational experiences, it must be acknowledged that people within a culture are different, they may be shaped by the culture, but they are still unique individuals. Chin et al. (2000) report that in their study students from a Western culture seem more confident in using web-based materials, while Asian students recorded fewer accesses to the web-based materials. This study also found that Western students showed fewer difficulties in navigating through the on-line materials than Asian students. These findings corroborate Hofstede's views (as cited in Chin et al., 2000) that Western students are more accustomed to student-centered situations whereas Asian students prefer a teacher-centered approach.

## Research Questions

1. Is there a significant difference in the perceptions of learning between USA vs. Asian students when comparing the online and face-to-face course delivery methods?
2. Are USA students more satisfied than Asian students when comparing online instruction with face-to-face instruction?

## Methodology

The purpose of this study is to measure USA and Asian students' learning perceptions related to hospitality and tourism majors who would have experience taking courses using the traditional face-to-face mode of instruction and the online mode of instruction. Then the authors seek to explore students' level of satisfaction with the learning instructional modes. The approach for this study was to replicate prior research procedures and use the survey instrument developed by Fortune, Shifflett, and Sibley (2006) that measured learning perceptions of students enrolled in business communication courses in the two different learning environments; online and face-to-face. Data for this study were the undergraduate student survey responses from hospitality and tourism programs which were conducted in the fall 2014 through fall 2015. In the USA, a request for student's participation was done via a packet with

twenty-five questionnaires sent out via regular mail to twenty-one Midwestern Universities with hospitality and tourism programs. To request Asian students participation, an email containing a SurveyMonkey link was sent out to over fifty faculty from hospitality and tourism programs in Asia; Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, China and South Korea.

The survey instrument was developed by modifying one used by Fortune, Shifflett, and Sibley (2006) which measured learning perceptions of online vs. face-to-face instruction. The survey instrument consisted of two sections. Section I had 9 demographic questions, section II with 29 statements with a five-point Likert-scale measurement that ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Section II assessed perceptions and attitudes about online learning, comparison of online learning environments to traditional learning environments on dimensions such as ease of communication with instructor and other students, ability to learn course concepts, and level of satisfaction. One-way ANOVA was used to compare means between the two regions. Differences between online and face-to-face learning environments in the two regions were tested with a series of two-factor ANOVAs with region as between-subjects factor and mode of learning as a within-subjects factor. In all cases of significance testing, an alpha level of 0.05 was employed.

## Results and Discussion

The sample consisted of 356 undergraduate hospitality and tourism students with about 66% from USA and 34% from Asia. About 62% (n=222) were female and 38% (n=134) were male. Most of the students were between 18 to 23 years. In the US sub-group, 92% were in this age bracket and in the Asian sub-group, 97% were in this age bracket. Majority of the students were upper classmen (senior and juniors). Percentage of students who had GPA of A or B was 54% and 58% for US and Asian groups respectively. Facebook usage was similar for both groups with more than 70% in the two sub-samples checking Facebook “many times a day.” Details of descriptive items are listed in Table 1.

**Table 1:**  
*Demographics of the Students*

	<b>USA (n = 234)</b>	<b>Asia (n = 122)</b>	<b>Total sample (n = 356)</b>
<b>Gender</b>			
Female	80%	28%	62%
Male	20%	72%	38%
<b>Age</b>			
18 – 23 years	91%	97%	93%
24 – 34 years	8%	2%	6%
>35 years	1%	1%	1%
<b>Class</b>			
Freshman	11%	15%	12%
Sophomore	17%	28%	21%
Junior	34%	11%	26%
Senior	39%	44%	40%
<b>GPA</b>			
A	18%	24%	20%
B	36%	34%	36%
C	34%	24%	31%
D	12%	10%	11%
<b>Facebook usage</b>			
“Many times a day”	72%	74%	72%

### ***Perceptions of online learning***

One-way ANOVA, with region as the factor was used to analyze differences of perceptions about online learning. Summary of means are shown in Table 2.

### ***Role of technology***

Both groups liked “using computer in learning.” Mean scores for USA and Asia were 3.75 (SD = 1.04) and 3.53 (SD = 0.96) respectively ( $p = .05$ ). Interestingly, while US students did not perceive that technology interfered with their ability to accomplish required coursework (mean = 2.68; SD = 1.05), their Asian counterparts appeared to be neutral (mean = 3.33, SD = 1.12). The difference in means was significant ( $p = .000$ ). US students agreed that access to the Internet/email made it easier to communicate with their instructor (mean = 4.21, SD = .98), while Asian students appeared to be neutral (mean = 3.26, SD = 1.09). This difference was significant ( $p = .000$ ).

### ***Course-related perceptions***

The amount of coursework in online courses was not considered too much in both groups. The means for US and Asia were 2.95 (SD = .99) and 3.13 (SD = .89) respectively with a  $p = .092$ . US students felt they spent more time on homework (mean = 3.18, SD = 1.21) in online courses than face-to-face courses compared to Asian students (mean = 2.78, SD = 1.07). This difference was significant ( $p = .002$ ).

US students were significantly more inclined to perceive online courses to be more convenient and a better fit for their schedule than Asian students (US students: mean = 3.40, SD = 1.20; Asian students: mean = 2.99, SD = .99;  $p = .002$ ). Both groups somewhat disagreed that they took online course because they were easier than face-to-face courses (US students: mean = 2.47, SD = 1.09; Asian students: mean = 2.71, SD = 1.03;  $p = .044$ ). Students also tended to agree that face-to-face communication would improve their ability to learn. There was no significant difference between students from USA and Asia.

### ***Role of instructor in online courses***

Perceptions of role of instructor were assessed through the following three statements: “instructors understand the online environment and make it easy to learn,” “instructors help to focus on-line discussions between students,” “I received frequent feedback on-line from the instructors.” There were no significant differences in the two groups about perceptions of instructors in online courses. The means (see Table 2.) are around mid-point of the scale and ranged from 2.87 to 3.07.

**Table 2:**  
*Means of student perceptions*

	USA	ASIA	p value
<b>Technology</b>			
• I like using the computer in learning.	<b>3.752</b>	<b>3.529</b>	<b>.05</b>
• The use of technology interferes with my ability to accomplish the required coursework.	<b>2.679</b>	<b>3.331</b>	<b>.000</b>
• Access to the Internet/email makes it easier to communicate with my Instructor.	<b>4.205</b>	<b>3.258</b>	<b>.000</b>
<b>Course</b>			
• The amount of coursework in the online environment is too much.	2.953	3.134	.092
• I spend more time on homework with online courses than face to face classroom courses	<b>3.184</b>	<b>2.775</b>	<b>.002</b>
• I take online courses because they are convenient and a better fit for my schedule.	<b>3.397</b>	<b>2.992</b>	<b>.002</b>
• I take online courses because they are easier than face-to-face courses.	<b>2.466</b>	<b>2.708</b>	<b>.044</b>
• Being in a classroom with face-to-face communication would improve my ability to learn.	4.085	4.102	Not supported
<b>Instructor</b>			
• The instructors understand the online environment and make it easy to learn.	3.051	3.068	Not supported
• The instructors help to focus on-line discussions between students	2.944	2.975	Not supported
• I received frequent feedback on-line from the instructors	3.047	2.874	Not supported
<b>Communication</b>			
• An online environment makes it easier for me to communicate with my instructor.	3.222	3.069	Not supported
• An online environment makes it easier for me to communicate with my classmates.	<b>2.812</b>	<b>3.263</b>	<b>.001</b>
• A classroom environment makes it easier for me to communicate with my classmates.	4.321	4.239	Not supported
• A classroom environment makes it easier for me to communicate with my instructor.	4.158	4.051	Not supported
<b>Learning</b>			
• An online environment can provide me with a deeper knowledge of the course content.	<b>2.816</b>	<b>3.333</b>	<b>.000</b>
• The online learning environment helps me to understand the course materials.	<b>2.671</b>	<b>3.316</b>	<b>.000</b>
• Face-to-face instruction would help me understand the course concepts better.	4.154	4.237	Not supported
• Face-to-face instruction would be a better way for me to learn the content/course materials.	4.09	4.111	Not supported
• Face-to-face instruction would help me learn more.	4.256	4.111	Not supported
<b>Satisfaction</b>			
• The online learning environment would contribute to my overall satisfaction of the course.	3.047	3.136	Not supported
• The face-to-face learning environment would contribute to my overall satisfaction of the course.	4.077	3.931	Not supported
• Overall, I am very satisfied with both online and face-to-face classroom learning environments	3.778	3.617	Not supported
<b>Preference</b>			
• Overall, I prefer the online learning environment rather than face-to-face classroom instruction.	2.581	2.689	Not supported

Examination of the means reported in Table 2. indicates differences in perceptions between online and face-to-face environments. To examine the role of mode of learning environment (online vs. face-to-face environments) and differences between USA and



Asia, a two-way ANOVA with learning environment (online vs face-to-face) as a within-subjects factor and region (USA vs Asia) as a fixed factor was used.

### **Communication**

The mean perceptions, as shown in Table 1., indicate that students in both sub-groups believed that communication was easier in face-to-face than online learning environment. A two-way mixed ANOVA revealed significant main effects of mode of learning and region on ease of communicating with course instructor. Students perceived it was significantly easier to communicate with the instructor in face-to-face learning environments than online environments (online: mean = 2.96; face-to-face: mean = 4.29;  $p = .000$ ). The means for the US sub-group were higher (USA: online: mean = 2.81; face-to-face: mean = 4.32; Asia: online: mean = 3.26; face-to-face: mean = 4.24;  $p = .046$ ).

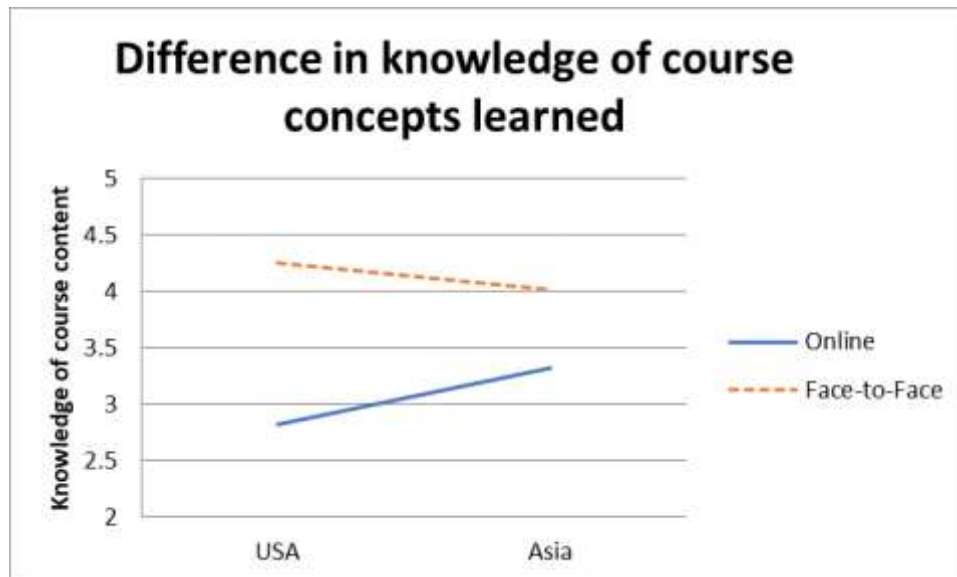
A separate mixed ANOVA with ease to communicate with students as the dependent variable showed significant main effects of mode of instruction and region as well as a significant two-way interaction between mode of learning and region. The model was significant with significant main effects of mode of learning and a significant two-way interaction. Students perceived it was significantly easier to communicate with their classmates in face-to-face learning environments than online environments (online: mean = 3.17; face-to-face: mean = 4.12;  $p = .000$ ). The means for the US sub-group were higher (USA: online: mean = 3.22; face-to-face: mean = 4.16; Asia: online: mean = 3.06; face-to-face: mean = 4.04). The significant two-way interaction ( $p = .002$ ) between mode of learning and region shows that the difference in perception of ease of communication with classmates is more pronounced in the US sub-group.

### **Learning course concepts**

Students in both regions perceived they would learn more in face-to-face environments. Regional differences as well as interaction effects between mode of learning and region were observed. Students in both regions perceived face-to-face learning environments to provide deeper knowledge of course content (online: mean = 2.89; face-to-face: mean = 4.18;  $p = .000$ ). Examination of the significant ( $p = .002$ ) two-way interaction between mode of learning and region shows that difference between perception of ability to understand concepts in online and face-to-face environments is bigger in USA compared to Asia, as shown in Figure 1. below. (USA: online: mean = 2.67; face-to-face: mean = 4.16; Asia: online: mean = 3.30; face-to-face: mean = 4.22;  $p = .002$ ).

**Figure 1:**

*Difference in knowledge of course concepts learned – interaction between mode of learning and region*

**Satisfaction**

A mixed two-way ANOVA with “learning environment would contribute to my overall satisfaction of the course” as a dependent variable showed significant main effects of mode of learning. Compared to online learning environment, face-to-face learning environment would contribute to greater overall satisfaction of the course (online: mean = 3.07; face-to-face: mean = 4.03;  $p = .000$ ). There were no differences in these perceptions between US and Asian students.

**Preference**

The means in Table 1. suggest that students in both regions did not prefer online learning over face-to-face environments with no significant difference between the two regions. The means for “Overall, I prefer the online learning environment rather than face-to-face classroom instruction” were 2.581 and 2.689 for USA and Asia respectively.

**Conclusion**

One key facet of the change taking place at institutions of higher education around the world is the growth of online learning. As the number of hybrid and online courses offered at colleges and universities increases, it presents an opportunity to reexamine the quality and reach of our educational work. The success of any class depends on identifying clear learning goals and then aligning the entire course (lectures, readings, examinations, projects, papers, etc.) with those objectives. Successful classes require a learning environment that truly engages students although the methods for engagement may vary by class format, Advising. Students in all courses require advising about their overall educational plan. Online courses do not obviate the need for the substantive support that students often depend on to select a thoughtful array of courses and to graduate in a timely manner. In all formats, the quality of the educational experience may vary depending on course design and organization, and the instructor’s teaching style and ability to engage with student questions and feedback.

The demand for distance education continues to grow as students, hard pressed by family and work demands, find the flexibility of online classes allows them to continue their education and graduate as planned. Colleges and universities all over the world see distance education as a means to grow enrollment without the additional expense of building more classrooms or adding staff. However there remain questions about students' perceptions and satisfaction with online learning vs face to face. This study compares students' in the USA with their counterparts in Asia. Asian students come from a culture where an instructor is an authority figure. When the nature of the course content is nonlinear and the quality of peer feedback is skeptical, Asian students would feel uncomfortable. Their feelings exemplify Hofstede's (1980, 1984) uncertainty avoidance dimension of cross-cultural behavior. The findings in this study is consistent with previous research performed over the last several years, where it has become a foregone conclusion that there is no significant difference in student learning outcomes between face-to-face versus online delivery modes (Russell, 1999; Swan, 2003; Newlin et al.2005; McCutcheon et al., 2015). There was no significant difference in the perceptions of learning when comparing the online and face-to-face course delivery methods between USA vs. Asian students and both USA and Asian students were equally satisfied with online and face-to-face instruction.

There is an argument that traditional learning is the best way of maintaining a learning process. Other models are always considered to be inferior or less efficient. However, there is no finding to support this argument, and research shows that technology-supported models are at least as good as traditional learning (Rashty, 2010). E-Learning includes many components that are familiar from traditional learning, such as: presentation of ideas by the students, group discussions, arguments and many other forms of conveying information and accumulating knowledge. E-Learning also includes advantages which are not found in traditional learning, such as: time for digesting the information and responding, enhanced communication among the learners, both as regards quality and as regards urgency, knowledge being acquired and transferred among the learners themselves, the ability to conduct an open discussion, where each learner gets more of an equal standing than in a face-to-face discussion, access to information and to discussion ability, responses may be made around the clock with no restrictions, a higher motivation and involvement in the process on the part of the learners.

## **Implication**

There is no doubt that online courses have their benefits. Online instruction can reduce classroom costs for colleges and universities. Students who work or have other responsibilities are still able to take classes. Classes are more accessible and convenient. Certain courses can be effective at accomplishing learning objectives. But with these benefits come expenses. The advantages and disadvantages of online instruction need to be considered; online courses may not be suitable or appropriate for everyone and for all instructional objectives. A face-to-face meeting in a classroom imposes accountability, inspires effort and promotes academic responsibility in subtle ways that we don't fully appreciate. On a campus, students attend class and stay alert because they worry what the teacher will think if they don't. Once they're in the classroom, the battle is mostly won. As in life, 80 percent of education is showing up, in person. Learning online is, of course, not the same as learning face to face, and that is likely good news for anyone who can recall an hour lost listening to an interminable lecture in an overheated classroom. Good courses, whether on campus or online, are engaging and foster active learning communities. In the best online courses, learners connect, collaborate, inspire, discover and create through myriad technologies. Based on the results of this study, there are implications for faculty; the results should give some faculty members a reason to move some of their courses taught to an online platform and reflect on the teaching methods used when teaching online.

## References

- Aragon, S., Johnson, S. & Shaik, N. (2002). The influence of learning style preferences on student success in online versus face-to-face environments. *American Journal of Distance Education, 16*(4), 227-244.
- Atan, H., Rahman, Z. A., & Idrus, R. M. (2004). Characteristics of the web-based learning environment in distance education: Students' perceptions of their learning needs. *Educational Media International, 41*(2), 103-110.
- Barron, P., & Arcodia, C. (2002). Linking learning style preferences and ethnicity: International students studying hospitality and tourism management in Australia. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport, and Tourism Education, 1*(2), 15-27.
- Batts, D. (2008). Comparison of student and instructor perceptions of best practices in online technology courses. *Journal of Online Learning and Teaching, 4*, 477-489.
- Bernard, R. M., P. C. Abrami, Y. Lou, E. Borokhovski, A. Wade, L. Wozney, P.A. Wallet, M. Fiset, and B. Huang. (2004). How does distance education compare with classroom instruction? A meta-analysis of the empirical literature. *Review of Educational Research 74* (3), 379-439.
- Brown, J. C., & Park, H. S. (2016). Longitudinal student research competency: Comparing online and traditional face-to-face learning platforms. *Advances in Social Work, 17*(1), 44-58.
- Cabero, J. (2006). Bases pedagógicas del e-learning. *Revista de Universidad y Sociedad del Conocimiento, 3*(1). Retrieved June 6, 2009, from <http://www.uoc.edu/rusc/3/1/dt/esp/cabero.pdf>.
- Cavanaugh, C. (2001). The effectiveness of interactive distance education technologies in K-12 learning: A meta-analysis. *International Journal of Educational Telecommunications 7*(1), 73-78.
- Chin, K. L., Chang, V. & Bauer, C. (2000) "The Use of Web-Based Learning in Culturally Diverse Learning Environments" Proceedings of Sixth Australian World Wide Web Conference, Cairns.
- Clark, R. A., & Jones, D. (2001). A comparison of traditional and online formats in a public speaking course. *Communication Education, 50*(2), 109-124.
- Coates, D., Humphreys, B. R., Kane, J., & Vachris, M. A. (2004). No significant distance between face to face and online instruction: evidence from principles of economics. *Economics of Education Review, 23* (5), 533-546.
- Conlan, F. (1996) "Can the Different Learning Expectations of Australian and Asian Students be Reconciled in One Teaching Strategy?" Proceedings of the 5th Annual Teaching and Learning Forum, Murdoch University
- Collopy, R.M.B. & Arnold, M.J. (2009). To Blend or Not To Blend: Online and Blended Learning Environments in Undergraduate Teacher Education. *Issue in Teacher Education, 18*(2), 85-101.
- Dale, C., & McCarthy, P. (2006). I like your style: The learning approaches of leisure, tourism and hospitality students studying generic modules. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education, 5*(2), 48-58.
- Davoud, M. (2006). *Critical factors for effective e-learning*. Retrieved from [http://asianvu.com/digital-library/elearning/Critical\\_factors\\_for\\_effective\\_e-learning\\_by\\_DMasoumi%5B1%5D.pdf](http://asianvu.com/digital-library/elearning/Critical_factors_for_effective_e-learning_by_DMasoumi%5B1%5D.pdf).

- Deming, D. J., Goldin, C., & Katz, L. F. (2012). The for-profit postsecondary school sector: Nimble critters or agile predators? *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 26(1), 139–164.
- Dervan, S., McCosker, C., MacDaniel, B., & O’Nuallain, C. (2006). Educational multimedia. In A. Méndez-Vilas, A. Solano Martín, J.A. Mesa González and J. Mesa González (Eds.), *Current Developments in Technology-Assisted Education*, Badajoz, Spain: Formatex, 810-805.
- Fedynich, L., Bradley, K. S., & Bradley, J. (2015). Graduate students' perceptions of online learning. *Research in Higher Education Journal*, 27, 1.
- Fortune, M.F., Shifflett, B., & Sibley, R. A. (2006). A comparison of online (high tech) and traditional (high touch) learning in business communication courses in Silicon Valley. *Journal of Education for Business*, 81(4), 210-214.
- Franzoni, A., & Assar, S. (2007). Using learning styles to enhance an e-learning system. *Proceedings of the 6th European Conference on e-Learning*, Copenhagen, Denmark: Academic conference management, 235-244.
- García Aretio, L., Ruiz Corbella, M., & Domínguez Figaredo, D. (2006). *De la educación a distancia a la educación virtual*, Madrid: Ariel.
- Georgouli, K., Skalkidis, I., & Guerreiro, P. (2008). A Framework for Adopting LMS to Introduce e-Learning in a Traditional Course. *Educational Technology & Society*, 11 (2), 227-240.
- Giroux, H. (2015). Higher education and the promise of democracy. In *Future of Higher Education: Perspectives from America's Academic Leaders*, 53.
- Greenhow, C., Robelia, B., & Hughes, J. E. (2009). Research on learning and teaching with web 2.0: Bridging conversations. *Educational Researcher*, 38(4), 280-283.
- Hannum, W. (2009). Moving distance education research forward. *Distance Education*, 30(1), 171-173.
- Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values*. Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, CA.
- Hofstede, G. (1984). *Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values*. Sage Publications, Newbury, CA.
- Hsu, C. H. C. (1999). Learning styles of hospitality students: Nature or nurture? *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 18, 17-30.
- John, O., Main, S., & Cooper, M. (2014). Student perceptions of online interactive versus traditional lectures; Or how I managed not to fall asleep with my eyes open. *Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 10(3), 405.
- Kearsley, G. (2005). *Online Learning. Personal reflections on the transformation of education*, New York: Educational technology.
- Lanham, E. & Zhou, W. (2003) "Cultural Issues in Online Learning — Is Blended Learning a Possible Solution?" *Journal of Computer Processing of Oriental Languages*, 16(4), 275-292.
- Larson, D., & Sung, C-H. (2009). Comparing student performance: Online versus blended versus face-to-face. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 13(1), 31-42.
- Loo, R. (2002). The distribution of learning styles and types for hard and soft business majors. *Educational Psychology*, 22, 349-360.
- Malik, M.W. (2009). Student satisfaction towards e-learning: influential role of key factors. *Proceedings 2nd CBRC, Lahore, Pakistan, November 14, 2009*.

- Mason, R. (2003). Online learning and supporting students: New possibilities. In A.Tait & R. Mills (Eds.), *Re-thinking Learner Support in Distance Education: Change and Continuity in an International Context*, London: Routledge Falmer, 91-99.
- McCutcheon, K., Lohan, M., Traynor, M., & Martin, D. (2015). A systematic review evaluating the impact of online or blended learning vs. face-to-face learning of clinical skills in undergraduate nurse education. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 71(2), 255-270.
- McDowall, S., & Lin, L.-C. (2007). A comparison of students' attitudes toward two teaching methods: Traditional versus distance learning. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education*, 19(1), 20-26.
- McFarlane, A., Bradburn, A. & McMahon, A. (2003). e-Learning for Leadership: Emerging indicators of effective practice. National College for School Leadership, Autumn 2003.[online] <http://www.ncsl.org.uk/media/F7B/98/randd-lit-review-e-Learning-full.pdf>
- Mendenhall, M.E., & Wiley, C. (1994). Strangers in a strange land: The relationship between expatriate adjustment and impression management. *American Behavior Scientist*, 37(5), 605-619.
- Meyer, K. (2003). Face-to-face versus threaded discussions: The role of time and higher-order thinking. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 7(3), 55-65.
- Moore, M. (1994). Administrative barriers to adoption of distance education. *The American Journal of Distance Education* 8(3), 1-4.
- Newlin, M. H., Lavooy, J. L. & Wang, A. Y. (2005). An Experimental Comparison of Conventional and Web-based Instructional Formats. *North American Journal of Psychology* 7(2), 327-335.
- Osguthorpe, R. T. & Graham, C. R.(2003). Blended Learning Environments Definitions and Directions. *The Quarterly Review of Distance Education* 4(3), 227-233.
- Pai, K. (2013). Assessing Online versus face-to-face learning, Proceedings, Global Conference on Business & Finance, 8(2), 350.
- Rashty, D. (2010). Traditional Learning vs. eLearning, Mount St. Mary's College. [Online]. (URL [http://www.msmc.la.edu/include/learning\\_resources/](http://www.msmc.la.edu/include/learning_resources/)). (Accessed August 2010).
- Rovai, A. (2004). A constructivist approach to online college learning. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 7, 79-93.
- Russell, T. (1999). The no significant difference phenomenon. Chapel Hill, NC: Office of Instructional Telecommunications, University of North Carolina.
- Salmon, G. (2004). *E-moderating: The key to teaching and learning online* (2nd Ed.), London: Routledge Falmer.
- Selim, M.H. (2007). Critical success factors for e-learning acceptance: Confirmatory factor models. *Computers & Education*, 49, 396-413.
- Sigala, M. (2002). The evolution of internet pedagogy: Benefits for tourism and hospitality education. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education* 1(2), 29-45.
- Sitzmann, T., Kraiger, D. Stewart, and R. Wisher. (2006). The comparative effectiveness of Web-based and classroom instruction: A meta-analysis. *Personnel Psychology* 59, 623-64.
- Summers, J., Waigandt, A, Whittaker, T. (2005). A comparison of student achievement and satisfaction in an online versus a traditional face-to-face statistics class. *Innovative Higher Education*, 29(3), 233-250.

- Swan, K. (2003). Learning effectiveness: what the research tells us. In J. Bourne & J. C. Moore (Eds) *Elements of Quality Online Education, Practice and Direction*. Needham, MA: Sloan Center for Online Education, 13-45.
- Urtel, M. G. (2008). Assessing academic performance between traditional and distance education course formats. *Educational Technology & Society*, 11 (1), 322-330.
- Wang, Y. (2003). Assessment of learner satisfaction with asynchronous electronic learning systems. *Information & Management*, 41(1), 75-86.
- White, C. (2005). Contribution of Distance Education to the Development of Individual Learners. *Distance Education*, 26(2), 165-181.
- Wilcox, B. L., & Wojnar, L. C. (2000). Best practice goes online. *Reading online*, 4 (2) , Retrieved June 16, 2009, from <http://www.readingonline.org/articles/wilcox/>.