Identification of excellent students

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BACKGROUND

The background of this research is the challenge to stimulate excellence in higher education. The current attention for excellence has been given a strong stimulus because of the launch of the governmental stimulation program Sirius in 2008. Excellence is connected to the professional future of a student, where demands of quality and innovation are the basis for the need for these excellent professionals. The Hanzehogeschool of Groningen is one of the institutes that received funding for the development of excellence education and the Academy of Nursing is one of the schools where excellence education is being developed. To effectively organize education aiming at the development of excellence, there is a need to recognize potential in an early stage.

OBJECTIVES

The aim is to explore whether there are personal characteristics that can be associated with excellent achievement.

Research question: *Are results of excellent bachelor students during their final praxis positively associated with the outcome of the variables that are derived from literature?*

METHOD

Three variables have been indicated that could have predictive value: motivation, mind set and personality. The dependent variable is student achievement in the end phase of the bachelor of Nursing. Positive correlation between one or more of the experimental variables and the dependent variable would support the assumption that positive scores on these variables at the beginning of the study may indicate potential of excellence.
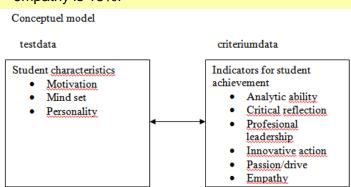
RESULTS

Groups are distinguished based on scores on student achievement (above average, average and below average). Variance analysis of the groups of the Academy of Nursing showed that there are no differences that have significant meaning.

The correlation analysis showed significant but moderate results for the sample as a whole with the scales of the multicultural personality test. The scale open mind proved to be the strongest predicator of student results.

CONCLUSIONS

The answer to the research question is that association with variables that should predict student achievement is found in the scales of the multicultural personality questionnaire. This association is moderate and pointing in the expected direction. The established predictive power of a regression model consisting of open mindedness, emotional instability and cultural empathy is 15%.

Conceptuel model

testdata — Student characteristics
- Motivation
- Mind set
- Personality

criteriumdata — Indicators for student achievement
- Analytic ability
- Critical reflection
- Profesional leadership
- Innovative action
- Passion/drive
- Empathy

LITERATURE

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