Remote Peer Tutoring Web App for UTAS-Shinas: A Study to Promote Student Learning

[1]Fatma Alajmi, [2]Noor Alhuda Albalushi, [3]Israa Alshidi, [4]Nahj Alshamsi

[1, 2,3,4] University of Technology & Applied Sciences – Shinas, Oman

[1]66j2049@shct.edu.om, [2]66S1958@shct.edu.om, [3]66S1911@shct.edu.om, [4]66S195@shct.edu.om

Abstract:

Peer tutoring is not a new concept. This is a learning strategy where students who are academically performing well help other students who are lagging behind in their class. The student who teach other students is referred to as a tutor and the student who is being taught or assisted is called the tutee. Peer tutoring is encouraged in most higher educational institutions because it benefits both the tutor and the tutee. In UTAS-Shinas, every semester a lot of students are on probation. For instance, in one of the departments, IT Department, the average percentage of students who are on probation in the previous academic year is about 23%. One of the interventions of the department in dealing with students who are on probation is peer tutorial which is usually facilitated by student clubs. But face-to-face mode for peer tutorial is not maximized sometimes because of issues with timing and venue. The tutor and tutee cannot find a common time to meet in the campus or there is no available venue conducive for tutoring because most of the classrooms or laboratory rooms are used for classes.

Remote Peer Tutoring Web App for UTAS-Shinas: A Study to Promote Student Learning is a project that was conceptualized to provide an intervention through the aid of technology to promote student learning and to take advantage of the benefits of peer tutoring in an online environment. This application has the following target users: admin, student, and tutor. It will become a platform where students who are excelling academically and are willing to help can reach out to their co-students who are struggling or academically at risk in their courses.

The web application will be built by the researchers in line with these objectives:

- Allow students to connect with tutors and vice versa at their most convenient time.
- Provide an alternative space for effective learning and sharing of knowledge between students and tutors without face-to-face engagement especially when most of the possible venues are not available.
- Provide a common posting area for tutorial sessions organized by the different departments/center to reach more students.

The researchers will adopt an appropriate software development life cycle in the development of the proposed project to ensure its usefulness for its intended users.

The application will not replace the face-to-face peer tutorial but rather extend or complement the existing set-up to intensify the benefits that students would get from this learning strategy. The implementation of this application will run along with the face-to-face tutorials.

Keywords: peer tutoring, web application