Is there a relationship between learning space and satisfaction with learning experience in a first year statistics tutorial class?

AYSE AYSIN BILGIN, DAVID BULGER, GREG ROBERTSON
Macquarie University, Australia

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Over the last decade, from primary schools to higher education institutions, there has been an emphasis on the role of learning spaces in encouraging or debilitating students’ learning experiences. Many new classrooms are built with public funds to create active and collaborative learning spaces which, it has been argued, enable better learning experiences.

Students’ perceived learning experience obtained through a quantitative survey in their last tutorial class in 2012 (n=226) in a large first year statistics unit at Macquarie University supports such claims. We found that active and collaborative learning is significantly correlated with students’ satisfaction in their tutorial classes. Students felt comfortable solving problems after their active and collaborative learning, since they believed that they had a deeper understanding of the concepts. We did not find enough evidence to conclude that the in-class activities had prepared students to tackle the unit’s assessment tasks more effectively or enhanced their critical thinking ability.