Postsecondary Education Organization, Management, Leadership Understanding Universal Design in Postsecondary Education Through Literature Review

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Abstract

Universal design for learning (UDL) increases learning for everyone. It improves postsecondary teaching and learning based on learning science. UDL acknowledges learners' differences. Colleges struggle to create, offer, and evaluate courses for diverse students, particularly the disabled students. Disability support services are often too overburdened to arrange classroom adjustments. A new technique is required to teach all learners. Universal Design (UD) frameworks may suit learners' requirements, but their usefulness in higher education is uncertain. A literature review was done to see how UD might aid students with disabilities in higher education. This study explored how UD frameworks aid students. The research examined perceptions on UD frameworks and inclusive teaching and practitioners' ability to apply UD principles in postsecondary classrooms.

Keywords: Higher Education; Disabilities in Higher Education.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Objectives

The implementation of universal design (UD) at postsecondary institutions is supported by a number of pieces of legislation, including the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (Roberts and colleagues 2011). However, there is little data to suggest that it is employed to assist in meeting the requirements of all learners, particularly students who have impairments, in settings that are classified as post-secondary. Additionally, several UD frameworks are utilized in postsecondary education, which may create to confusion as well as a lack of consistency in the teachings that are being taught. This study aims to better understand how UD frameworks are utilized to serve postsecondary students with disabilities and to explain how these findings have crucial implications for disability support services (DSS) practitioners.

This research will first examine empirical studies of UD frameworks in postsecondary education to achieve its aims. After discussing UD frameworks and how they have evolved, the study's technique, findings, and recommendations will be discussed.

2. Theoretical Framework

Designing a product or place requires considering aesthetics, engineering alternatives, environmental concerns, safety concerns, industry norms, and cost. Designers focus on the average user. Universal design (UD) makes items and environments accessible to all without adaptation or professional design. Universal design in postsecondary guarantees that all students and teachers, including those with disabilities, can participate fully.

Since its inception, UD began with seven guiding principles. Ideas for design and implementation include equal usage, flexible usage, intuitive usage, observable information, error tolerance, low physical exertion, approach space, and use space, and equal usage (The Center for Universal Design, 1997; Story and colleagues 1998; Zeff, 2007). This strategy has been utilized to construct frameworks for accommodating learners in inclusive settings (McGuire and colleagues 2006; Zeff, 2007).

Although each framework contains its own set of distinctive elements, their shared focus is on accessibility for people with disabilities and best practices.

3. Methods

In the study, a comprehensive literature search was carried out to investigate the many ways in which UD frameworks are utilized to support students with disabilities who are enrolled in higher education.

4. Data Sources

ERIC, which is the name of a digital database that focuses on education, contained the great majority of the materials that were discovered.

5. Results

Focus is shifting from teacher to learner, requiring educators to understand diverse students (Meyer and colleagues 2014). Educators explore learning systems that combine technology and active learning. UDL aims to improve student education. It would appear that the empirical research journal papers on UD in postsecondary education settings that are now available and have been subjected to peer review constitute the infant stages of a literature base. Although the authors of the reviewed articles advocated for the use of UD in postsecondary education for educating pre-service teachers (McGuireSchwartz & Arndt, 2007; Spooner and colleagues

2007; Zhang, 2005), training faculty members (Izzo and colleagues 2008), and improving web accessibility (Harper & DeWaters, 2008); and presented the perspectives of students and service providers as evidence of the effectiveness of UD use in postsecondary education (In addition Evidently, there are not many studies that make use of experimental designs and approaches that combine several methods.

The literature research found that techniques, materials, and assessments need to be adaptable. This is one of the most important findings. Every classroom has a wide range of skills, and teachers must design to the edges to effectively assist all students. Education institutions face an uphill battle in attracting and maintaining students from historically underrepresented groups (Loftin and colleagues 2012). Most crucially, not the pupils themselves, but rather the educational setting and curriculum itself must undergo a transformation. In order to fulfill the requirements of all students and encourage a variety of learning styles, educators must consider the What, Why, and How of education when developing their lessons. Research on how UDL might be used in education curriculum shows that there is still a lot of work to be done in this area, but what is known so far suggests that it can help students from various backgrounds succeed in education school by providing a variety of learning options. In order to expand minority representation in the education programs might increase recruiting of minority students and construct courses for diverse learners that will improve retention and graduation rates. A one-size-fits-all approach to education is no longer relevant in today's educational landscape. Higher education students are increasingly diverse, so it is critical to establish programs and curricula that cater to these students' unique needs. All students are referred to as "all students" by the UD principles, which advocate for an inclusive instructional strategy that minimizes barriers and maximizes learning for all students. The essays demonstrate how UD concepts offer options, flexibility, and goals to accommodate diverse learners regardless of the subject they are studying. It also encourages educators to consider how they might improve their own teaching practices by including the demands of students from varied backgrounds. Curriculum and course design in nursing education have not yet incorporated the UDL paradigm (Levey, 2014). In nursing education, the necessity for additional research into UDL cannot be stressed. Based on the findings of this literature review, it is evident that nursing educators and curriculum creators must acquire a deeper understanding of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approaches.

6. Significance of the Study

The universal design approach seems to have a lot of potential for teachers who work with many different kinds of students in many different settings. This study shows how the UD idea applies to education, which can help

people who work in the field make and run programs that include everyone.

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