

Improving students' learning strategies by means of a self-administered motivational interview (SAMI)

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ABSTRACT: Students' learning strategies may have a substantial effect upon the quality and quantity of learning in higher education (Entwistle, Tait, & McCune, 2000). A means of making students improve their learning strategies is to explore and resolve their ambivalence between advantages and disadvantages of continuing with their present learning strategies as opposed to advantages and disadvantages with improvement of their learning strategies. This presentation reports result of a Self-Administered Motivational Interview (SAMI) (Duffy & Rimmer, 2008) administered electronically by means of SurveyMonkey (2012) to 16 university students. The SAMI is designed in accordance with principles from motivational interviewing (Rollnick, & Miller, 1995), firstly by making students reflect upon the difference between how well they are doing with their studies at present and how well they could perform if they really tried their best. Next, learning strategies are introduced by making the students rate themselves regarding "deep" and "strategic" learning strategies. Furthermore, the students report advantages and disadvantages with continuation of their current learning strategies, and advantages and disadvantages with improving their learning strategies. Next, they are asked to note particular things they can do in order to improve their own learning strategies. Finally, the students indicate to what extent they think they will be able to perform these changes, and whether they think that participating engaging in the present SAMI procedure may help to improve their learning at university. Analysis of responses from the 16 participants show a great diversity of responses regarding to what extent they were concerned about their own performance, satisfaction with their own learning strategies, whether they thought they would be able to change strategies, and how they perceived participation in the SAMI as beneficial for their own learning. The students also produced a considerable amount of qualitative response data when they reported ambivalence and suggestions for actions they can take in order to improve their own learning. In accordance with previous research findings (Duffy, Houston & Rimmer, 2010) the SAMI is considered as a cost effective means of improving students' learning strategies which may contribute to transformed patterns of learning and behavior among students.

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