

ICT in education: Khazar University faculty and students' perspective

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Introduction

The objective of the survey is to collect information concerning computer literacy and internet access and to examine the faculty and students' perceptions of the integration of e-learning activities in teaching and learning at Khazar University.

Data collection

A total of 389 (28% of total enrolled) undergraduate and graduate students and 105 (68%) of faculty members completed the survey. The respondents were categorized by academic class: first year (101), second (81), third (110), fourth (82), and graduate students (15).

Table 1: Distribution of student respondents by year of study

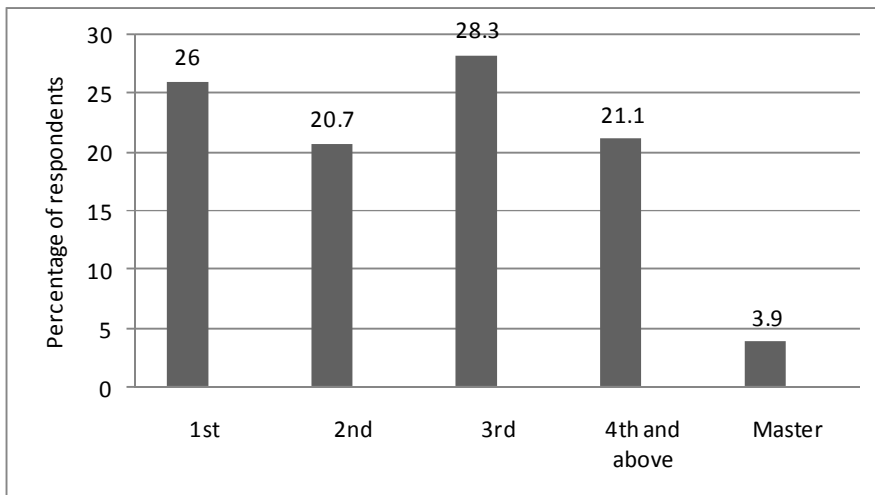
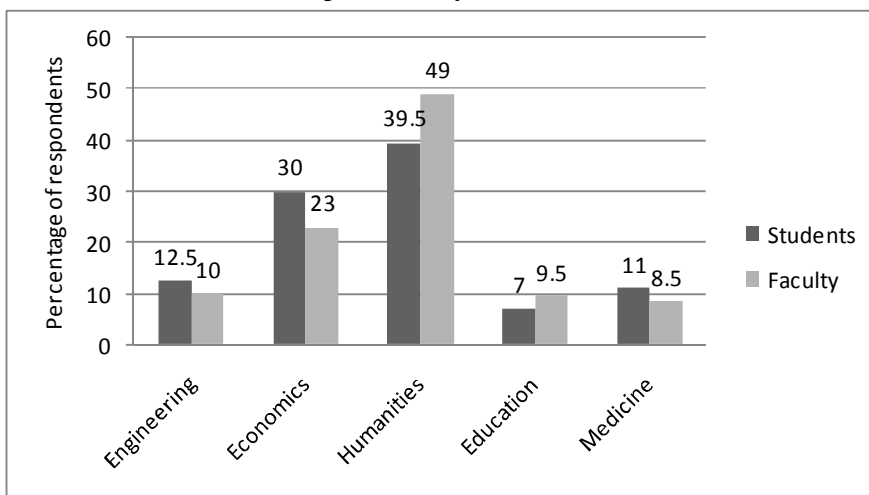


Table 2: Distribution of respondents by school



Findings:

The students and faculty are certainly wired with technology. Among the respondents, 93% of students and 93.3% of faculty own a computer.

Internet access

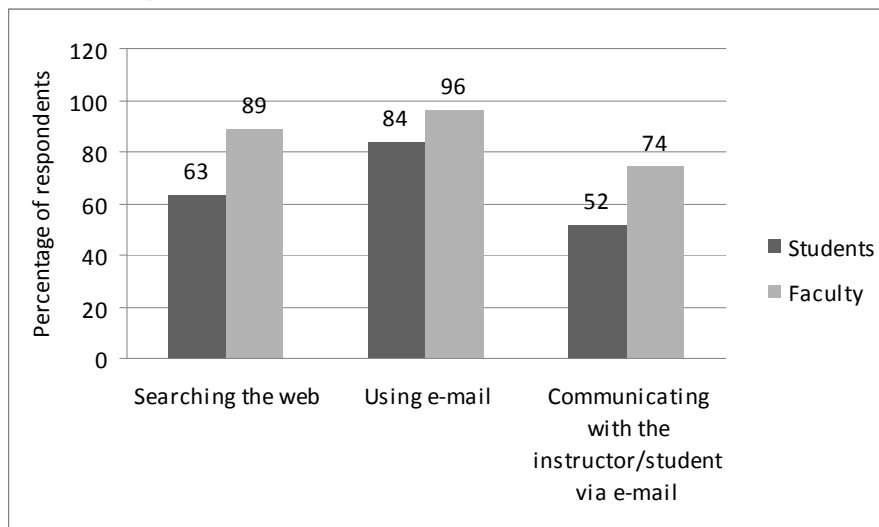
The great majority of faculty (87%) and students (80 %) also have home internet access; 9.5% of students connect to the internet from internet clubs. Only 1.5% of students and 10% of faculty use the university's internet access service.

Most students (73%) and faculty (83%) use the internet at least once a day. Only 4 % of the total respondents said they had never used the internet.

Students' and faculty's engagement in ICT-based activities

The survey results indicated that both faculty and students are familiar with e-mail and the use of the internet for searching the web. The results are presented in table 3:

Table 3: Proportion of students and faculty using web technology



While the use of word processors is common (47%), students use other programs less (Excel – 29% and Power Point Presentation - 38%).

Recreationally, 51 % of student respondents download and listen to music, and 50.6% use social networks such as Facebook. One fifth of the respondents use the computer to play games.

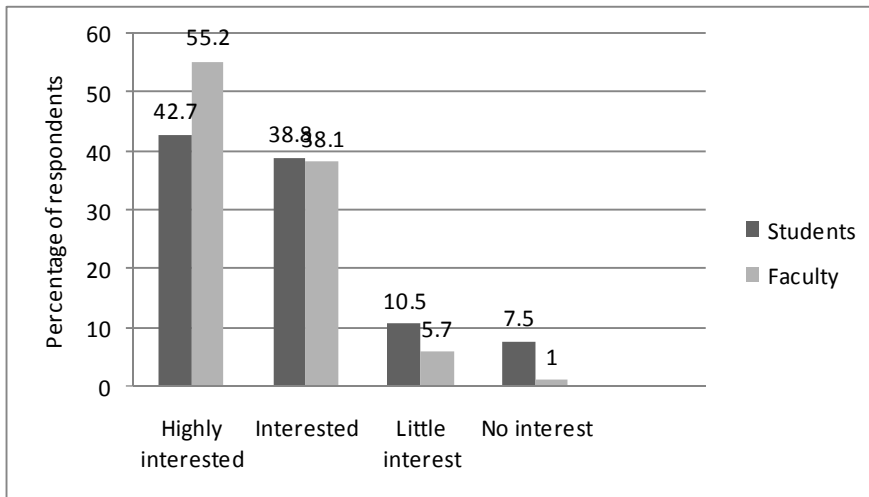
The numbers decrease for typical uses in academic settings: 49.1% report using Wikipedia, 34.4% reading books, newspapers or magazines online; 8.5 % searching databases (EBSCO, JSTOR, etc).

In contrast, online learning and teaching tools are more commonly used for research activities among faculty, including reading books, newspapers or magazines online (71 %), using Wikipedia (69%), and searching EBSCO, JSTOR and other databases (22 %).

Attitudes towards e-learning

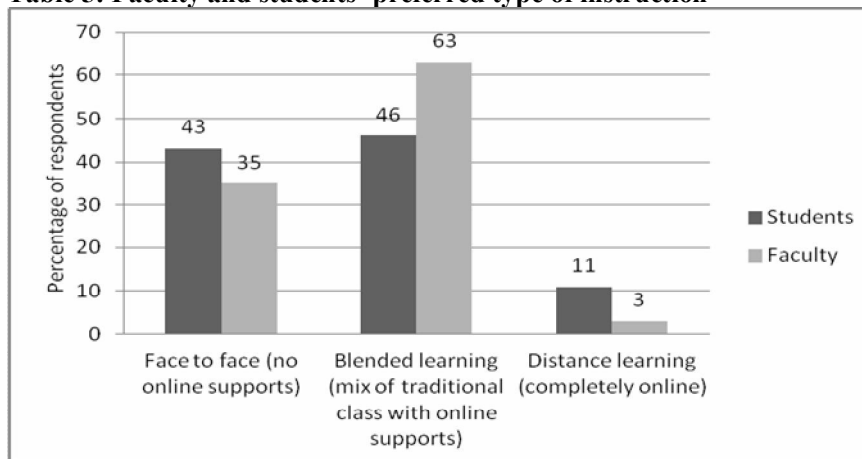
The results reveal that both students and faculty are positively disposed towards trying to use e-learning. However, students appear more conservative than faculty.

Table 4: Level of interest in integration of educational technologies in teaching and learning



The faculty and students were also asked to determine their preference in instructional methods. The results are given in table 5.

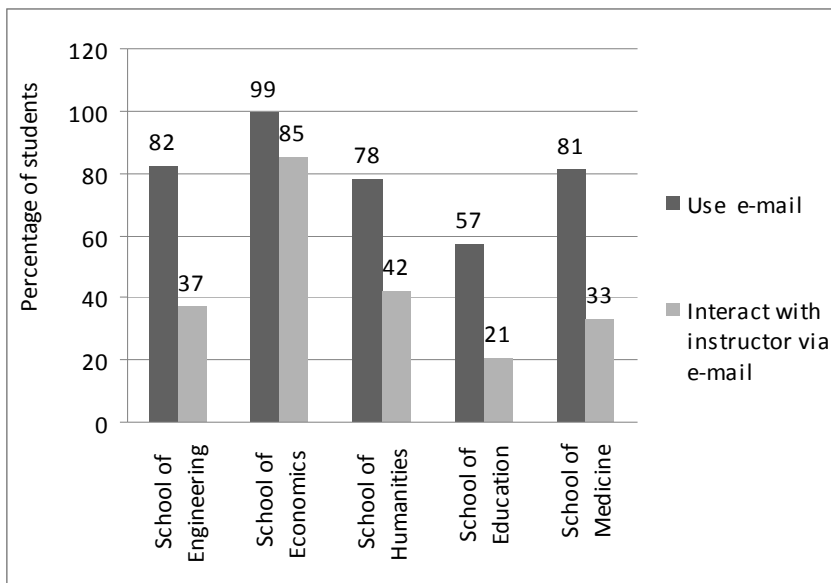
Table 5: Faculty and students' preferred type of instruction



Statistics by school:

The survey shows that there are differences in perceptions of computer literacy and e-learning activities among the students and faculty of different schools.

Table 6: E-mail communication



Less than half of the respondents, with the exception of the students from the School of Economics and Management, use e-mail to communicate with their instructors.

Students majoring in engineering, economics and medicine exhibited higher preferences for the usage of e-learning activities in comparison to the students of the Schools of Humanities and Education.

Table 7: Level of interest in using computer and web technology in teaching and learning by school

Schools	Highly interested, %		Interested, %		Little interest, %		No interest, %	
	Faculty	Students	Faculty	Students	Faculty	Students	Faculty	Students
Engineering	55	49	27	31	9	10	9	10
Economics	83	50	17	42	0	3,5	0	4,5
Humanities	45	36	53	42	2	12	0	10
Education	30	29	40	32	30	25	0	14
Medical	67	50	22	36	11	14	0	0

The students and faculty members of School of Economics and Management were found to be the most highly interested in integration of ICT into teaching and learning, and only 4.5% of students expressed no interest in e-learning.

An explanation for this is that school of Economics and Management has emphasized integration and use of technology in the academic setting since its foundation.

In contrast, 25% of students and 30% of faculty of the School of Education expressed little interest and 14% of students reported that they are not interested in integrating ICT into academics.

Conclusion

The results show that the great majority of all respondents have access to computers, the internet and e-mail accounts. In other words, the basic foundation exists for the use of ICT in education.

In addition to computer infrastructure and skills, attitudes towards integrating e-learning into teaching and learning were also investigated. The findings indicate that the respondents, in general, have a positive attitude towards e-learning activities.

The survey clearly shows the initial potential for further integration of a variety of ICT tools into the teaching and learning process to enhance the environment for learning, to deliver the most effective method for a quality education, and to meet the needs of Khazar University students.