

## GROUP DYNAMICS IN A VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT

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### ABSTRACT

Any group task set in a tertiary institution brings with it specific challenges. However, when the groups are working in a virtual environment, with a large majority of the work done in an online mode, the challenges are even greater. This situation, however, creates a unique opportunity for the lecturer to observe the group interactions and group dynamics first hand. This paper explores students' reactions to an online learning environment, and in particular it explores the group dynamics of groups studying an undergraduate course at Saurashtra University, Rajkot. In this paper, the five-step model proposed by Salmon (2000) relating to computer-mediated communication is integrated with the Tuckman (2001) model of group development. One group in particular was studied in depth, taking into consideration the nature of the group's interactions during the course of the entire term. Key learning outcomes pertaining to online group dynamics are highlighted taking into account the model of teaching and learning online advanced by Salmon (2000).