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Understanding student experience feedback of ethnic minority students with learning analytics

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This presentation explores text analytics of student experience survey data to understand educational inequalities. The UK National Student Survey has shown that ethnic minority students generally have a less satisfactory student experience compared to White students. Existing research has primarily focused on quantitative survey items in order to understand this gap, neglecting the potential contributions of student responses to open-ended questions.

To address this gap, this research presents a novel attempt to explore the richness encapsulated within these open comments, aiming to shed light on educational inequalities. The proposed methodology utilizes a two-step approach. Firstly, a key word analysis is employed to extract insights from a large dataset comprising 22,275 student comments. Subsequently, manual content analysis is conducted to examine the most salient key words pertaining to two specific UK ethnic minorities: Black or Black British African students, and Black or Black British Caribbean students.

The results demonstrate the effectiveness of this hybrid method, combining both automated and manual content analysis, in identifying a variety of specific key topics for each ethnic minority. The analysis captures both positive and negative aspects in detail. Moreover, this study highlights the feasibility and advantages of employing text analytics to provide guidance for manual analysis of open comments. Importantly, this method uncovers valuable insights into the student experience of ethnic minority students, which are often overlooked when relying solely on quantitative survey questions.

Overall, this presentation emphasizes the significance of incorporating open comments into research on educational inequalities, showcasing the potential of text analytics in enriching our understanding of these disparities and providing a more comprehensive view of the student experience.

Keywords: student evaluation of teaching, student experience, educational inequalities, ethnicity, Asian, Black, Caribbean, African, text analytics

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