Student perspectives on co-creation of learning resources and its benefits on learner development

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Overview

- Context
- Co-creation project
- Research objectives & Methods
- Findings

Quantitative findings
Qualitative findings
Student experience (Jolel Miah)
Context

Concept of co-creation

Student success in education is clearly linked to their engagement.

New found interest in the ideology that students act as partners or co-creators of their learning as evidenced in the emerging literature\(^1\).

On an ideological level, co-creation challenges traditional conceptions of learners as subordinate to the expert tutor/academic.

Calls for a commitment from students and teachers to a more shared responsibility for learning.

\(^1\)Bovill, Cook-Sather, Felten, 2011; Cook-Sather, 2010; Healey, Flint, & Harrington, 2014
Co-creation project

Co-creation project started in September 2014 with 25 participants (21 students and 4 academics) to develop 2 student co-created e-learning resources in Public Health for use both within and outside the University.

To support blended learning, student experience and employability.
Co-creation project - Stages

Two day workshop involving students and academics working together in groups to develop the initial content of the resource (using standardised tools such as storyboards)

Workshop provided a forum for critical debates leading to relevant, evidence-based and high quality content

4 Draft specifications for online resources on 2 topics developed
Co-creation project

Draft specifications peer reviewed by a group of academics and students using standardised forms and procedures to maintain quality assurance and revisions made.

Content was then developed as an online resource by a learning technologist.

Second peer review by students and academics.

Final peer review.

Preliminary evaluation by students.
Co-creation project - Output 1

http://sho.beds.ac.uk/USER-FILES/33-nupton-Nottingham/media/index.html

Publication as an open access resource for use within UoB and beyond
Research study

A small scale mixed methods study involving:

Online quantitative surveys among students who registered interest to participate in the project (n=18) and those who did not (n=26)

Questions on desirability, feasibility and the benefits of co-creation with agreement marked on five point scale

Qualitative semi-structured interviews conducted with 5 students who took part in the co-creation project

All students were from post graduate courses in the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences
## Demographic Details

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<th>Demographic Details</th>
<th>Total (Percentage)</th>
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Quantitative study: 44 students including 18 who participated in the co-creation project and 26 who did not take part.
Quantitative study findings

Desirability of co creation

• Nearly four out of five (79%) reported no previous experience of taking part in designing a learning resource with academic staff

• Nearly two thirds (63%) agreed or strongly agreed to have a basic understanding of what ‘co-creation of learning’ by students and teachers means

• More than three fourth (76%) shared the view that students are not only expected to feed back on their learning experience by giving comments and ideas

• Great majority (84%) found the idea of ‘co-creation of learning’ inspiring and were enthusiastic about getting involved in co-creation projects

• A great majority (89.4%) viewed the co creation of course curriculum jointly by students and teachers as worthwhile. Similar proportions reiterated that they will actively participate in developing the curriculum and learning resources for their course in the future if given the opportunity
Feasibility of co-creation

- Great majority (89.4%) were of the view that it is viable to involve students formally in shaping aspects of their course curriculum from setting the learning objectives to the means of assessment.

- More than two thirds (78.9%) thought they could effectively contribute to the curriculum and learning resources if given the opportunity.

- More than four out of five (84.2%) of respondents acknowledged that there are challenges involved in creating curriculum and learning resources jointly between teachers and students.
Benefits of co creation

• Great majority (94.7%) reported that co-creation of learning helps students and teachers understand what each other wants and expects from the learning experience.

• They also viewed (89.4%) co-created learning resources as an ideal way to improve overall student performance.

Although based on a sample, overall, the results indicate high levels of agreement among students on the desirability, feasibility and benefits of co-creation on learner development.
Qualitative study findings

**Meaning of co-creation** – viewed as a partnership between teachers and students in developing learning experiences

“I see it as a partnership where teachers and students come together to create something, for example, a resource that can be used by the students and by anyone generally, to learn more and gain more information about a particular subject matter”

“Personally to me, initially before the workshop, I had no idea of what co-creation was but now, bringing it to myself as a student, it's an opportunity for me to be involved in my own learning process, which is very good, so you don't feel like they're imposing knowledge on you”
Benefits of co creation: Range of benefits to learners, teachers, and to the body of knowledge including positive impact on learning experiences; transfer of knowledge; interpersonal skills; confidence in designing own learning

“It definitely will affect their learning experience because for each time that they convene to meet with the lecturers, there’s always knowledge sharing, there’s knowledge transfer, there’s knowledge taken in, so that is definitely [beneficial]…From the first day and the second day workshop, I didn’t bring the notebook, but I can tell you the things that I wrote, the things that I learned, the interpersonal skills and communication skills, so there’s definitely a learning experience transferred to the students when they have such experiences. So I really do think that it affect the learning experience of the students positively”

“There are benefits to the students, there are benefits to the lecturer, there are benefits to the body of knowledge! ..Like I said before, it’s a creation from two sides, the teachers actually learn from us, seeing how we study or how we learn and things like that. The benefit for me, it’s helped me get, if I use the word bolder or more comfortable in creating my learning experience…”

“Gets looked at from a student perspective”
**Lived experience – Anxieties before taking part**

“I was really anxious because for me it was the first time, secondly I didn’t really have a full grasp of what it was, so I was a bit scared thinking it was something probably only the senior academics that are able to do, I mean any tangible input, but being able to contribute as much as someone more experienced, was really amazing”

“I wasn’t worried about the students because I’m a student myself but I just thought if you’ve got lecturers on there, they might just dictate in a way and just push it towards their agenda but actually it took on students’ viewpoints which I found quite surprising….”

“Yes, I thought it was going to be a very uncomfortable atmosphere, sitting with an academic, it was going to be very awkward to be honest but it actually went really good”
“Definitely, I will. Everyone was friendly, everyone makes you feel very comfortable and everyone tells that your opinion is valid so in that atmosphere, I would be comfortable to say what I think or say whatever comes to my mind. It’s only when you're in a hostile environment or in an environment where you don’t feel comfortable, that you probably won’t be okay to share your ideas but that environment was just perfect, the room was very comfortable, the ambience was good, there was laughter, you know when people say a point, “Oh that’s very good”, everyone just encouraging each other so it just helps you bring more ideas out.”

“I would definitely encourage everyone, anyone that's eager to learn, that is not afraid to reach out and achieve something, to go ahead if you find any opportunity... the wealth of experience that was in the room, when everyone introduced themselves, this is a doctor, this is a nurse, this is a pharmacist, the wealth of experience in the room, it was very overwhelming. You can’t pay for such opportunity......”

“The experience I’ve had so far has been very good, maybe if it wasn’t good, I’d probably have something to say but it’s been pretty good. Maybe more emphasis would be on ensuring that we have an equal representation of both academics and students, so that it’s evenly spread out, if we could have that then that would be very interesting to see “
Challenges

“I think students are a bit worried because probably from experience, they get talked down and dismissed very quickly so I think the biggest problem with that is when someone gets dismissed, so do the ideas, so does the insight, so does the expertise, so does the knowledge from that student so I think that fear of like if a lecturer was to dismiss their ideas, brush them aside, not because of this course but because of previous experiences, by bringing it in... so it’s about motivating them and having that bond...... so I think that’s a big challenge, in terms of engagement, it’s almost susceptibility”

“Would the [academics] be bossy, would they intimidate the students? How comfortable would the students be around them? Because if you're not comfortable, you can’t bring out the best. Another thing is actually getting the message out to as much people as possible, to actually look at this as a viable project because a lot of people are very sceptical about, I think a lot of academics too might be a bit sceptical, “Do we really want students involved?”, so getting a lot of people on board might be a challenge“
Message to academics

“Embrace it. It’s like getting to know your child better. Once a baby just cries, if you don't know the child, you don't know why she’s crying, she might want to eat, she might want to sleep but when you actually get to know the child, it’s like that, get to know your students, get to know what they need to be better at what they do, it’s a beautiful opportunity.”

“My message for the academics, the only thing that can come to mind is for them to be open......be open to be ready to transfer knowledge to people because a lot of the students actually want to learn so much more...I feel that it also an opportunity for them to impact on the students”

“Every opportunity that academics have with the students, it must be an engaging one so that next time, they will be optimistic about coming in“
Summing up

The quantitative and qualitative findings indicate that students do value formal opportunities to act as active co creators of their learning

Strengthen the case for higher education institutions to actively promote explicit student participation in the development of curriculum and learning resources

Over to Jolel……….
About Me

• Employed in a variety of settings (research, practice & strategic)
• PhD psychology Student at University Bedfordshire
• Visiting lecturer at University of Bedfordshire
• Commissioner in Public Health LBC
• Health Advisor Public Health Hertfordshire County Council
• Health Psychologist in Training
• Mental Health first Aid instructor
• Publicity & Liaison Chair for Health Psychology in Public Health
What is it? - Co Creation

- A thinking and working learning platform
- Equality and of value
- Creating something together with colleagues across different disciplines
- Dual process
EXPECTATIONS BEFORE

• How was it going to work?
• Would it possible to work several others to get your own perspective down
• Fun and good to share learning for future content
• How will it be managed?
• What do I need to do?
THE ACTUAL EXPERIENCE

• It was good to share and input different perspectives
• Shaped my own learning by seeing others view from an expert
• Fun and enjoyable
• Assisted in my own development of learning
• Applied knowledge in practice
AFTER THE EXPERIENCE

• Positive learning impact
• A range of expertise informing the content
• All indicating the important bits that need to be addressed
• Will depend on how good facilitator is
• Practitioners to think about working environment and role whilst creating content
• Keep an open mind to this approach - It works with the right characteristics
THANK YOU!

COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS?

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“...The critical thinking goes up so they’ll have a bit of an argument and the students will challenge them a bit more. 3, you get students who might want to take the initiative and do something in their life but will always remember this and always refer back to the academics who helped them to achieve where they are going, so that kind of thing.”

“Definitely, I will. Everyone is friendly, everyone makes you feel very comfortable and everyone tells that your opinion is valid so in that atmosphere, I would be comfortable to say what I think or say whatever thing comes to my mind. It’s only when you're in a hostile environment or in an environment where you don’t feel comfortable, that you probably won’t be okay to share your ideas but that environment was just perfect, the room was very comfortable, the ambience was good, there was laughter, you know when people say a point, “Oh that’s very good”, everyone just encouraging each other so it just helps you bring more ideas out.”