

Action Research: The Goal Setting Intervention Promotes Students' Academic Achievement of the Bachelors of Early Childhood Education Program During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract : The rationale for conducting this action research was to increase students' Academic Achievement (AA) contexts of studying/researching by employing the Goal Setting intervention (GS). The purposive sample consisted of 10 female undergraduate students at a university in Dubai. The intervention was introduced through workshop classes conducted online. The pre-intervention consisted of discussions concentrating on participants' research contexts amidst a pandemic. The GS moderators were implemented in the class, followed by scaffolding and mentoring interactions and self-reflective accounts of students' actions and feelings of using the intervention to better plan and structure their dissertation tasks. The research incorporated a Mixed Methods Methodology (MMM). Quantitative data collection took place through surveys, while qualitative data were collected using semi-structured interviews. Triangulation of the emergent themes showed a positive increase in students achievable GS, self-regulatory study skills, feedback-seeking behaviours, research organisation and synthesis, self-reflection and Academic Resilient (AR) attitudes amalgamate to enhance students' AA outcomes. Though, students' intrinsic motivational levels to study and research observed minor changes only. Nonetheless, the pebble in the shoe was removed as students AA contexts improved in undertaking better actionable steps for their research. Therefore, the GS intervention enabled students to set, balance, and achieve academic goals while catering to their academic anxieties, mental health concerns, and adaptability to the e-learning platforms amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the wide-scale changes the pandemic brought to the teaching and learning communities, the GS intervention served as a targeted intervention to help students maintain their achievement contexts in a goal-oriented way.

Keywords : academic achievement, academic resilience, COVID-19, goal setting

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