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How does a Co-curriculum Programme contribute to Intellectual Development?

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Background

• Lingnan University, the only liberal arts university in Hong Kong, concerned much on students’ whole person development

• Integrated Learning Programme (ILP), a co-curriculum programme for students exploring talents and enhancing competences – one of the graduate requirements (75 ILP units in 4-years)
Integrated Learning Programme (ILP)

- Introduces learning approaches and skill to enhance learning, cultivate interests in intellectual pursuit, and acquire knowledge.

Six learning domains:

- Social and Emotional development
- Civic education
- Hostel education
- Physical education
- Whole person development through ILP
- Intellectual development

Year 1 students
First Year Experience Programme

Year 2-4 students
Advanced Year Experience Programme
Integrated Learning Programme (ILP)

• Various activities, e.g. experiential learning, performance, workshop, seminars, field trips
Importance of intellectual development

- Intellectual development is very important to a student’s growth and the University’s curriculum plays an important role (Yuen, 2010)
- Multiple learning dimensions of cognition, emotion, and behavior should be developed (Hoover et al., 2010)
- A causal link between the dimensions of intellectual capital and business performance (Bontis, 1998)
Attributes of intellectual development

• Salient life skills, including those related directly to academic development, ‘learning to learn’, personal and social growth, and future career planning (Yuen, 2010)

• Communication, teamwork, leadership and/or initiative, decision making as well as planning & organizing skill (Hoover et al., 2010)
Factors to concern in course design

- A match between environmental variables and individual characteristics (Schmidt and Davidson, 1983)
- Age and gender (Schaie, 1994)
- Family and peer relationships (Yuen, 2010)
- Self-report measures are the ideal way of determining the level of knowledge a person already has (Armstrong & Fukami, 2010)
Research objectives

• To provide some insights into how ILP courses are designed to facilitate students in developing their intellectual skills

• In practice, the Integrated Learning Programme of Lingnan University can be further improved on.
Research methodology

• Two steps approach
  – Questionnaire in quantitative manner, focus on satisfaction level towards the course and students’ self-evaluation
    • 414 samples in five courses in 2014
    • Analyzed by SPSS v.21 package
  – Interview based on semi-structured questions with a tutor, supplemented with 94 student evaluations who attended the three classes in 2012, 2013 and 2014 respectively
## Attributes to consider

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Attributes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skill</td>
<td>Comfortable to build relationship with others</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Can cooperate with others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication skill</td>
<td>Feel comfortable to present ideas</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Know how to communicate to others</td>
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<td>Problem solving and analytical skill</td>
<td>Feel confident in tackling problems</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Understand problems which have many causes</td>
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<td>Know how to gather information</td>
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<td>Skill or strength development</td>
<td>Can explore and appreciate new cultures</td>
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<td>Can work with people of different backgrounds</td>
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<td>Develop imagination and creativity</td>
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<td>Develop desire for life-long learning</td>
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<td>Develop independence</td>
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<td>Develop adaptability</td>
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<td>Develop self-confidence</td>
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Findings and Discussion

• Evaluation on ILP tended to be favorable
  – Content is interesting (m=7.51)
  – Inspiring (m=7.57)
  – Usefulness (m=7.62)
  – Satisfaction level (m=7.60)
  – Achieving learning outcome (m=7.40)

• Students comment their own participation level lowest among all factors (m=7.13)
Findings and Discussion

• Students had obtained some skills and strengths under intellectual development
  – Interpersonal skill (m=7.30)
  – Communication skill (m=7.08)
  – Management skill (m=7.08)
  – Problem solving and analytical skill (m=7.23)
  – Strength development (m=7.32)

• 3/4 year system, and year of study is influential, but not language to use in the course delivery
Findings and Discussion

• Students under 4/3-year system are different

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By 4/3 year system</th>
<th>4-year System</th>
<th>3-year system</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation level</td>
<td>7.24</td>
<td>6.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills development, e.g. imagination, creativity,</td>
<td>higher</td>
<td>lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>independence, adaptability, self confidence</td>
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</table>

• Implications
  – The education reform involves a different approach of learning matters to ILP design
  – Less mature students perceived ILP to be more effective and useful to their intellectual development
  – Students’ participation is crucial
Findings and Discussion

• Students studying at year 1/2/3 are slightly different

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>by year of study</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation on ILP courses</td>
<td>7.64</td>
<td>6.75</td>
<td>7.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits on intellectual development</td>
<td>7.47</td>
<td>6.56</td>
<td>7.15</td>
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• Implications
  – Year 1 and Year 3 students comment more positively on ILP courses, and they get more benefits from it
  – Students should have different learning needs at different years of study at university
Findings and Discussion

• Based on the interview with tutors, the following actions help make the courses more effective...
  – A very interactive approach with out-of-the-box teaching and learning activities
  – The transferability of knowledge is important
  – Apply concepts into real life and link to personal life
  – Use of social issues which are debatable as examples to arouse interest
  – Has to match students’ personal developmental needs
Looking ahead

- ILP will have refinements in coming years
  - First Year Experience programme (FYEP)
  - Advanced Year Experience programme (AYEP)
- Different learning needs in intellectual aspects of students be better catered
- Aligned closely with other programmes or activities
Conclusion

- ILP is an effective co-curriculum helping students to have intellectual development

- Factors to concern when designing courses aiming at students’ intellectual development
  - Students’ maturity, or stage of intellectual development, which is reflected in the years of study
  - Course design and approach of learning; content, as well as delivery and ways of presentation
  - Medium of instruction may not be a matter
Limitation

• Intellectual development is ideally conducted in a longitudinal but not cross sectional manner
• Samples of different courses were not of the same person, implying direct comparison across courses impractical
• Self evaluation could be biased

>> Suggest to conduct a longitudinal research tracing a few students for years in their intellectual development
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References


References


