Can student engagement be enhanced using an immersion room for simulated learning?

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Abstract

Background: Higher education institutions are increasingly prioritising the enhancement of student engagement, recognising its significant impact on student outcomes (Tinto, 2023). Student surveys based on engagement models are commonly utilised to gather performance feedback. This research paper investigates the potential of new technologies, such as immersion rooms for simulated learning, to elevate student engagement. As evidenced by Scott et al (2018) a more inclusive learning environment can be created by integrating active learning methods and introducing relevant learning scenarios using available resources.

Method: The research was conducted using an action research methodology (McNiff, 2017). This was manifestly designed to develop an interactive learning session for second-year BSc Diagnostic Radiography students. The session involved an immersion room experience and other group-based active learning activities. The students were asked to provide feedback through a mixed quantitative and qualitative post-hoc questionnaire, of a total cohort of 60 students, 29 48% responded.

Results: Quantitative and qualitative outcomes were positive. Quantitatively, the questionnaire revealed that all of the students actively enjoyed the experience, with 93% enjoying working in smaller groups. In the immersion room, 96% of students reported feeling comfortable asking questions, while only 52% of students asked questions in sessions with their whole year group present. The qualitative results expressed positive reactions to the visual learning aspects of the immersion room. One student described the immersion room as "a unique way to learn and stay engaged with the help of modern technology.". Motivating students beyond the assessment and achieving skills for employability is an important element of Radiography education. 97% of students found the experience gained from the immersion room would be useful in clinical practice.

Conclusions: The findings from this research will be used to incorporate new, simulated learning, and active learning techniques into Undergraduate modules to create a captivating inclusive learning experience for students.

References

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