

ZMATH 2004e.03866

Brett, Clare

Off-line factors contributing to online engagement.

Technol. Pedagog. Educ. 13, No. 1, 83-95 (2004).

Online discourse environments are increasingly popular both in distance education contexts and as adjuncts to face-to-face learning. For many participants such contexts are experienced as positive, community-supported learning opportunities, but this is not the case for everyone. Understanding more about the online and off-line factors that contribute to the online experience is important in order to support equitable online learning. This study has analysed patterns of engagement and disengagement in one particular learning context; that of pre-service, math-anxious elementary candidates enrolled in a two-year pre-service program. Program supports for the self-declared math-anxious participants ($n = 20$ from a total cohort of 57) included small-group math investigations and participation in an online learning environment. Results show tremendous variability in levels of contribution and that the online context provided most learning support for participants who had had successful social and subject-related experiences in the program. Those with fewer successful face-to-face experiences who espoused an ability-based notion of subject matter, and who felt less able to contribute substantively, participated less online. As well, patterns of participation were established rapidly and were hard to change. (Author's abstract)

Classification: C29 C79 R59 U59

doi:10.1080/14759390400200174