

**THE ROLE OF COMPUTER AND INTERNET ACCESS IN BUSINESS
STUDENTS' ACCEPTANCE OF E-LEARNING TECHNOLOGY**

By

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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June 20, 2005
Blacksburg, Virginia

Keywords: computer access, Internet access, digital divide, technology acceptance, e-learning

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(ABSTRACT)

This study was based on previous research that investigated the disparity or gap between those who have access to computers and the Internet and those who do not (Hoffman & Novak, 1998; NTIA, 1999b; Carey, Chisholm & Irwin, 2002; Vail, 2003; Zelif, 2004; Glenn, 2005). The Technology Acceptance Model developed by Davis, Bagozzi, and Warshaw (1989) was used to investigate whether computer and Internet access influenced the acceptance of e-learning technology tools such as Blackboard and the Internet. Of the studies conducted concerning adoption of these technologies, a limited number have addressed the extent to which college students accept these tools. The majority of these studies failed to consider computer access as a factor regarding computer technology acceptance.

The E-Learning Technology Acceptance (ETA) survey instrument was administered to business students at two universities in North Carolina. Hierarchical regression was performed to test whether or not computer and Internet access explained variance above and beyond race and socioeconomic status. Regression analysis revealed that computer and Internet access affected the degree to which students expect Blackboard and the Internet to be easy to use. As a result, creating a technology assessment to be utilized by e-learning educators and students to measure the level of computer and Internet access was recommended. The analyses also revealed that computer and Internet access significantly impacted students' attitude toward using

Blackboard and the Internet. Improving the level of technology access should be addressed to promote positive attitudes regarding e-learning tools.

Additional findings revealed that socioeconomic status and race did influence computer ownership. A suggestion for educators is to explore initiatives that assist low income and minority students with obtaining home computers. Finally, the findings suggested that closing the digital divide is not enough to ensure technology acceptance of students. The researcher proposed that digital inclusion should be the goal of our society. Recommendations for further research suggested by the researcher included investigating other variables that may influence technology acceptance and computer and Internet access.

ACKNOWLEDEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank my Lord and Savior for revealing His purpose for me to pursue a doctorate degree. Without Him, I am nothing. I want to thank God for providing me with the dedication, motivation, and commitment to continue when my desire to continue wavered. Next, I would like to thank my loving and supportive husband, Marlon, who constantly encouraged me to follow my dreams. Thank you for being you. I would like to acknowledge my son, Amari, who endured many uneventful days while I worked instead of giving him my undivided attention. Thank you for cooperating with me. Finally, I would like to thank all of my family members and friends who have been praying and encouraging me along the way. To my Mother, Father, and brother, I dedicate this dissertation to you for being my foundation. I love you all.

To my committee members, thank you for all of your help and support. I realize the sacrifice that you have made in agreeing to work on my committee and I appreciate it greatly. To Dr. Betty Heath-Camp, Dr. Cliff Ragsdale, and Dr. Sherri Turner, thank you for working with me and providing valuable input to improve my work. Dr. Cecile Cachaper, thank you for all of your statistical knowledge. I could not have completed my statistical analysis without you. To Dr. Daisy Stewart, words can not express the gratitude I have for you working with me so diligently. You made being an out-of-state doctoral student much easier. Thank you all.

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