

Students' Perceptions of Formative Assessment Feedback: A Case Study for Undergraduate Students in Bahrain

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Abstract : Formative assessment feedback is increasingly practiced in higher education. Instructors allocate great time and effort to provide assessment feedback. However, educators are not sure about students' perceptions, understanding and respond to the feedback given, as very limited research have been done about what students do with feedback and whether if they understand it. This study aims to explore students' conceptions and perceptions of formative assessment feedback through questionnaire and focus group interviews. One hundred eighty undergraduate students doing different courses filled the questionnaire, and ten focus group discussions were conducted. Basic descriptive and content analyses were used to analyze students' responses to the questionnaire, while grounded theory with open coding was used to analyze the focus group interviews. The study revealed that most students believe assessment feedback is helpful to improve their academic performance, and they take time to read, think and discuss their feedback. Also, the study shows most students understand the feedback given. However, students expressed that most of the written feedback given are too general, and they prefer individual oral feedback as it can lead to better understanding on how what and where to improve. The study concluded that students believe formative assessment feedback is valuable, students have reasonable understanding and respond to the feedback provided. However, this practice could be improved by requesting lecturers to make more specific feedback and communicate with students on the way of interpreting and using assessment feedback as a part of the learning and teaching process.

Keywords : assessment, feedback, formative, undergraduate, higher education

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