CHANGING SPACES: ACADEMIC STAFF’S PERCEPTIONS OF CONVENTIONAL AND IMAGINED LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

N. Sopromadze¹, N. Karodia¹, R. Butler², J. Rhodes¹, R. Prior¹, J. Stanley¹

¹ University of Wolverhampton (UNITED KINGDOM)
² Coventry University (UNITED KINGDOM)

Abstract

The poster reports on the final phase of a mixed methods study exploring the perceptions of formal and informal learning spaces at a UK university. A growing body of literature has highlighted a relationship between a physical learning environment and student outcomes in higher education (Adams Becker et al., 2018; Cleveland & Fisher, 2014; Yang et al., 2013). Yet, it remains a challenge to determine precisely what makes a ‘good’ learning space (Jessop et al., 2012; Park & Choi, 2014; Sawers et al., 2016). Since our previous findings suggested a disconnect between student appreciation of a learning environment and actual learning experience, the current study focuses on academic staff’s perceptions of how educational facilities can be utilised to enhance learning and teaching. To elicit faculty members’ perspectives on desirable classroom characteristics, focus group discussions were conducted. A purposeful sampling strategy was used to recruit eight lecturers across four faculties within the case study institution. The focus group participants were shown photos of existing as well as aspirational learning spaces and asked to consider what features would facilitate or inhibit their teaching approaches. The initial findings offer insight into academic staff’s classroom experience and provide recommendations for designing future higher education learning spaces as sites of active learning.

References:


Keywords: Learning spaces, higher education, student experience, active learning classroom.