Student Learning Behaviours in Informal Learning Spaces

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Introduction

The Taylor Family Digital Library is a campus centre where students come to complete assignments, study, learn and relax. A previous study highlighted the diversity of learning activities and concluded that students intentionally chose to conduct their learning in specific spaces in the library.

Research question

What is the relationship between students' choice of informal learning space and their learning?

Study design

The study of student perceptions of TFDL learning spaces involved semi-structured interviews with 21 participants (M=10), 19 UG, 10 STEM, 11 AHSS. Questions included:
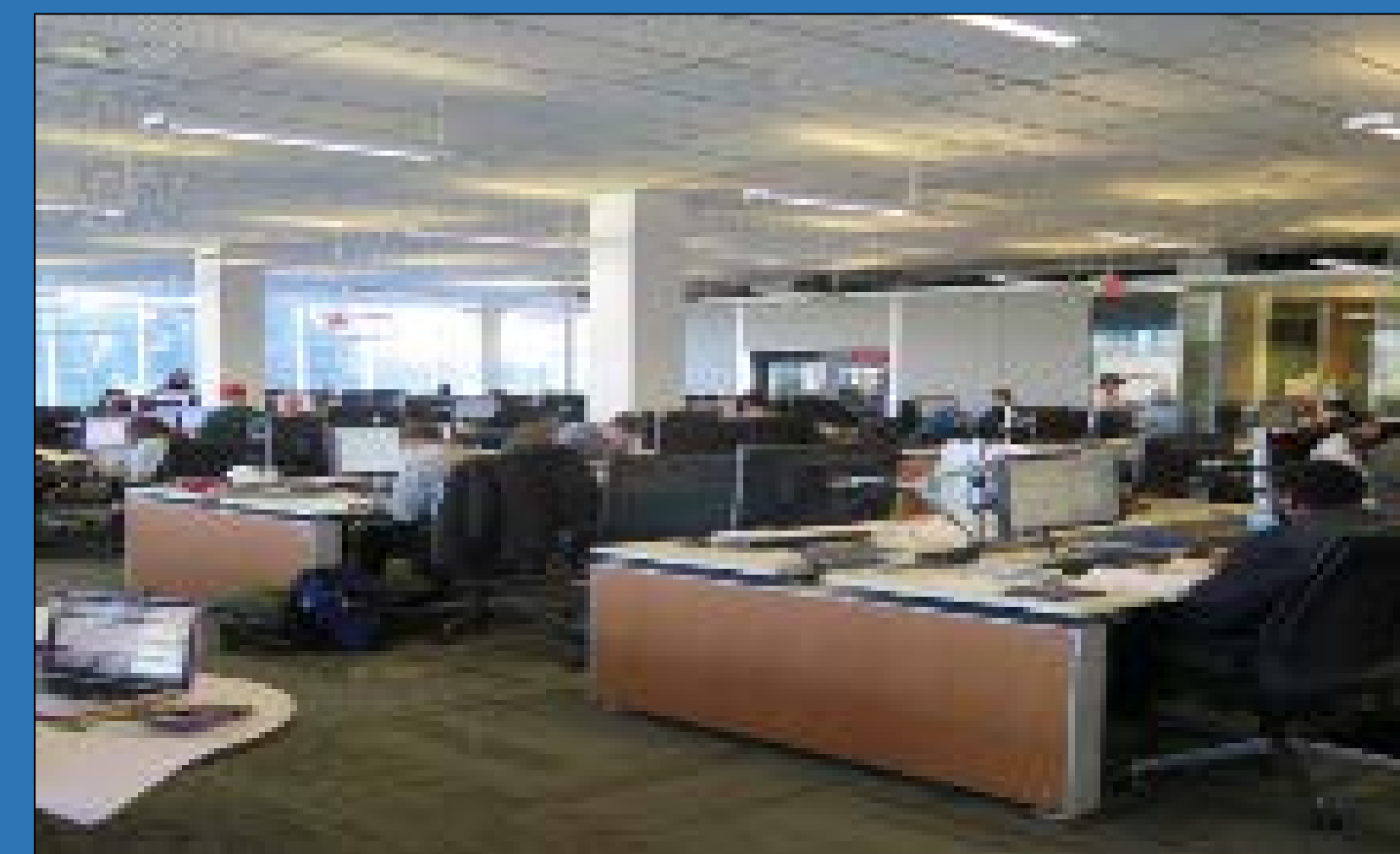
- Students learning styles
- Learning activities in the library
- Locations in which they studied
- Space preferences based on 15 photos of TFDL spaces

Interviews were analyzed via open and axial coding using NVivo software. Preliminary results highlight student views on spaces in the TFDL

Learning spaces

A number of factors influencing students' choice of learning space were identified by students using a series of photos of representational spaces. Spaces were chosen to illustrate design features: lighting, traffic, activity, view, openness
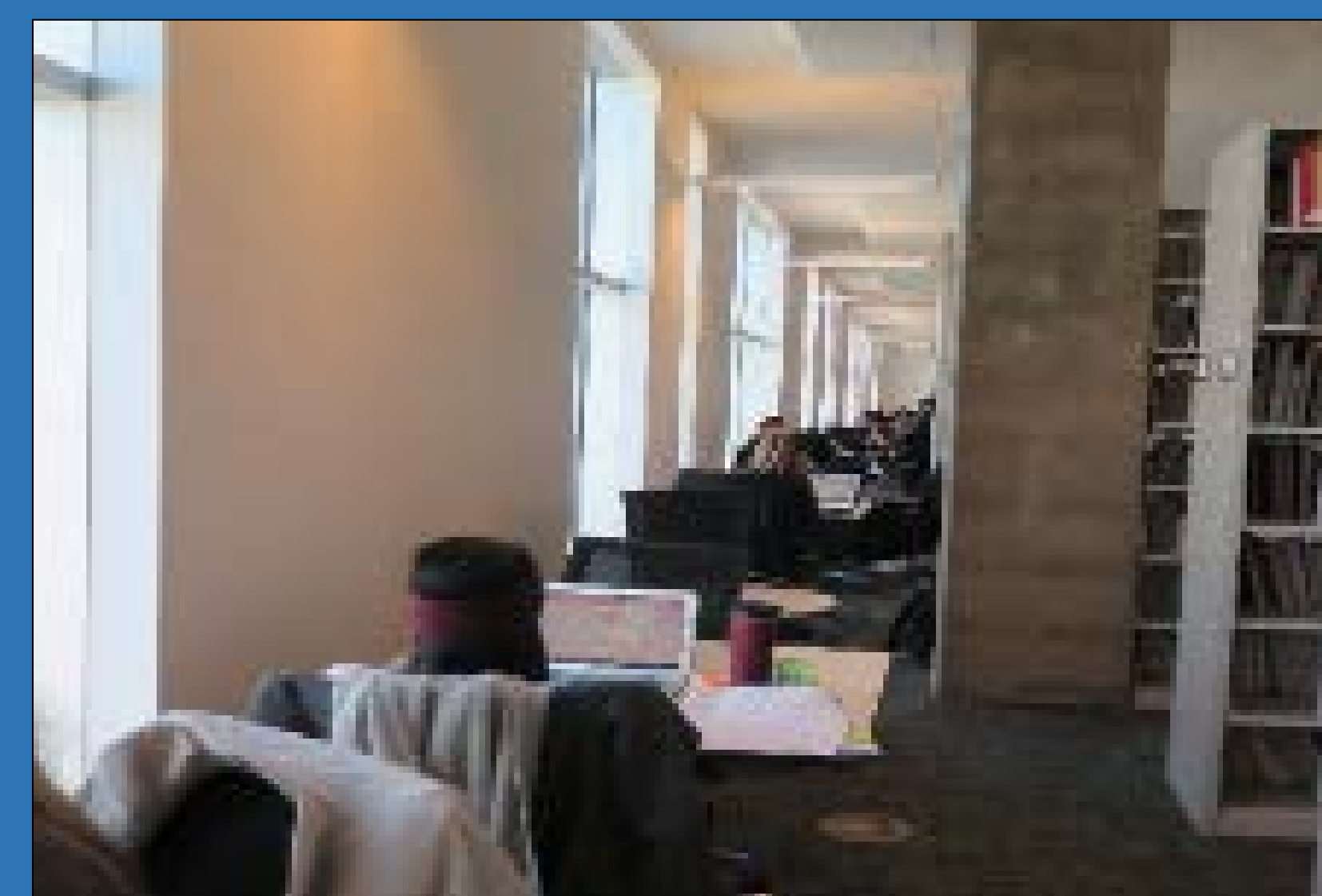
"The only time I find myself using this is if I need to do some fast printing"

"When you have a few people it is relaxing but when you have a lot it's not"

"You see everyone around you... you feel a sense of community"

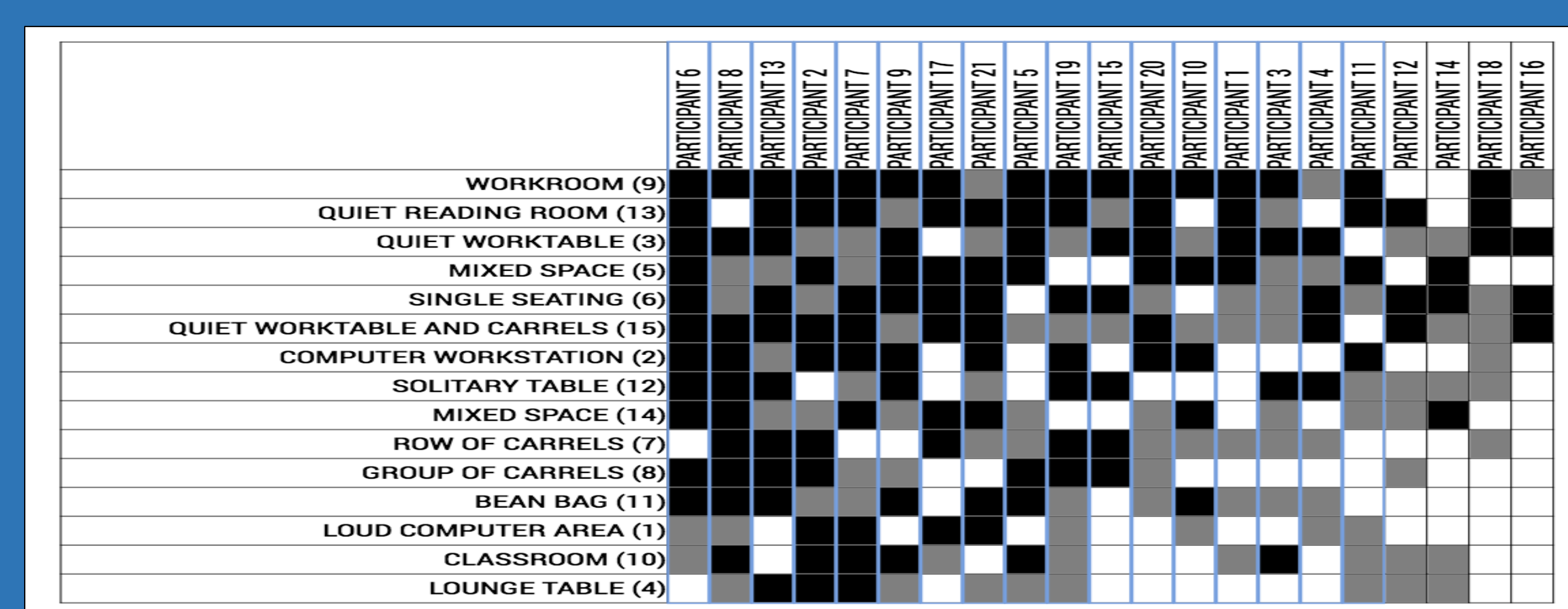"You might have people in front of you that's a little bit distracting"

"there's a certain type of privacy,...we're together"

"I'd be too busy trying to figure out what the people ahead of me are doing"

Self-regulated learning and environmental regulation

- Students plan to learn
- They recognize spaces that help them learn
- They regulate their surroundings in order to create a learning mood
- Environmental regulation assists in motivation and achievement of learning goals

Purposeful design for learning

Bertifier to determine patterns

Positive
Neutral
Negative

Next: examine relationship between learners and learning spaces