

PROGRESS TESTING AND DEEP LEARNING

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Progress Testing involves the use of a large common questions bank aimed at assessing all students in a programme against the entire degree course graduate outcomes. Therefore, students in all years of study – Years 1 to 6 – are administered the same questions. This process of assessment is becoming more popular in medical and health science courses in New Zealand and Australia. However, there is an interesting debate as to whether it cultivates deeper learning than traditional forms of assessment. In our research we have operationalized several variables: year of study, perceived level of stress, acquisition of deep or surface learning, and academic attainment. In this lecture, I will discuss our findings and relate these to relevant theories of assessment and student learning practices. I will discuss both the quantitative and qualitative findings associated with this investigation. I will further discuss the research and educational implications of the findings of the study, particularly in designing courses to promote and monitor achievement of intended graduate outcomes.

COMMUNICATION AND EXPLANATORY FRAMEWORKS

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Communication refers to the act of conveying or imparting information to another individual through speaking, writing and/or using some other medium. The manner in which information is communicated greatly influences individuals' beliefs about the world around them. For example, the type of information about psychological conditions conveyed to the general public have been shown to influence lay people's mental health literacy, their explanatory frameworks (i.e., beliefs about cause and treatment) as well as their help-seeking behaviours and treatment compliance. This lecture will discuss the results of a cross-cultural study on Bulimia Nervosa conducted with Japanese and Australian participants, and the implications for cross-cultural design and delivery of public education programs and intervention for this condition in Japan. Additionally, this lecture will discuss the implications of the findings to the wider issue of how higher education students learn, consume and process information, as well as issues that need to be kept in mind when designing methods to effectively communicate information to target audiences.