



An Explanatory Mixed-Methods Pilot Study: Using a Coached-style Podcast to Improve the Wellbeing of Preservice Teachers

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Abstract

Background: This three-year educational design study will build on the findings of two completed pilot projects: one study that investigated using podcasts to engage students in online courses (Kendrick et al., 2023) and another that explored combining physical activity with learning about workplace well-being through an in-person professional learning session named a HEARTcare Walk and Learn. The findings of these two studies suggested combining the asynchronous nature of podcasting with the HEARTcare Walk and Learn content could improve professional learning.

Methodology: This explanatory mixed-methods study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018) explored the potential of the hybrid HEARTcare Podcast and Learn through several iterations. Firstly, the research team scripted and recorded a coaching-style podcast episode using the content generated from the HEARTcare study (Kendrick et. Al, 2025). This podcast episode was used as a required reading for an undergraduate course on comprehensive school health. Data were elicited from a post-use survey (n=34) and interviews (n=6). The questions for research were: 1. *To what extent and how does listening to the Podcast and Learn impact an individual's physical and emotional well-being?* 2. *Is the hybrid Podcast and Learn an effective professional learning format for well-being information? If so, why or why not?*

Results/Discussion: Participants enjoyed the novel structure of the podcast and the additional time to reflect embedded in the listening exercise. Participants suggested that the musical interludes improved retention of podcast content and allowed them to connect theory to practice. Mixed response to whether the podcast was effective for behavior change (such as accessing wellbeing supports) or for building a greater sense of community. Survey participants suggested that financial distress was a growing concern, identified by 70% of respondents as having an impact on learning. Greater fidelity by participants with defining wellbeing and positive classroom culture than in previous studies of similar cohorts. A surprising result was a decrease in respondents who prioritized their wellbeing (67% agreement) from previous studies (84% agreement) requiring further investigation. Series available on YouTube (https://youtu.be/95bWLJetLLA?si=8R1NQ9Gw6IVkg_G2).

Limitations: The survey sample size was small, representing only 21.3% of total population of the undergraduate class.

Keywords: podcast; coaching; reflection; physical activity; theory to practice



References

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