EXAMINING UNDERGRADUATE SPORT MANAGEMENT STUDENTS' ATTITUDE AND INTENTION TO USE E-LEARNING

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Synopsis:
Today, universities have aggressively pursued successful strategies, including the delivery, effectiveness, and acceptance of the courses (Saadé, 2003), and e-learning developers and deliverers in the field of sport management are no exception. Understanding how students perceive and react to elements of e-learning is important to better implement e-learning system (Koohang & Durante, 2003). However, little attention has been paid to the issue of measuring the impact of e-learning on students in undergraduate sport management programs. Therefore, this study examined the influences of students' perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use on their attitude toward using e-learning, the effect of attitude on their intention to use e-learning, and the moderating effect of e-learning self-efficacy on the influences in the context of sport management programs.

Abstract:
PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship of intention to use e-learning with perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, attitude, and e-learning self-efficacy among undergraduate sport management students. Based on the technology acceptance model (TAM), this study investigated the moderating influence of e-learning self-efficacy on the relationships between perceived ease of use and attitude and between perceived usefulness and attitude.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND
With the rapid increasing popularity of e-learning in higher education, universities have aggressively pursued successful strategies, including the delivery, effectiveness, and acceptance of the courses (Saadé, 2003), and e-learning developers and deliverers in the field of sport management are no exception. According to TAM (Davis, 1989), there are two factors: perceived

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usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PE). External variables affect intention and actual use through mediated effects on PU and PE. Thus, students may have a favorable attitude toward using e-learning and use it frequently and intensely when they perceive e-learning as one that is easy to use and nearly free of mental effort and that is helpful to their learning. Park (2009) also noted that e-learning self-efficacy (SE) plays an important role in influencing attitude towards e-learning and behavioral intention to use e-learning. Understanding how students perceive and react to elements of e-learning along with how to most effectively apply an e-learning approach is important to better implement e-learning system (Koohang & Durante, 2003). However, little attention has been paid to the issue of measuring the impact of e-learning on students in undergraduate sport management programs. Therefore, adopting TAM, this study examined the influences of PU and PE on attitude, the effect of attitude on behavioral intention, and the moderating effect of SE on the influences in the context of sport management programs.

METHOD
The sample was composed of 182 undergraduate students (82.2% male; 44.4% Hispanic; mean age = 22.9 years) who were majoring in sport management at a large southeastern university in the United States. Participants completed a 10-minute paper-based survey. The survey questionnaire consisted of two parts. Part I was designed to measure five sub-sections: perceived usefulness (4 items), perceived ease of use (4 items), attitude (3 items), behavioral intention (3 items), and e-learning self-efficacy (2 items). All items except e-learning self-efficacy were adapted from the three studies: Lee, Cheung, & Chen, (2005), Ndubisi (2006), and Malhotra & Galletta (1999). E-learning self-efficacy was measured using 2 items developed by Park (2009). All responses ranged from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (7), using a 7-point Likert-type scale. Part II contained demographic items such as sex, age, ethnicity, school year, marital status, the number of e-learning courses previously taken, the number of e-learning courses currently being taken, and the availability of computer with high speed internet at home.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION
Reliability measurements were found to be above an acceptable level (.70) as Cronbach's alpha values ranged from .81 to .93. A multiple regression analysis was performed to evaluate how well PU and PE predicted attitude. The regression equation with PU (β = .79) and PE (β = .16) was significant, R^2 = .82, adjusted R^2 = .81, $F(2, 178)$ = 392.22, $p < .001$. The simple regression showed that attitude was strongly related to behavioral intention (β = .76) as well. A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was then conducted to examine the moderating effect of SE on the relationships. Predictor and moderator variables were entered first in the regression analysis where a criterion variable was attitude, and then two interaction terms were added in the second model. Results revealed significant interaction effects of PU × SE and PE × SE. The first model including PU, PE, and SE was significant (R^2 = .82, $F(3, 177)$ = 275.12, $p < .001$). The second model with interactions was significant ($F(5, 175)$ = 182.79, $p < .001$) with a significant R-squared change (R^2 = .02). Therefore, the second model with main effects of PU (β = .73), PE (β = .17), and interactions of PU × SE (β = .20) and PE × SE (β = .20) was considered acceptable. A simple slope analysis

was conducted to understand the direction of each interaction effect at 'lower' and 'higher' levels of SE variable. Results indicated that PU and PE are positively associated with attitude, and attitude had a positive impact on behavioral intention. Furthermore, the influences of PU and PE on attitude increased with high levels of SE. This indicates that higher self-efficacy results in a more active learning process. These findings have important implications for e-learning developers and deliverers in the field of sport management, which covers a range of practical areas with efforts to help students develop comprehensive sport management skills and talents.

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