

PGCert - Action Research Project

Sleepiness in the Classroom

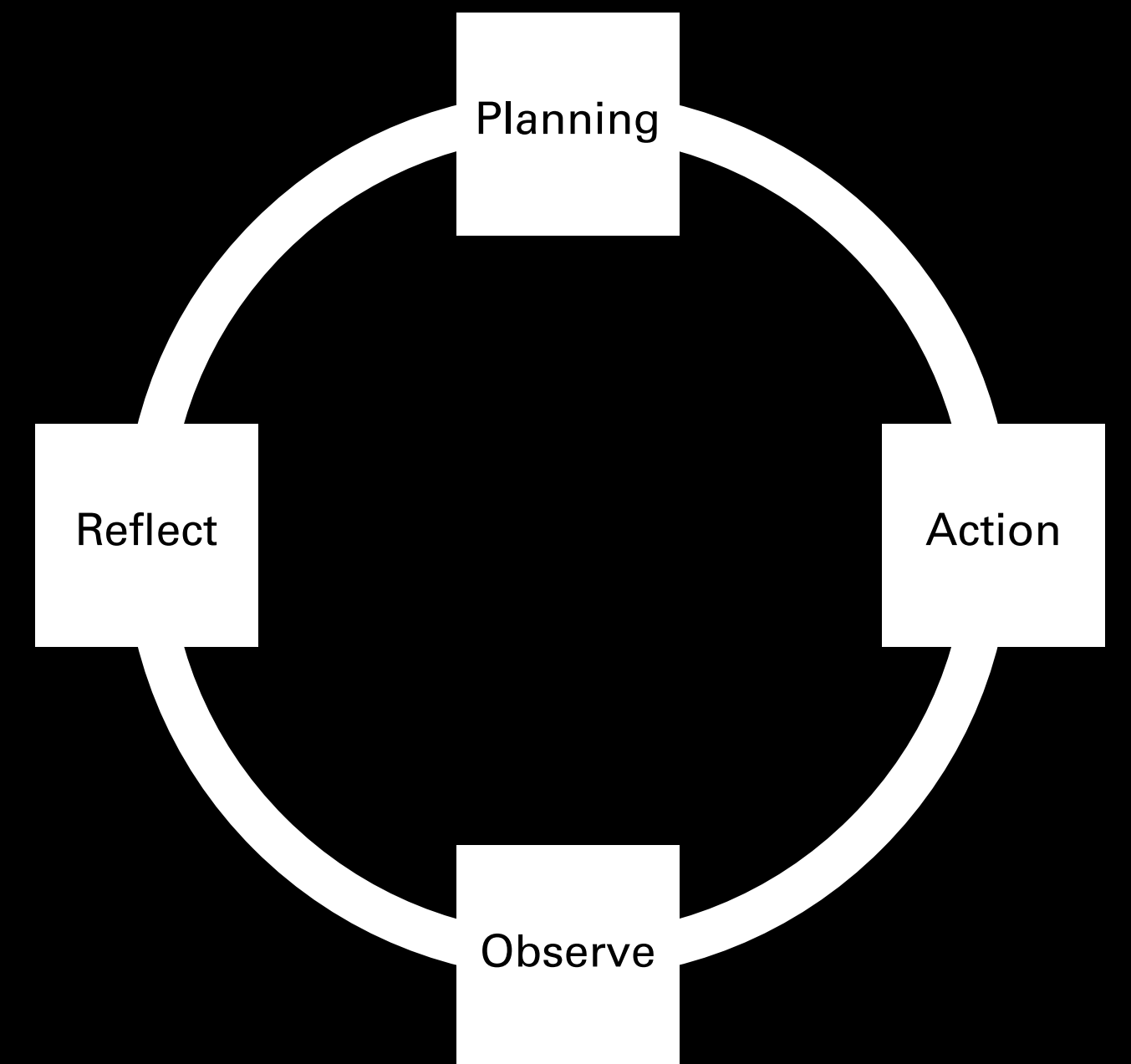
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Agenda

- Context, Rationale and Research Question
- Research Methods
- Findings
- Conclusion and Next Steps
- References



Context

- Sleep impacts physical and mental health, well-being and functioning (Bixler, 2009)
- Increase in sleep deprivation and diagnosis of sleep disorders (Kronholm et.al. 2008)
- Sleep deprivation often outside a person's control - sleep is a social justice issue (De Cristofaro & Chiodo, 2023; Stamatakis et.al., 2007)
- Bodies being treated like machines closely tied to capitalism and current systems of labour
- To rest is to resist (Hersey, 2022)



Rationale

- Academia is mimicking the neoliberal economy (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2000)
- Stress and exhaustion are present at different levels of intensity during different times of the year
- Sleep affects the learning experience and engagement (Stamatakis et.al., 2007)
- Consideration of this can challenge academic norms that might be conducive to stress



Research Question

By understanding how sleepiness affects the student's ability to learn I hope to find ways to incorporate rest and its ability to hold space for communal dreaming, care and healing of tired bodies into my teaching.

How does the level of sleepiness in students affect their learning experience?

Survey

- Subjective levels of sleepiness are measurable with standardised scales
- Stanford Sleepiness Scale: Likert-scale, 7 levels of vigilance (Hoddes et al.,1973)
- Epworth Sleepiness Scale: occurrence of daytime sleepiness (Johns, 1991)
- Sleepiness at different times of the academic year
- Factors contributing to sleepiness

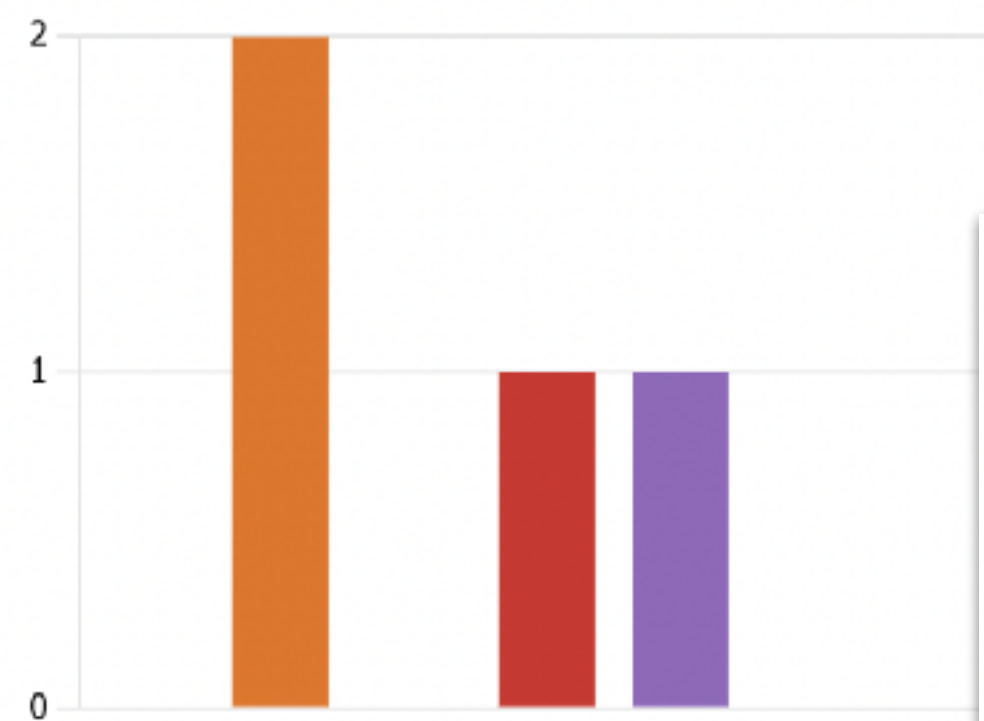
Survey

- 4 students from a seminar on Design History and Theory at University of Applied Arts Vienna

2. Please select one of the seven statements best representing your level of perceived sleepiness right now.

[More Details](#)

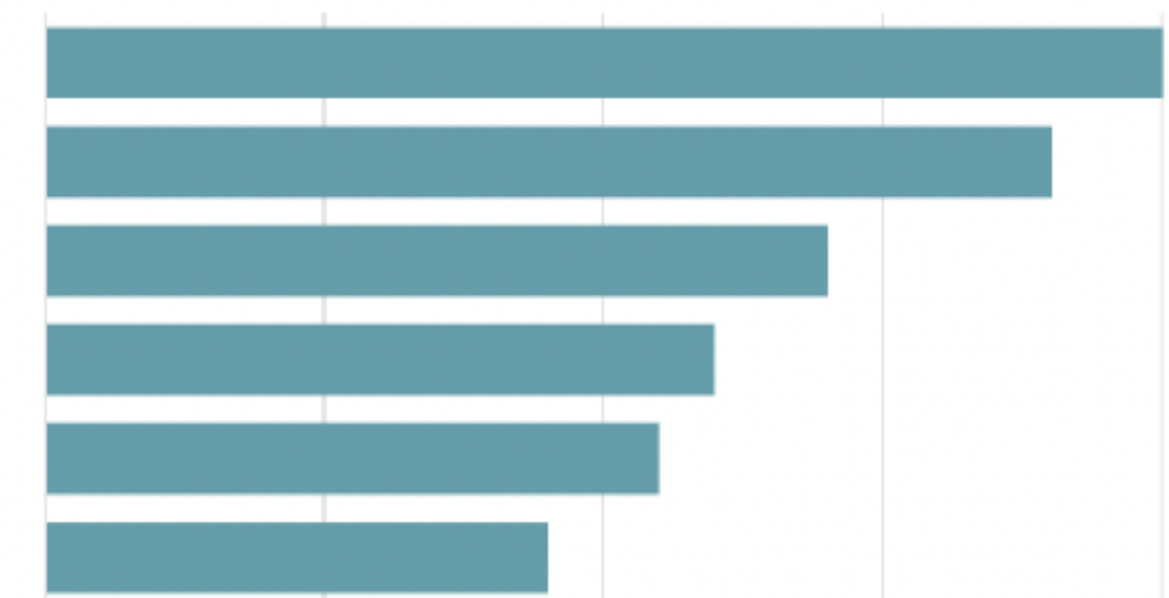
- Feeling active and vital; alert; wi... 0
- Functioning at a high level, but ... 2
- Awake but relaxed; responsive b... 0
- A little foggy; not at peak; let do... 1
- Foggy; beginning to lose interes... 1
- Sleepy, woozy, fighting sleep; pr... 0
- No longer fighting sleep, sleep ... 0



4. Please rank the following times of an academic year from feeling sleepest to feeling most awake.

[More Details](#)

- 1 Christmas holidays
- 2 Winter semester
- 3 Easter holidays
- 4 Semester holidays
- 5 Summer semester
- 6 Summer holidays



Cadavre Exquis

- 4 students collaboratively write 8 fictional anecdotes following different prompts in the format of an Exquisit Corpse
- Write from the perspective of a fictional student participating in the seminar and how different levels of sleepiness affect their classroom experience
- Surrealist parlour game alluding to 'collective dreaming' I would like to further investigate as a method for teaching after this study

Seit ich an dem Morgen aufgewacht bin fühlte ich mich etwas benebelt und nicht ganz auf der Höhe. Ich fühlte mich etwas von mir selbst im Stuck gelassen. Im Seminar diskutierten wir einen Artikel und ich...

Jachte nur davon wie sehr ich gestern darauf bestanden habe; früh einzuschlafen, nur um dann doch mit dem falschen Fuß aufzuwachen. Irgendwie passierte mir das schon die ganze Woche so häufig.

Warum passieren mir immer Dinge, die sonst nur dummen Menschen passieren?

Ich bin oft zu verträumt und unkonzentriert.

Aber die Dummen überleben in den Filmen immer am längsten.
Lucky me!

Es endlich die Zeit für mein "Main-Character-Moment".

"JOHANNA!!"

~~Wach~~ Up, unangenehm, schon wieder eingeschlafen.

Cadavre Exquis

“I was longing for an oat milk cappuccino with a cookie. This is normally my best way to wake me up; the small sugar rush always takes me out of my brain fog. I started dreaming myself into a small cloud made from oat milk foam. Floating along the oat milk sea on a raft made out of cookie material. The surface below me turned soft and I swam into a vortex, like Tim from the Kaba advert swam down a chocolate vortex. Yummy and extremely pleasant. I could remain here forever.” (Anecdote 3)

“I peacefully fell asleep without noticing, since my dream was about work. It was about a staircase, it was spiralling up and down and eventually in my dream I started drilling and bending. I think I’m studying too much.” (Anecdote 8)

Findings

Mood: stress and boredom

Consumption: too much or too little food, drink or caffeine

Screen Time: spending too much time on the screen before going to bed, screen time in the classroom

Environment: room temperature, light and noise

Work: too much work and stress

Exercise: too little physical exercise or movement

Conclusion and Next Steps

Slow pedagogy - making space for other activities than teaching - and ethics of care (Collet et.al. 2018; Hartman & Darab, 2012; Tronto, 2013;) :

- 1st step, caring about: how does sleepiness affect the students' experience in the classroom and what factors contribute to this sleepiness?
- 2nd step, caring for: consider the findings when planning for next term and implement new or change my behaviour

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