

Designing Optimal Learning Experiences in Higher Education through Learners' Self-Assessment

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Abstract

There are increasing needs to innovate pedagogy in higher education. Many educational programs have been implemented and assessed in various fields, however, there is still a lack of pedagogical research to design optimal learning experiences. Thus, this study proposes a method to design learning experiences based on learners' self-assessments. This research integrates related theories regarding learning objectives, including inspiring, illuminating, interacting, incubating, and reflecting. In our pilot study, we implemented 159 educational practices based on a combination of five types of pedagogical methods regarding ten topics to learn. In the last session of the program, five voluntary participants evaluated their learning experiences in each learning practice based on criteria relevant to its designated learning objectives. Learning experiences for each individual task and group activity were assessed by learners in two dimensions of enjoyability and meaningfulness to evaluate the optimal learning experience. Eleven out of 21 individual tasks (52%) and 8 out of 12 group activities (67%) were evaluated as both highly enjoyable and meaningful by the learners. This study lacked sufficient empirical data to validate its conclusion. However, it gives us insight to conduct further analysis on which types of educational content influence the creation of significant learning experiences to fulfill the goal of education.

Keywords: optimal learning experience; pedagogical methods; learning objectives; self-assessments; higher education