AN INTERACTIVE APPROACH FOR LEARNING ETHICS: STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE USE OF SCENARIOS AND STUDENT RESPONSE SYSTEM

Alvin Wong, Ken Tsang* & Simon Wong*

Hong Kong Community College,

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Joseph So*

College of Professional and Continuing Education, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

(*authors with equal contribution, in alphabetical order)

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INTRODUCTION

- Ethics education is an important cornerstone for curriculum design and student development activities.

Literature review:

Educators have tried several approaches:

- e.g. in-class discussion, cases studies, debates (Spain, Engle and Thompson, 2005)
- websites analysis (Goby and Nickerson, 2012)

A PRIOR PILOT STUDY

An exploratory study by Wong and Chan (2017):

A pilot study by semi-structural individual interviews with three tertiary business students

Aim: To understand business students' perception on some elements of ethical activities such as use of scenarios setting, role taking discussion, students' response options and potential consequences.

USE OF SCENARIOS AND STUDENT RESPONSE SYSTEM

This paper aims to provide some empirical evidences on the effectiveness of the interactive approach based on participants' perceptions.

The ethical activity consists of two parts:

(i). Public transportation etiquettes, and

(ii). Computer ethics and etiquettes in social networking.

USE OF SCENARIOS AND STUDENT RESPONSE SYSTEM

An interactive approach:

- Based on public transportation situations, some scenarios were created (e.g. use of priority seats, photos uploading to social network, etc).

- Participants were invited to think about the situations/decisions from perspectives of the role(s) in the scenario, and then to provide real-time response through an online response system.

- Participants were asked to indicate anonymously their decisions based on the options given.

- Then, facilitators invited participants to share their views on voluntary basis.

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- The facilitators concluded the activity by discussions on the potential consequences based on participants' responses indicated through the response system.

- At last, facilitators also shared some soft reminders, other possibilities regarding the feelings and responses of the characters in the scenarios.
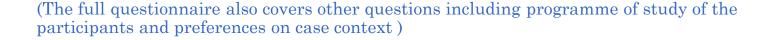
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & DATA COLLECTION

- Three rounds of the activity were conducted during 2017-2018.

- Students were invited to participate in a questionnaire survey on voluntary basis.

- A total of 59 students (from 3 rounds of the activity) returned the questionnaires.

QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

Participants were asked to indicate their perceptions on the following questionnaire statements (using 5-point likert scale) :

- Q3. The interactive approach helps me to understand more about other people's feelings when facing ethical issues.
- Q4. The interactive approach is an interesting approach to learn ethics.
- Q5. This ethics learning activity has enhanced my sense of ethics or moral related values when facing daily life situations.
- Q6. This ethics learning activity has encouraged me to reflect my social responsibility in promoting benefits or welfare to others or general public.

(The full questionnaire also covers other questions including programme of study of the participants and preferences on case context)

RESULTS

Table 1: Mean Scores of Q3-6

Questionnaire questions	Mean of rating (5 as "strongly Agree", and 1 as "Strongly Disagree)	Percentage of respondents indicating rating at 4 or above
Q3 (helps to understand more about other people's feelings?)	4.1	89.8%
Q4 (interesting approach to learn ethics?)	4.2	91.5%
Q5 (enhanced my sense of ethics or moral related values)	4.0	86.4%
Q6 (encouraged to reflect my social responsibility)	4.1	84.7%

RESULTS

- Table 2 shows these questionnaire measuring items. In this regard, Cronbach's (1951) coefficient alpha could be used to test the internal consistency reliability.

Construct	Measuring Items
The degree to which the participating students perceive interactive approach is good for their ethics learning (C1)	Questionnaire Question 3 (Q3): The interactive approach helps me to understand more about other people's feelings when facing ethical issues.
	Questionnaire Question 4 (Q4): The interactive approach is an interesting approach to learn ethics.
the degree to which the participating students perceive ethics learning activity is good for their ethics learning (C2)	Questionnaire Question 5 (Q5): The interactive approach helps me to understand more about other people's feelings when facing ethical issues.
	Questionnaire Question 6 (Q6): The interactive approach is an interesting approach to learn ethics.

RESULTS

- Table 3. Mean scores and internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire measuring items

Construct	Measuring Items	Item Mean (Standard Deviation) (n = 59)	Cronbach's coefficient alpha
C1	Q3	4.07 (.583)	0.651
	Q4	4.19 (.682)	
C2	Q5	4.00 (.719)	0.655
	Q6	4.19 (.635)	

Pallant (2013, p. 95) mentions that when there are a small number of measuring items (e.g. 10 or less measuring items) in the scale, Cronbach's coefficient alpha values tend to be low (e.g. 0.5) and Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson and Tatham (2006) recommends accepting Cronbach's coefficient alpha value near 0.6, especially there are only few measuring items.

CONCLUSION

- First, students perceived that this interactive approach using a real-time online response system is an interesting way to learn ethics.

- Second, there are evidences supporting that this approach may help enhance their empathy and ethics awareness.

- These findings enable educators to understand more about students' perceptions on ethics education pedagogy, and provide reference for designing ethical activities.

- In view of the limited data collected for this study at this stage, further studies are required to provide more evidences on the effectiveness of this activity design.

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