

The Drop-in Support Centre: Connecting with academic support, and more!

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Abstract

Non-school leavers, particularly those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds have reported difficulty in transitioning to a more independent learning mode due to a lack of real-time contact with faculty staff and peers (Holley & Oliver, 2010). In 2016, in the quest to support student learning, a weekly Drop-in Support Centre (DISC) initiative was piloted. The DISC provided an informal, learning space one day a week for students to access academic support if required. This study aimed to evaluate the utility of the DISC, examine profiles of attendees and assess the impact of attendance on academic performance. Of the 1008 undergraduate nursing students who were enrolled on the campus, 163 (16.1%) attended at least once. Those who attended were older, more likely to be overseas-born (74% versus 45% native-born, $p < 0.001$), and had a higher grade point average (4.04 versus 3.86 non-attendees, $p = 0.016$). Controlling for demographic factors, attendees at the DISC were over three times more likely (Adjusted Odds Ratio: 3.39, 95% CI: 1.68-6.87) to achieve higher GPA (>4.4) compared to non-attendees.

Author contributions

MM, YS, LMR, PG and BE were responsible for the study conception and design, organised the data collection and performed the data analysis. MM, YS, LMR, PG and BE were responsible for drafting the manuscript. MM, YS, LMR, PG and BE made critical revisions to the paper for important intellectual content.