Learning in different contexts:
Indonesian students' Internet use in Australian universities

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Introduction

- Higher education has the largest number of international student enrolments in Australia which has been increasing every year (AEI, 2009).
- 7,968 Indonesian students were enrolled in Australian higher education institutions (AEI, 2008).

Characteristics*	🇦🇺	🇮🇩
Population (2008)	> 20 million	> 237 million
Total area (km²)	7,686,850	1,919,440
Internet users (2007)	15,504,532	20,000,000
Internet subscribers (2007)	6.43 million	2 million
Internet Service Providers (2006)	689	298
Internet penetration (2007)	72.9%	8.5%

*(Central Intelligence Agency, 2008; Internet World Stats, 2007; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007;Indonesian Association of Internet Service Providers, 2007).

Different practises of Information and Communication Technology in the educational sector influence different learning environments, teaching and learning processes and student-lecturer communication.

Different learning styles in Higher Education (Knowles, 1990)	Australia	Indonesia
	Proactive way of learning Students have intellectual curiosity, obtain other resources, think critically, concern with the reliability and validity of the content, learn from their mistakes and develop skills in self-regulation and self-direction.	*Reactive way of learning* Students respect the authority of teacher, listen and learn the material, retain information, take notes and predict examination questions.

- As new technologies appear in educational settings, there is always an interest in discovering their significance to pedagogical and learning activities (Barron, 2004).
- **The rapid development of technologies has impact on teaching-learning processes.**

Research Questions

- How do Indonesian students use the Internet for academic purposes in Australia?
- What are their online activities?
- To what extent has Internet usage contributed to their learning activities?
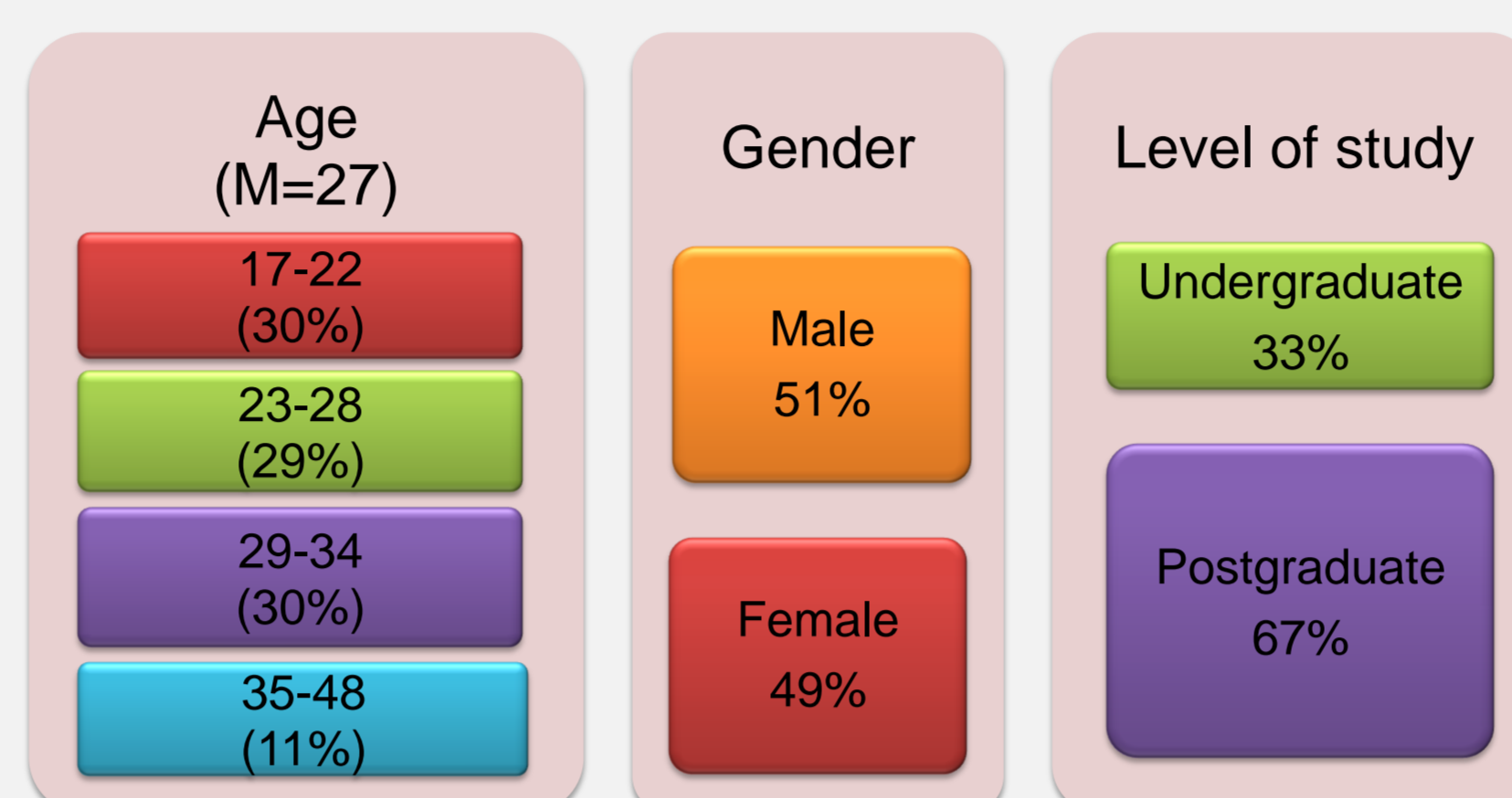
Methodology

Measures

- Students' new media ownerships, main Internet access, Internet usage and expenditure, previous experience, recent online activities, confidence in using the Internet, examination preparations were measured using questionnaire adapted from the UK Children Go Online and Young People and New Media in UK (Livingstone & Bober, 2004; Livingstone & Bovill, 1999).
  - Online activities: e.g. send and read e-mails; look for information in relation to study; use Internet news groups, chat rooms, instant messaging, bulletin boards; find information on careers and further education; participate in educational courses or online lessons.

- Mixed method (Survey, n=94; In-depth interviews, n=10).
- Data collection: June-August 2007.

Participants

- 94 Indonesian students at Victorian-based universities.
- 61.7% of participants had home Internet access in Indonesia before coming to Australia, however, rarely used for pedagogical or learning experiences.

Age (M=27)
- 17-22 (30%)
- 23-28 (29%)
- 29-34 (30%)
- 35-48 (11%)

Gender
- Male 51%
- Female 49%

Level of study
- Undergraduate 33%
- Postgraduate 67%

Analyses

- Chi-square test for independence.
- Independent-samples t-test.

Findings

Percentage of Users by Time of Usage and Purposes

| Time spent	A weekday		A weekend day	
	Academic	Non-academic	Academic	Non-academic
<1 hour	10.6	30.9	38.3	25.5
1-3 hours	33.0	31.9	30.9	23.4
3-5 hours	38.3	21.3	20.2	30.9
>5 hours	18.1	16.0	10.6	20.2

Data are percentage of the participants (N=94).
A weekday is any day of the week from Monday to Friday.
A weekend day is either Saturday or Sunday.

- The convenience of the location and good quality of connection influenced the students to use the Internet for a range of activities, which were not possible in their previous learning environment .

Users Visiting Different Web sites within Two Weeks
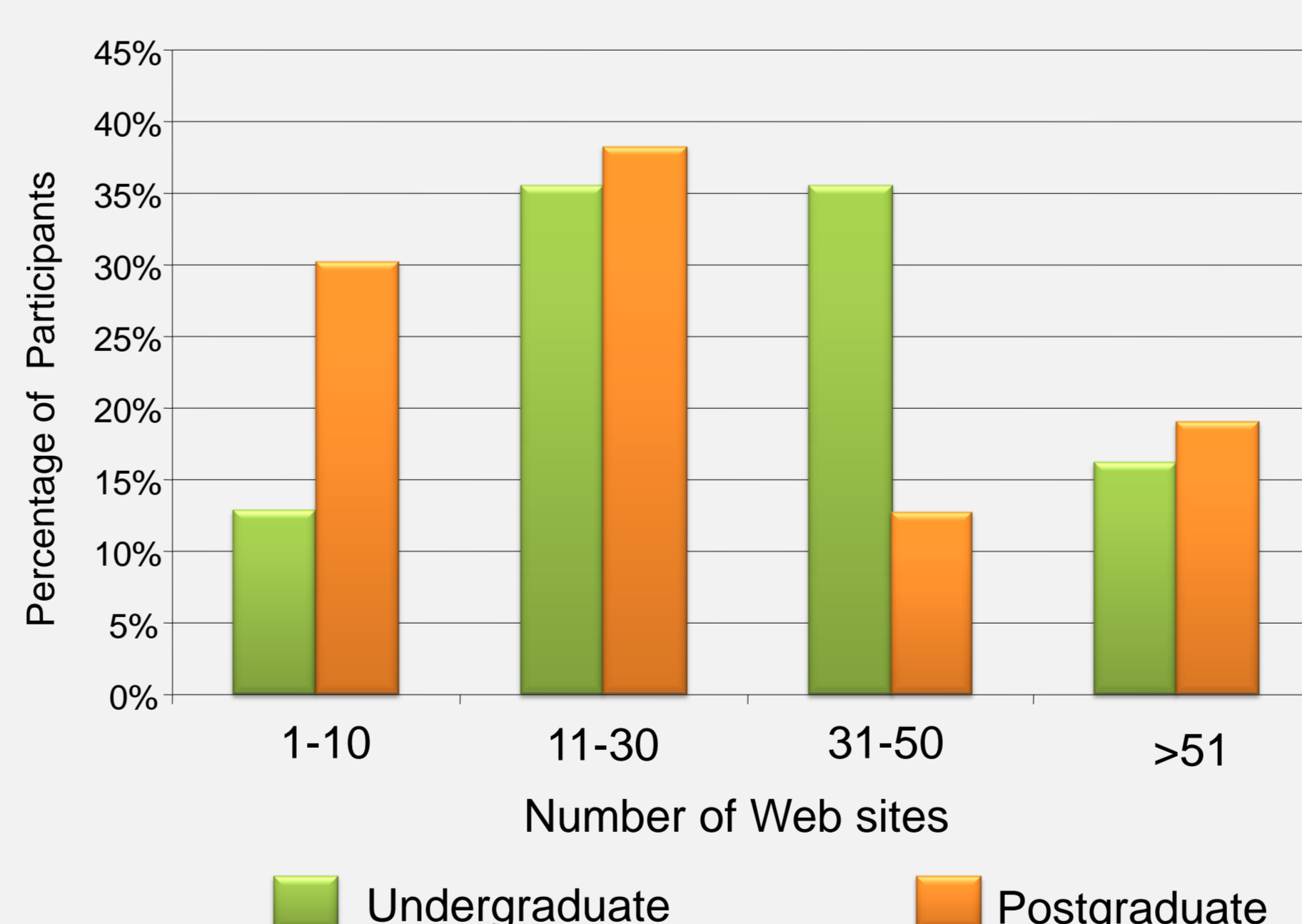
Most Useful Study Resources by Level of Study
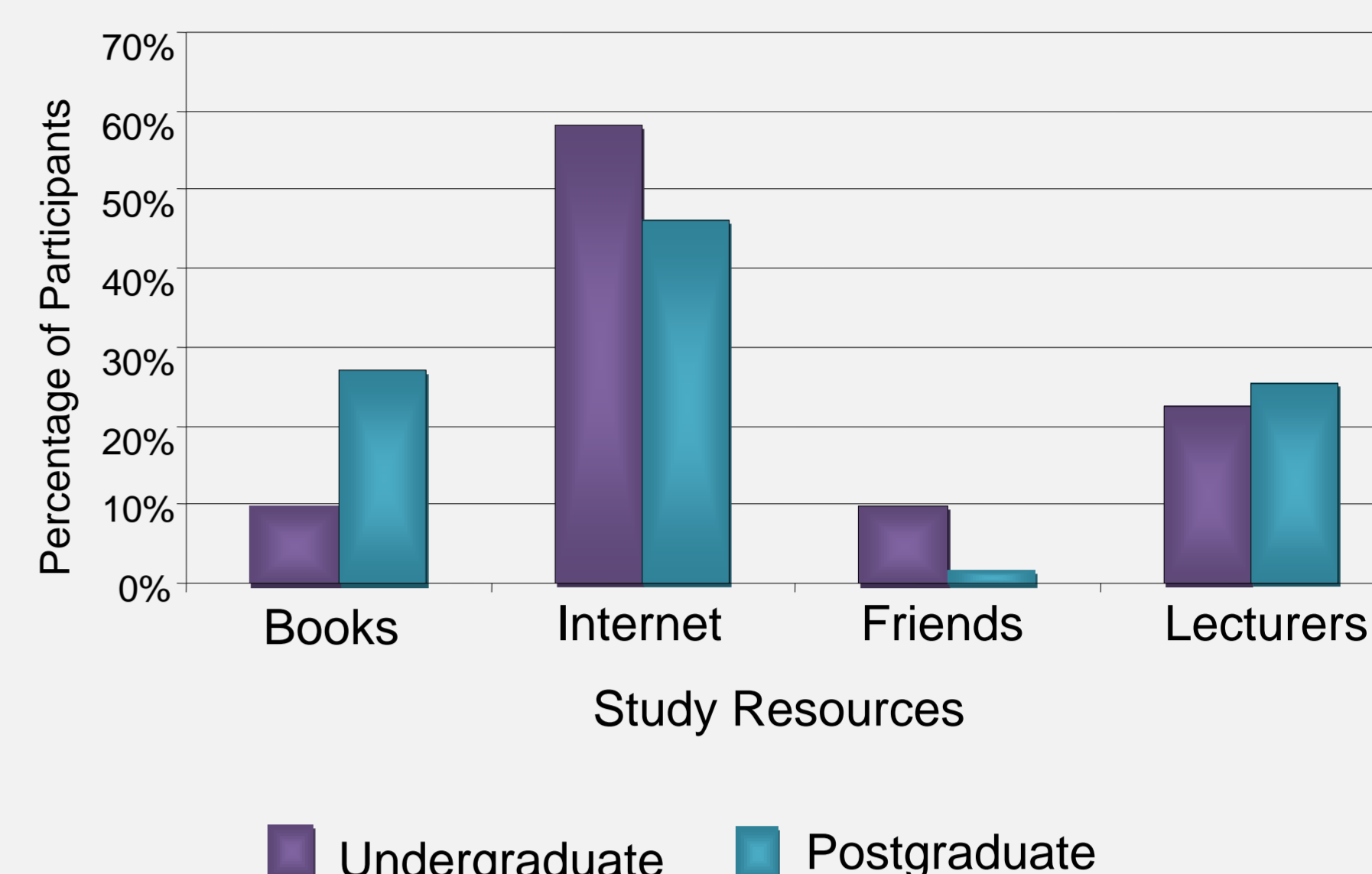
- Most popular activity was *to send or read e-mails*.
- The majority (40.4%) used e-mail more than 40 times in the two week period of the survey, but they rarely sent e-mails to lecturers or tutors for various reasons, e.g. no questions to ask, preferred asking friends, no previous reply from lecturer.
- Joining friendship-based mailing list was preferred than online discussion forum organised by lecturer. The mailing lists were formed based on the students' club, organisation, interest, hobby, religion, and living area.

Percentage of Users Visiting Certain Web sites within Two Weeks

Website Category	0-5 times	6-20 times	21-40 times	> 40 times
Own university	4.3	27.7	35.1	33.0
Other university	86.2	8.5	4.3	1.1
Library	12.8	30.9	27.7	28.7
Search engine	1.1	28.7	30.9	39.4
Exam preparation	62.8	23.4	7.4	6.4

Data are percentage of the participants (N=94).

- Significant association between level of study and library Web site visits [χ^2 (3, N=94) = 10.289, p = .016].
- Most postgraduate participants (38.1%) searched library Web sites more than 40 times during the two weeks, while most of the undergraduates (38.7%) visited the sites only 6-20 times within the same period.
- Web sites related to e-mail and search engines were the most popular among the non-academic categories, while university and library Web sites were the students' most used academic Web sites.

Summary of Findings

- The findings support Rice's claim (2001) that university students tend to be more literate, creative and socially skilled because of their early familiarity with the Internet.
- The students experienced learning with technology as an active and incremental process during their study.
- Student practices are influenced by their experiences, needs and motivations both in the past in Indonesia and at the time of their study in Australia.

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Monash Education Research Community

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