
FROM LEMONS TO LEMONADE: STUDENTS' RESILIENCE WHEN MANAGING CHALLENGE

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BACKGROUND

To succeed at university and be prepared for today's challenging workplace, students need to develop strong resilience. Students face a number of academic, social and life challenges throughout their studies (Brewer et al, 2019; Ainscough et al, 2018). The disruptions from COVID-19 in Semester 1 of 2020 have undoubtedly exacerbated these challenges, or presented entirely novel ones to manage. This study describes how students demonstrated resilience when responding to such challenges.

METHODS

Biomedical science students (n=200) in their 2nd year of study, were asked how they coped with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and what advice they would give themselves for dealing with novel challenges in future.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Almost half the students struggled with motivation and the loss of on-campus experiential learning (36%), with a third then advising how they would better manage study in future. Many students also emphasised the importance of balancing health with study (21%), whilst other indicators of resilience (adaptability, positive mindset, seeing the "Big Picture") were identified by 38% of students. While some students focused mainly on academic aspects, others had a broader perspective on managing challenges in the context of life and well-being. Students with the most rounded approach to challenges, might thus be those who have greatest resilience.

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