



# Does the Homework Format Really Matter?

*The Impact of Online Homework Assignments  
and Learning Style Fit on Accounting Students'  
Learning Engagement and Academic  
Achievement*

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# Central Research Question

Is there a significant difference in learning engagement and academic achievement between students using online homework and students submitting written homework?



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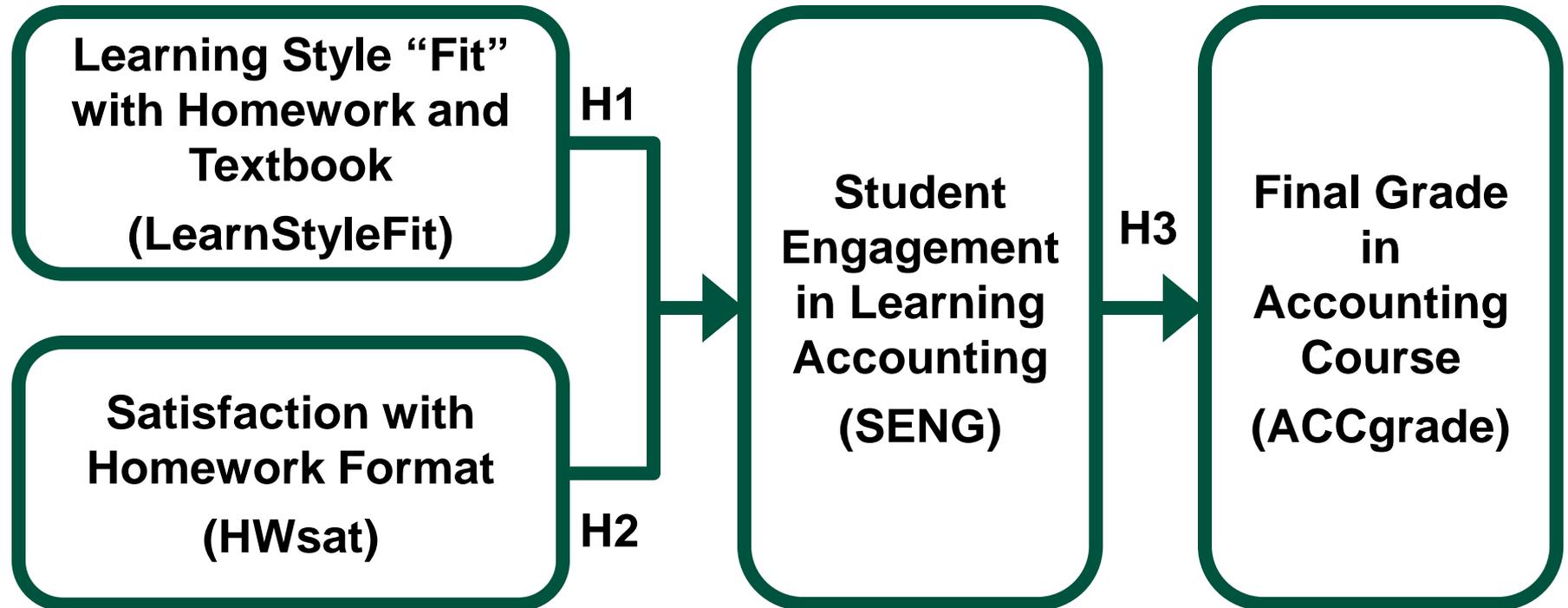


# Key Variables

- “Fit” of learning style to homework format
- Student satisfaction with homework format
- Student engagement in learning the course subject while completing homework
- Final grade in course



# Research Model





# Study Participants

- 353 undergraduate business students enrolled in 13 different accounting course sections (6 different instructors)
  - Three instructors required online homework.
  - Three instructors required written homework.
  - Three semesters over two calendar years





# Study Participants, cont.

- Weekly homework assignments:
  - 238 students used an online homework platform.
  - 115 students submitted written assignments.
- All students had the choice of using an e-textbook or a traditional printed textbook.





# Survey

- The survey collected information in three categories:
  - Ease of use and perceived effectiveness of the homework format (HWsat);
  - Student-reported level of learning engagement when completing homework (SENG);
  - Preferred learning style (LearnStyleFit).





# Analysis: OLS

- Split sample
- Tests for multicollinearity
- Controls: Gender, age, overall GPA





# H1 Findings: Fit of Learning Style

Two variables supported ONLY within the online homework group:

- Fit of Learning Style
- GPA



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# H2 Findings: Satisfaction with Homework Format

Not supported.



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# H3 Findings:

## Engagement and Final Grade in Course

- Overall GPA has greatest influence on course grade for both groups.
- H3 supported **ONLY** within the online homework group.





# Summary of Findings

1. Personal learning style “fit” with the online homework platform most influenced the students’ sense of engagement, even more than their satisfaction with the web-based technology.
  - A specific learning style is not as important as whether students *perceive* their preferred style of learning is compatible with the online homework platform.
  - We can influence student perceptions.





# Summary of Findings

2. Online homework seems to have a special appeal for students with lower GPA.





# Summary of Findings

3. There is a positive relationship between learning engagement and final course grade for students in the online homework group.
4. Online homework platforms are enhancing the student's experience in accounting courses, as evidenced by the connection found here between learning style fit and engagement.





# Future Research

What is the most effective use of online homework platforms for teaching, learning, and engagement?

➤ Warranted in order to understand how instructors can help students “master the skills and knowledge they need to function in a hypermediated environment”<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Jenkins, H., Clinton, K., Purushotma, R., Robison, A. J., & Weigel, M. (2006, October 19). Confronting the challenges of participatory culture: Media education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century [white paper].



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