



A NOVEL FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT TO ENHANCE GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES: A STUDY WITH POLYMER ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY STUDENTS

Weerakoon Amali Dhanushka

Division of Polymer, Textile and Chemical Engineering Technology, Institute of Technology, University of
Moratuwa, Sri Lanka
amalidhanu22@gmail.com

In the process of providing accessible, flexible and efficient technological education, assessment methods have a greater influence on how and what students learn than any other factor. It has long been assumed that there are two main purposes of assessment. The first is to provide certification of achievement (summative assessment). The second purpose of assessment is to facilitate learning (formative assessment). Formative assessment refers to assessment that is specifically intended to generate feedback on performance to improve and accelerate learning. Hence, Institute of Technology of University of Moratuwa assess the students only at the year-end examinations (summative assessment), this research comprehensively sought to explore the potential of a poster exhibition project as one of the formative assessments in a scheme of continuous assessments. This study was carried out with Level 2 Polymer Engineering Technology students and four consecutive annual poster exhibitions had been conducted for four different batches. Poster exhibition project was a one month project and the 24 students in each batch. After having the constructive feedback for the rough skeletons of the posters and modifying them for five to six times, the students created amazing posters in groups. The students were evaluated throughout the project according to rubrics under attendance, information searching, creative thinking and design of the poster, support for the whole project, meeting deadlines, presentation skills. The final examination paper on the polymeric materials course included problematic situations where students needed to apply relevant subject matter and practical aspects presented in the poster exhibition and the students were able to score full marks for those questions. In addition to the feedback and the year-end examination results the students were asked to respond for a close-ended questionnaire and descriptive statistics of the responses were analyzed. The overall results show that poster exhibition project is an excellent formative assessment and it pays greater attention to develop graduate attributes to compete confidently in the real-world professional context.

Keywords: *formative assessment, poster exhibition, graduate attributes*