TIME MATTERS: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LECTURE DURATION, STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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KEYWORDS: online lectures, lecture duration, student engagement, academic performance

SUBTHEME: Empowering educators

AIM: Motivated by the trend of students frequently watching short-form videos on platforms like YouTube and TikTok, this study aims to explore the effects of varying lecture lengths, defined as Short-Form (SF) and Long-Form (LF), on student engagement and academic outcomes in higher education.

BACKGROUND/CONTEXT: Adapting educational strategies to meet the shifting preferences of students, who are increasingly influenced by brief social media content, is critical. Previous research by Junco, Heiberger, and Loken (2011) highlighted the influence of social media on student engagement and academic results. Furthermore, Barkley and Dawson (2018) discussed the relationship between attention spans and academic success, underscoring the need for educational practices to reflect students' digital consumption habits.

METHODS: Student engagement with SF and LF lectures was tracked using Panopto data. Lectures from several undergraduate biomedicine courses were categorised into SF (under 15 minutes) and LF (over 15 minutes) formats. Quantitative methods, including Pearson's correlations and t-tests, were employed to examine the connections between lecture length, student engagement (via a derived engagement score), and academic performance (final course grades).

EVIDENCE: Findings reveal that students, typically accustomed to viewing shorter videos on social media, engage more with SF lectures than LF lectures. There was greater uptake in students watching shorter compared to longer duration lectures ($p < .001$). We observe student engagement spikes with the introduction of each new topic/theme during semester, and note a non-significant association between student engagement and academic performance ($p = .08$, r = .58)

OUTCOMES: This study contributes to the discussion on modernising educational practices to align with students' evolving digital preferences. The insights gained can help educators design content that maximises student engagement and improves learning outcomes in higher education.

REFERENCES

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