

An Evaluative Survey of Learner Satisfaction in Higher Education: Improving the Blended Learning Experience through Learner Feedback

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Abstract

In the era of digital transformation and knowledge-driven society, the integration of information technology with pedagogical approaches is crucial for educational reform. This study investigates the impact of blended learning on the learning experience of students majoring in preschool education using the Students' Evaluations of Educational Quality (SEEQ) questionnaire and interviews. The findings reveal varying degrees of satisfaction across different aspects of the course, with high satisfaction in teacher attitudes, course organization, and perceived learning value, and lower satisfaction in course difficulty and workload. This study suggests that blended learning can effectively enhance the learning experience for preschool education students, with areas for improvement identified. Recommendations include adopting diverse teaching methods, strengthening support for blended learning, and providing training resources. This research contributes to understanding the impact of blended learning on learning experiences and provides insights for optimizing instructional strategies and improving educational quality.

Keywords

Blended Learning; Learning Experience; Preschool Education; SEEQ Questionnaire.

1. Introduction

In the knowledge-driven, digitally transformed society, the integration of information technology has emerged as a critical imperative for educational reform, driving profound changes in human learning and educational paradigms. As an essential element in the pursuit of excellence in higher education, the seamless fusion of information technology with pedagogical approaches can catalyze innovation in teaching processes and enhance instructional quality. This synergistic strategy is strategically vital for the enhancement and innovation of higher education systems.

The objective and scientific assessment of teaching effectiveness is indispensable for improving instructional quality and driving continuous innovation and optimization within higher education. Within the framework of contemporary educational philosophies, the evaluation of instructional impact is increasingly embracing a diversity of perspectives, with a significant focus on student-centered evaluative methods. The substantial influence of students in upholding educational standards and cultivating learning environments stems from their active participation in internal quality assurance mechanisms, as highlighted by Asli and Gokturk[1]. Moreover, Student Evaluations of Teaching (SET) have gained recognition as a universal metric, extensively incorporated into global higher education frameworks, as evidenced by Zabaleta [2].

Student assessment serves as a valuable metric for evaluating teaching effectiveness, based on the application of objective and precise methodologies. The effectiveness of self-report instruments in assessing educators' performance hinges on their clear explanation and the application of reliable measurement criteria. Despite their widespread use, many institutions' internal surveys lack robust psychometric validation, reliability, and validity, which are crucial for providing comprehensive and empirically sound assessments of instructional activities.

In this study, we utilize the Students' Evaluations of Educational Quality (SEEQ), initially developed by Marsh [3-5]. The SEEQ is among the most extensively validated instruments for student feedback, noted for its strong factor structure, commendable reliability, and established validity. This tool has been successfully employed to yield valid and consistent metrics across diverse higher education contexts, including Greece, Turkey, Australia, and China [6-11]. Notably, the pioneering work by Marsh et al. [9] offers an evaluation of the SEEQ's Chinese translation applicability, serving as a foundation for our current research.

2. Organization of the Text Methods

2.1. Participants

The present study employs a cohort of 264 undergraduate students, all specializing in preschool education, who are enrolled in a blended learning program at a private institution in China. Participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous, adhering to stringent ethical guidelines. This investigation hypothesizes that a comprehensive examination of various dimensions of instructional quality could provide valuable insights into the efficacy of hybrid teaching methodologies.

2.2. Instruments

Table 1. The eight scales of the SEEQ which were used, with sample items

Scale name	Typical item	Area
1. Learning/Value	You have learned something which you consider valuable.	Learned something valuable
2. Instructor Enthusiasm	Tutor was enthusiastic about teaching the course.	Enthusiastic about teaching
3. Organization	Teacher explanations were clear .	Tutor explanations
4. Group Interaction	Students were invited to share their ideas and knowledge.	Students shared ideas
5. Individual Rapport	Tutor had a genuine interest in individual students.	Interested in students
6. Breadth of Coverage	Tutor contrasted the implications of various theories.	Contrasted implications
7. Assignments/Reading	The reading and homework of this course are helpful for understanding and improving the course theme.	The Value of assignments/reading
8. Workload/Difficulty	The difficulty of this course is higher than other courses.	Difficulty (easy-hard)

The study utilizes the Student Educational Quality Evaluation Questionnaire (SEEQ) as the primary quantitative instrument, supplemented by interview guides for qualitative data collection. The SEEQ comprises 35 items across nine domains: Learning/Values (5 items), Instructor Enthusiasm (5 items), Organization (4 items), Group Interaction (4 items), Individual Rapport (4 items), Breadth of Coverage (4 items), Tests/Grading (3 items), Assignments/Reading (2 items), and Workload/ Difficulty (4 items). Table 1 illustrates that the modified SEEQ retained eight original scales, excluding the Tests/Grading scale associated with

extracurricular elements. Participants rated each item on a five-point ordinal scale ranging from 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good), with higher scores indicating more favorable ratings.

2.3. Procedure

Prior to the commencement of the study, the SEEQ instrument underwent translation into Chinese by the researcher. This translation was then re-translated into English by bilingual experts proficient in the subject area. Discrepancies between the original and back-translated versions were rectified through refinement of the Chinese translation. The accuracy of the translation was pilot-tested among a subset of students to evaluate its face validity. Open-ended questions from the survey were employed as qualitative interview data, with participants providing narrative feedback on their experiences, which was integrated into the final analysis. This mixed-methods approach aimed to augment the interpretability and analytical depth of the evaluation results.

2.4. Data Analysis

The SEEQ questionnaire data were collected through the Wenjuanxing platform, followed by a descriptive statistical analysis conducted using SPSS 23 (IBM, Armonk, NY, USA). For the interview data, audio recordings were made, transcribed into text, and subjected to detailed analysis, with a focus on the encoding of meanings and their condensation.

3. Results

3.1. SEEQ

3.1.1. Scores of All Items

The average scores for student feedback on the course ranged from 4.62 to 3.86, with the majority of scores clustered at the “agree” level. This indicates that, overall, the course was deemed satisfactory by students across the evaluated dimensions. The items receiving the highest ratings were A17 (teachers’ friendliness towards students), A10 (teachers’ meticulous preparation and detailed explanation of course content), and A18 (teachers’ willingness to answer questions during and after class). These top-rated items primarily reflect the teachers’ attitudes towards teaching and their interactions with students, suggesting educators who are passionate about their subjects, meticulously prepare their lessons, and maintain a positive engagement with their students.

In contrast, the items with the lowest ratings were A7 (teachers’ use of humor and engaging teaching style), A8 (the appeal of teachers’ teaching methods), and A3 (increased interest in the subject matter through the course). These lower-rated items predominantly highlight potential issues with the teachers’ instructional approaches, particularly concerning the lack of stimulation in student interest, which may limit the full expression of students’ initiative and consequently impact the effectiveness of the teachers’ instruction.

The standard deviations for most items were relatively small, indicating a general consensus among students regarding their evaluations of the teachers’ instructional quality. However, larger standard deviations were observed for items A7 (teachers’ use of humor) and A3 (increased subject interest), suggesting significant variability in student perceptions. This variability indicates that while some students found the course engaging, others did not, pointing to a disparity in how individual students perceive and respond to different teaching styles.

This analysis underscores the importance of a balanced teaching approach that not only effectively communicates content but also engages students through varied and participatory methods. It highlights the need for further exploration into how teaching techniques can be

tailored to better resonate with diverse student populations and maximize educational outcomes.

3.1.2. The Average Score of Each Factor and the Difference Test

An examination of the average scores for the eight evaluated factors reveals that the score for Individual Rapport is notably high, indicating a robust communication framework established by teachers with their students, which fosters strong teacher-student relationships. Concurrently, the commendable score in “Group Interaction” underscores the teachers’ proficiency in facilitating and guiding students towards meaningful group interactions throughout the instructional process.

Table 2. The eight scales of the SEEQ which were used, with sample items

Factor	Average	Standard deviation	Number
1. Learning/Value	4.000	0.834	214
2. Enthusiasm	4.130	0.833	214
3. Organization	4.353	0.697	214
4. Group Interaction	4.418	0.655	214
5. Individual Rapport	4.555	0.560	214
6. Breadth of Coverage	4.322	0.713	214
7. Assignments	4.325	0.706	214
8. Workload/Difficulty	3.250	0.597	214

However, certain aspects require attention. Specifically, the reduced scores in the “Workload/Difficulty” category suggest challenges in appropriately calibrating the pace of instruction or the complexity of learning materials. This discrepancy may reflect a disconnect between the teaching progression and students’ comprehension levels. Furthermore, the lower scores in “Learning/Value” indicate a potential shortfall in fully engaging students’ interest in the subject matter, potentially obscuring opportunities to cultivate a deep sense of value and appreciation for the curriculum.

These findings offer insights into the current state of curriculum and teaching development, highlighting areas of strength and those that necessitate enhancement.

3.2. Interviews

The study conducted a thorough qualitative analysis of the interview transcripts, revealing four core categories that influence the higher education experience: (1) Accessibility to Learning, (2) Student Expectations, (3) Appropriate Teaching Strategies, (4) Learning Assessment and Lifelong Learning, and (5) Improvement Suggestions. In the discussion on Learning Accessibility, it was found that the difficulty of the courses was influenced by various factors, including the complexity of the course content, the challenges of online learning tasks, and the lack of learning skill training. Through an in-depth analysis of the interview data, a further understanding was gained of students’ expectations for the transition from traditional teaching to online/blended learning, where they aspire to acquire Professional skills and apply this knowledge and skills in real-life situations. Regarding appropriate teaching strategies, the participants’ views on the performance of teachers’ individualized teaching strategies were analyzed, which aim to meet the diverse and personalized learning needs of students. Additionally, the data showed that learner-centered teaching methods and attractive course designs significantly impacted students’ engagement, participation, and motivation. In the collected suggestions for improvement, participants proposed a series of practical proposals: (1) providing students with clear academic goals and employment skills guidance; (2) designing practical activities based on productive and critical thinking skills; (3) highlighting the key and difficult points of the course content and linking them to students’ daily life

experiences; (4) reasonably adjusting the volume and difficulty of assignments; (5) enhancing classroom interactivity and increasing the interest and diversity of classes; (6) providing effective self-study and life planning guidance. These suggestions reflect students' earnest expectations for optimizing the learning environment and enhancing educational quality.

4. Conclusion

This study employed the SEEQ questionnaire and interview methods to investigate the impact of blended learning on the learning experience of students majoring in preschool education. The findings indicate that students exhibit varying degrees of satisfaction across different aspects of the course, such as teacher attitudes, course organization, and perceived learning value. Students demonstrate high satisfaction in areas such as teacher attitudes, course organization, and perceived learning value, while lower satisfaction is observed in aspects related to course difficulty and workload.

The results of this study suggest that blended learning can effectively enhance the learning experience for students majoring in preschool education, albeit with some areas needing improvement. To enhance the effectiveness of blended learning, it is recommended that educators adopt more diverse teaching methods, such as case studies, group discussions, and practical activities, to increase student engagement and interest in learning. Additionally, educational departments should strengthen support for blended learning and provide corresponding training resources to promote the widespread adoption and development of blended learning.

This study also has some limitations, such as a small sample size and a limited scope of research. Future studies could expand the sample size, investigate the effects of blended learning in other majors or courses, and further explore the long-term impact of blended learning on students' academic outcomes.

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