

# ONLINE EDUCATIONAL FORUMS

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## **Introduction**

Our research question is ‘What are the effects of using educational online forums on student?’. We criticized the other researchers’ papers that are related to research question. The information which were founded in them will develop our research paper. We discussed what author’s research orientation is. We want to make a survey on Bilgi University students to search this question. Our thesis is that Computer Science students use online education forums much more and more effectively in comparison with the other departments because of being closer to computer and technology. After searching other papers about our research question, we harmonized these literatures with the result of survey to support our thesis.

## **Background**

Our first source’s title is ‘Transparency in Cooperative Online Education’. This source’s research question is what the potential of social networking is within cooperative online education. The authors support their thesis in terms of individual, collaborative, or cooperative, and online education technology. This research paper mentioned about some subjects such as online education, social networking, transparency, e-learning, cooperative learning, and learning community. We want to search what effects social networks have on e-learning. The reason for this is that we learned what online education is, how students cooperate each other and what develop this cooperation with students. This research harmonizes our topic because both of them are about social networks. In addition, this article has materials which are relevant to our topic and includes enough information. The authors supported their thesis with several real studies which happened over ten years. Because of these given reasons it is a strong source. The authors’ orientation is critical and interpretive and their source framework is developmental because they explain their own thoughts compared to the people who are working on this topic. The

basic components of the study design is a population. For instance, NKI's(Nathan Kline Institute for psychiatric research) 9,628 users had indicated their visibility and learning partner preferences by the end of January 2009. (Paulsen and Dalsgaard 2009)

Our second source's title is 'Social networking sites: Transparency in online education'. This source depends on utilizing social networking within university students. Students share information and resources that are originally developed for themselves, but made available to others: for instance bookmarks, references, links, and notes. This source's topic is related to our research topic and we benefit from them. The paper discusses the question is What are the pedagogical potentials of social networking sites? This research paper mentioned about some subjects such as Social networking sites, transparency, pedagogy, personal tools,and social networks. This article compares between social networking and educational discussion forum about sharing information. This comparing is excessive information for us. We could not see relation between social networking and discussion forums. But we realized that the author determined the discussion forums which are also in groups of social networking. For example, in Facebook there are group ' DrScheme Lovers '. The member of this group can discuss any topic about DrScheme in this group. This article contributed to developing our research project and assignments. Like that,the author separated the people in groups such as people working together collaboratively, and people engaged in similar or related activities. Actually we focus on advantages of online educational forums but with the help of this article, we realize that there are many disadvantages about this such that students do not meet face-to-face. There is an objective basis to the reasoning because the author mention about advantages and disadvantage of this. (Dalsgaard 2008)

Our third source's title is 'Technology and Education Online Discussion Forums: It's in the Response'. This source is related to technology and educational in online forums. This article contains the roles of instructor,administrator and student. Actually we do not interested in instructor and administrator roles, but in the article there is an explanation of them. This article is more useful for us than others because it gives students' thoughts of online forums. The author wrote his article as subjectivist. Because he searched an

exactly field which is students in Arizona. At this point the author approached from students' perspectives. The article contains the ideas of people who are important for instance McDonald and Gibson. They thought that the instructor should support to the students beginning of the course in online forums, thereby creating a safe learning environment of acceptance and trust. (Markel 2001)

## **Methods, Result & Discussion**

Our thesis is proved by the survey on students of Istanbul Bilgi University. Questions are prepared for this survey as the result of the studies. This survey contains questions such that do Bilgi students use forums, which type of the forums do the students use, what problems do they use the forum for, how effective are these forums at solving their problems and why the students prefer online education forums instead of the library. We tried to make this questions multiple choices because the student can want to answer in this manner. This survey is made on 70 students and those students have been study on the some departments which are computer science(CS), financial mathematics(FM), business informatics(BE), mathematics,law and international relations. When we made this survey, we focus on students of computer science department. The reason for this is that, we think that the computer science department is related with technology more than other departments.

Seventy percent of our survey's participations is computer science students. More than ninety percent of the computer science students use the online education forums. The reason for this is that, we guess that those students are always in front of the computer and study with computer.

According to the usage of forums; 27 of computer science students use online courses, 15 of them use Youtube Edu and the others use discussion forums. In addition to these forums students also use Google Scholar, MIT and Wikipedia. When we examine the survey, the percentage of using the online educational forums increase in terms of the years. For instance; although 75 % of the first year students do not use these forums, all

of the third year students use online education forums.

In our survey, type of computer-technology of forums is divided into 4 groups. These are forums where basic computer concepts are explained, operating system's forums (Ubuntu forum and Apple discussion), software of preparation document(Open office, Microsoft office and Latex), and programming language forums.

When we compare the first option of computer technology parts with other options in the computer science department, it shows that the first option is used less than others. The reason of this, computer science students know computer concepts well. Every students who want to study in the computer science department or study in this , have to know to download a file. The reasons for this is that it is a basic information about computer science.

CS's students use these forums to learn unknown subjects and access knowledge easily. In addition they think that these forums are effective for the computer science students at solving their problems. Because they sometimes can not find what information they want. The reason of this is being a lot of information on forums.

There are different reasons of preferring online education forums instead of library such as accessing easily and bigger coverage. Moreover, some students think that there are more practically information than the library sources and they prefer to have practice instead of theoretical information. Some of them think that they have to read the whole book or the most parts of the book to search any topics in library. However, if they use online education forums, they do not waste time for finding information. Because they can access what ever they want as writing just one keyword.

The second group is financial mathematics in survey. When we criticize which years of students use whether using forums, the result of this is that third and fourth year of students use these forums much more. For example, none of students use online education forums until the second year, but after the third year financial mathematics students began to use these forums.

When we ask the which type of forums you are using, we see that fifty percent of

financial mathematics students use online course's forums and nobody use youtube education in comparison with computer science. This department's students have same curriculum with computer science at first year, 33% of students use programming language forums. Furthermore, none of students use operating system's forums. We can deduct that financial mathematics do not use ubuntu or mac operating systems. 97% of FM students think that these forums are effective at their problems' solution.

All the students of third group students whose departments are business informatics use discussion forums of online courses. BI students take some of same lessons with CS students. Thus, they also use software of preparation documents such as LaTeX and programming language forums. The % 50 of BI students say that Online educational forums are rarely effective. The reason for this is that studying alone and learning lessons from forums and websites are difficult to combine their previous knowledge. Although the % 25 of this department students think that forums provide sharing information and cooperation between each other, these students think that the online educational forums do not provide face to face communication.

When we survey on other departments students, we realized interesting result that visual education on online forums is more effective than reading from books. These departments benefit from online educational forums as the most important opportunity like computer science students.

## Conclusion

The last ten years are called technology years. Thus the internet is used on approximately every area. One of the users' vast majority is university students. The students use internet for their thesis, homeworks, and projects. In addition the internet is huge area to search for students. Thus the students should decide from where they research on the internet. The online educational forums are being used for searching by many students. This research paper is about percentage of using forums, which type of forums and for which problems are being used forums, and how effective on solving problems. Firstly

we found the different researches about this subject and evaluated and criticized these studies. And then we supported our thesis with survey which is done on Bilgi University students.

# Reference-List

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