Learning approach and achievement

Unexpected insights from a project asking the question:
“Is more always better?”

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Aim – evaluate the impact of extra live-recorded lectures on learning skills and wellbeing in 1st and 2nd year BVSc students

Methodology – mixed methods

Focus Groups

- 6 focus groups (4 with 1st years and 2 with 2nd years) using themes from SSIs to build questions

Interviews

- Semi-structured one-to-one interviews with 4 volunteer students

Questionnaire

- Cohort-wide questionnaires using themes from focus groups to write Likert-type and free text questions

Results

- Students accurately identify as poor, average and good learners, when compared to their achievement.
- Students undertaking > 10 hours of self-study achieve higher results than those undertaking < 10 hours (P=0.005)
- 83% of students agree that workload is a cause of stress.
- Lower achieving students are more likely to consider their workload excessive (P=0.001)
- Lower achieving students are more likely to acknowledge experiencing increased feelings of depression and anxiety since beginning university (P=0.01)
- Lower achieving students are more likely to perceive pressure from staff (P=0.000) and peers (P=0.004) to work long hours.
- Lower achieving students are more likely to view lots of resources as a source of pressure (P=0.029)
- 80% of students do not think that recorded lectures reduce their workload.
- Lower achieving students are more likely to limit their study to use of recorded lectures (P=0.019) and to consider that all the information they need to know is in the recorded lecture (P=0.02).
- 25% of students ignore a learning outcome if it is not covered in the recorded lecture!

Emergent FG themes

- Active learning
- Intelligent use
- Safety net
- Supporting need

Conclusions

RLs are a valuable resource to support students with varying learning preferences, and are viewed by most as an essential safety net for times of need. Many students use RLs efficiently, intelligently and actively alongside diverse learning methods. This does not hold true for struggling students, however, and teachers must consider ways to guide students’ use of resources to ensure workload is managed and crucial independent learning skills are developed.

Data analysis

Numerical data

- Correlations identified using Spearman’s rho.
- ANOVA performed to identify significant differences between groups

Transcription and free text data

- Framework analysis

If a high perceived workload reduces achievement¹, and surface learning reduces achievement², what is the effect of providing “back-up” live-recorded lectures on struggling students?

References