

When Less is More: Microlearning to Encourage Interest and Understanding in Higher Education

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Abstract

A decline in students' interest in reviewing course bibliographic material outside the classroom has been observed. To address this and promote self-directed learning, students were provided with microlearning resources, short materials designed to cover topics in small sections. This quasi-experimental exploratory study, used a mixed-methods approach to understand students' experiences with these resources. The sample included 140 undergraduate students from the Monterrey campus of Tecnológico de Monterrey enrolled in EC1020 Microeconomic Incentives and Macro Outcomes, during the February–June 2025, August–December 2025, and February–June 2026 semesters. Data were collected through a voluntary, anonymous survey at the end of each semester. Results showed that students perceived the microlearning resources to positively contribute to their understanding of the topics. Many expressed a desire for more of these resources across additional topics. Open-ended responses highlighted that the resources facilitated the comprehension of the topics, as well as a way for students to assess their level of understanding of each topic. They also appreciated the diversity of resources provided. Interestingly, while the term "microlearning" was not explicitly stated to students, their comments alluded to this concept. These findings suggest that microlearning can be a practical and engaging strategy to support independent study and improve learning outcomes in higher education. Further research is recommended to explore its broader applications.

Keywords: Learning Resources; Mixed-method Study; Self-directed Learning; Self-study; Student Engagement