Exploring Students' Perceptions of Lateness to Class

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Introduction

✓ The project sought to investigate students' reasons for lateness when attending scheduled learning sessions.

✓ Understanding why students are late might help prevent subsequent tardiness, absenteeism and eventual dropout.

Method

✓ Leaflets were handed to undergraduate students.

✓ Students not studying full-time courses and living on campus accommodations were excluded from the study.

✓ Ten participants proceeded to the next stage (6 females, 4 males). The students' mean age was 29.7 years. They represented a variety of undergraduate courses.

✓ One-to-one semi-structured interviews were conducted and studied using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006); see *Fig.1*.

Table 1-Students' pseudonyms, identified gender, age, estimated time (minutes) for being late, frequency of lateness, and reason for being late.

Student Pseudonym	Gender (Male, female, rather not say)	Student's age	Commute method	Estimated time spent commuting (minutes)	Estimated time/minutes being late for seminar/lecture	Frequency of being late	Reason for lateness
Dave	Male	21	Bus	20	10	Some days	Unavailability of buses
Amanda	Female	24	Walk+train+bus	60	0	Never/ Rather not say	Takes earlier bus and train
Fatima	Female	38	Personal car	<15	10-15	Sometimes/ more than 15 minutes, rather not come in	Familial responsibilities, Traffic
Jack	Male	22	Walk	20	<30	Twice a week	Difficulty waking up in the morning
Frannie	Female	38	Bus	30-45	<5	Very rarely	Takes earlier bus and train
Mandy	Female	36	Walk+Bus	105	0	Never	Takes earlier bus and train
Nick	Male	20	Walk	45	15	Most days	Difficulty waking up in the morning
Kya	Female	20	Walk+train+bus	80-90	15	Most days	Commute
Gemma	Female	44	carpooling	<60	0	Only has been late once	Sickness
John	Male	34	Personal car	=/>60	15	Most days	Difficulty waking up in the morning Traffic Difficulty in finding parking space
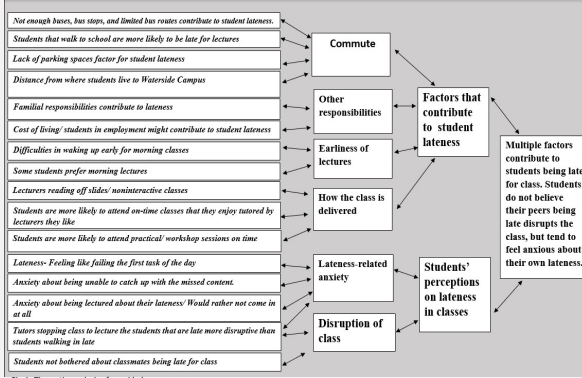
Fig.1- Thematic analysis of provided answers

Not enough buses, bus stops, and limited bus routes contribute to student lateness.

Students that walk to school are more likely to be late for lectures

Lack of parking spaces factor for student lateness

Distance from where students live to Waterside Campus

Familial responsibilities contribute to lateness

Cost of living/ students in employment might contribute to student lateness

Difficulties in waking up early for morning classes

Some students prefer morning lectures

Lecturers reading off slides/ noninteractive classes

Students are more likely to attend on-time classes that they enjoy tutored by lecturers they like

Students are more likely to attend practical/ workshop sessions on time

Lateness- Feeling like failing the first task of the day

Anxiety about being unable to catch up with the missed content.

Anxiety about being lectured about their lateness/ Would rather not come in at all

Tutors stopping class to lecture the students that are late more disruptive than students walking in late

Students not bothered about classmates being late for class

Commute · Other responsibilities · Earliness of lectures · How the class is delivered · Lateness-related anxiety · Disruption of class

Factors that contribute to student lateness

Students' perceptions on lateness in classes

Multiple factors contribute to students being late for class. Students do not believe their peers being late disrupts the class, but tend to feel anxious about their own lateness.

Commute

✓ Students claimed that commuting was the main reason for being late to lectures. Not enough buses, bus stops and limited bus routes were most often denounced.

✓ Secondly, the travel distance to campus and the lack of parking spaces often caused students to be late.

Secondary Responsibilities

✓ Familial responsibilities, such as childcare, caused some students to be late.

✓ Many students need to undertake part-time jobs to support themselves through their undergraduate courses. This often leads to exhaustion among students.

Earliness of Lectures

✓ Male students claimed to have difficulty being punctual for morning lectures.

✓ In contrast, female students preferred morning lectures and were likelier to attend lectures on time.

Delivery of Content

✓ Students were more likely to attend practical sessions on time.

✓ Personal affinity towards the module content or lecturer increased punctuality among students.

Personal Perception of Lateness

✓ Students asserted that being late for class often caused them anxiety

✓ Students did not find their peers being late for class disruptive; however, tutors interrupting the class to lecture these students was deemed disruptive.

Limitations and recommendations

✓ The study was only conducted on ten participants; hence, the results might not represent the greater student population of the University of Northampton.

✓ Some offered answers might have been influenced by examination period stress.

✓ In future research on the topic, a greater sample of students is recommended for more representative results. This would be facilitated by using online questionnaires.

Conclusion

✓ Commute was the main reason students attended late for scheduled courses.

✓ However, students that lived the furthest were more likely to arrive early or on time for lectures.

✓ Male students were likelier to arrive late for morning lectures, while female students preferred morning lectures.

✓ Students were more likely to attend practical or workshop sessions on time when compared to seminars or lectures.

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