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Does Course Format Matter When Learning About Diversity? Exploring Student Evaluations in Online Versus Hybrid Classroom Structures

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Background

- HDFS 280: Family Diversity underwent a course transformation from a fully online asynchronous course to a hybrid course where students met in person one day per week
- Students feel that face-to-face interactions provide more authentic and meaningful discussion (Kemp & Grieve, 2014; Wang & Woo, 2007)
- Students report feeling more disconnected from their professor and their peers in online courses (Otter et al., 2013)
- Central Florida reports that “Blended classes generate the highest student evaluations of any learning mode” (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2010)

Results of t-test Comparing Student Perceptions for Online vs. Flipped

	Online <i>M (SD)</i>	Flipped <i>M (SD)</i>	F	η^2
Learning climate	4.89 (1.16)	5.50 (1.39)❖	1.54	.03
Autonomy	4.09 (.67)	4.47 (.97)	1.23	.02
Competence	3.61 (.89)	4.18 (.96)	2.72	.05
Relatedness	3.87 (.64)	4.63 (.85)	6.31*	.11
Motivation	9.85 (7.24)	10.47 (11.50)†	.02	.00
Relevance	5.40 (1.04)	5.73 (1.07)	.69	.01
Learning gains	3.99 (.82)	4.36 (.67)	5.55*	.02

Note. ❖N = 48; †N = 45; * $p < .05$

Quantitative Findings

Student Perceptions (Table shown at left)

- Results suggest a large difference in perceptions of relatedness based on course format, with students perceiving greater feelings of connectedness in hybrid classes
- Mean values were higher for all other variables in the hybrid compared to online
- Mean scores reveal that students perceived they learned more in the hybrid course; the magnitude of this difference was moderate

Student Performance (Table not pictured)

- Results indicate that hybrid courses were associated with increases in hot topic presentation scores, with a small effect, and final points, with a moderate effect

Procedure & Methods

Participants & Procedures

- The sample consisted of 190 students (78.4% female) enrolled in the Family Diversity course during the Spring 2014, Summer 2014, Fall 2014, and Spring 2015 semesters
- The students ranged in age from 19 to 37 ($M = 21.76$, $SD = 2.41$) and the majority of students were White (65.8%)
- Of these students: 52% completed the course evaluations and 35% participated in the survey

Measures

- Student Performance assessed by final points percentage, average quiz percentage, and average hot topic presentation percentage
- Student Perceptions Online Survey comprised of four scales sent at the end of the semester
- Course Evaluations were completed both at mid-term and at the end of the semester

Qualitative Coding

- To provide more depth to these findings, we conducted a qualitative content analysis of student comments provided on the course evaluations
- Our research question is: how do the perceptions of the class differ between students in the hybrid course compared to students in the online course?
- To answer this question, we use subgroup sampling design which allows us to compare students in the hybrid course to students in the online course
- All three research team members coded student evaluation comments, and reliability was determined based on percentage agreement
- Qualitative findings are still in preliminary stages

Qualitative Findings

