



RN to BSN Student Engagement in Online Courses: The Impact of Synchronous Teaching Methods



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Introduction

- IOM Report (2010)- 80% registered nurses possess BSN by 2020
- Plethora of online RN to BSN programs
- 24/7 accessibility attractive to working RN
- Impact of asynchronous and synchronous teaching methods on student engagement not yet studied

Study Purpose

- To compare RN to BSN student engagement utilizing *asynchronous* (discussion forum) and *synchronous* (web conferencing) teaching methods in an online, 8 week nursing course

Existing Literature

- Utilizing interactive and engaging tools, building community approach result in lower student attrition (Bart, 2012)
- Greater engagement by students and improved performance with synchronous assignment (Scheuermann, 2010)
- Teacher presence and learner presence both have been shown to positively influence student engagement experiences (Sull, 2010, Olson and Benham-Hutchins, 2014)

Methods

Human Protection, Sample, Design

- Quasi experimental non equivalent design
- IRB approval received
- Grant funding for the drawing for five IPADs
- Three groups of students (n=20)
- Each student participated in **two** synchronous activities (web conferencing) and **two** asynchronous (discussion forums) activities in addition to other course requirements
- Those students not participating in research study completed asynchronous activities only, in addition to other course requirements

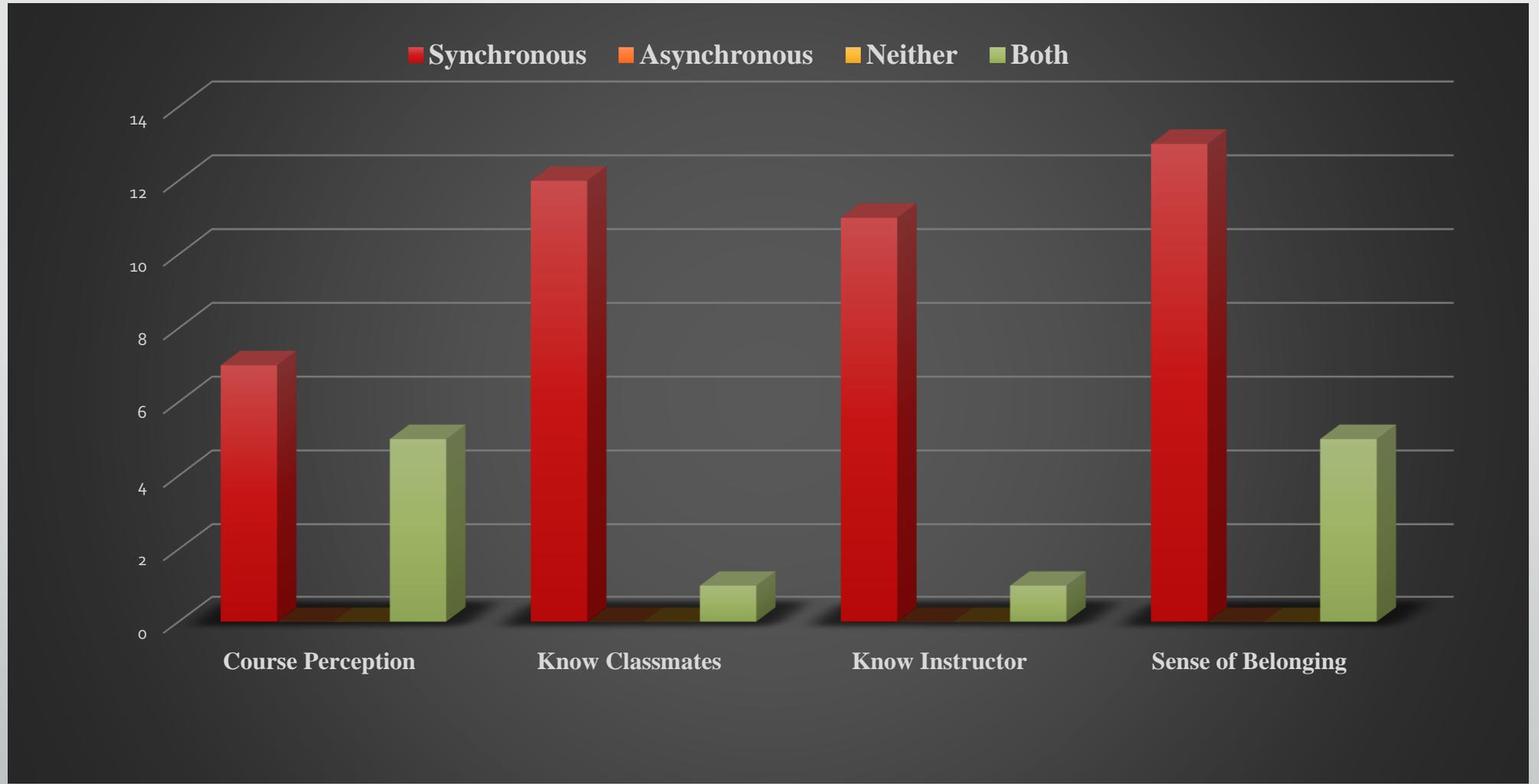


Methods

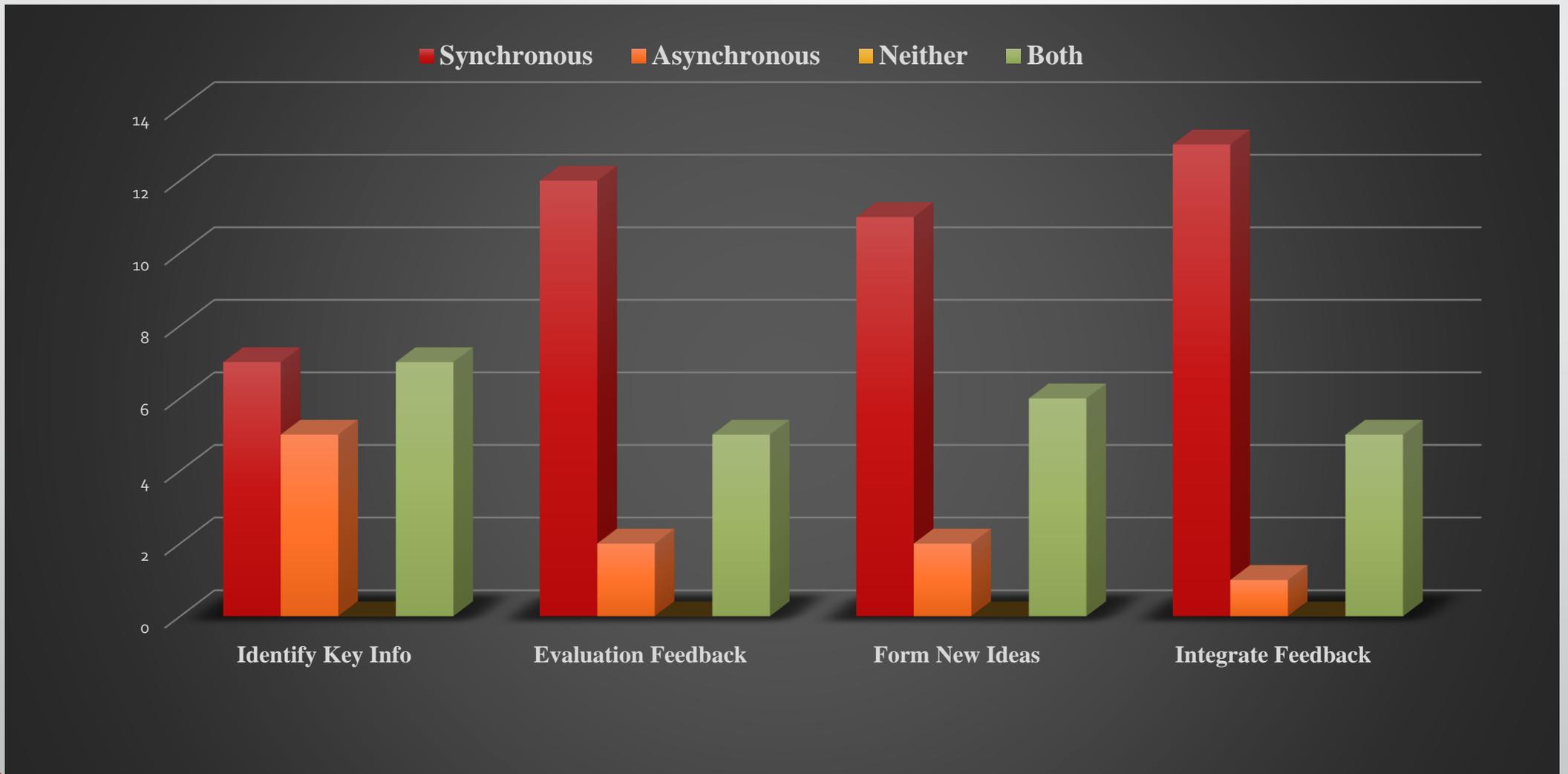
Data Collection Instruments

- Researcher developed survey regarding student engagement
 - 12 item survey
 - Participants asked which learning method helped more:
 - Synchronous
 - Asynchronous
 - Both
 - Neither
- Focus groups
 - 30-60 minutes conducted after synchronous and asynchronous activities completed

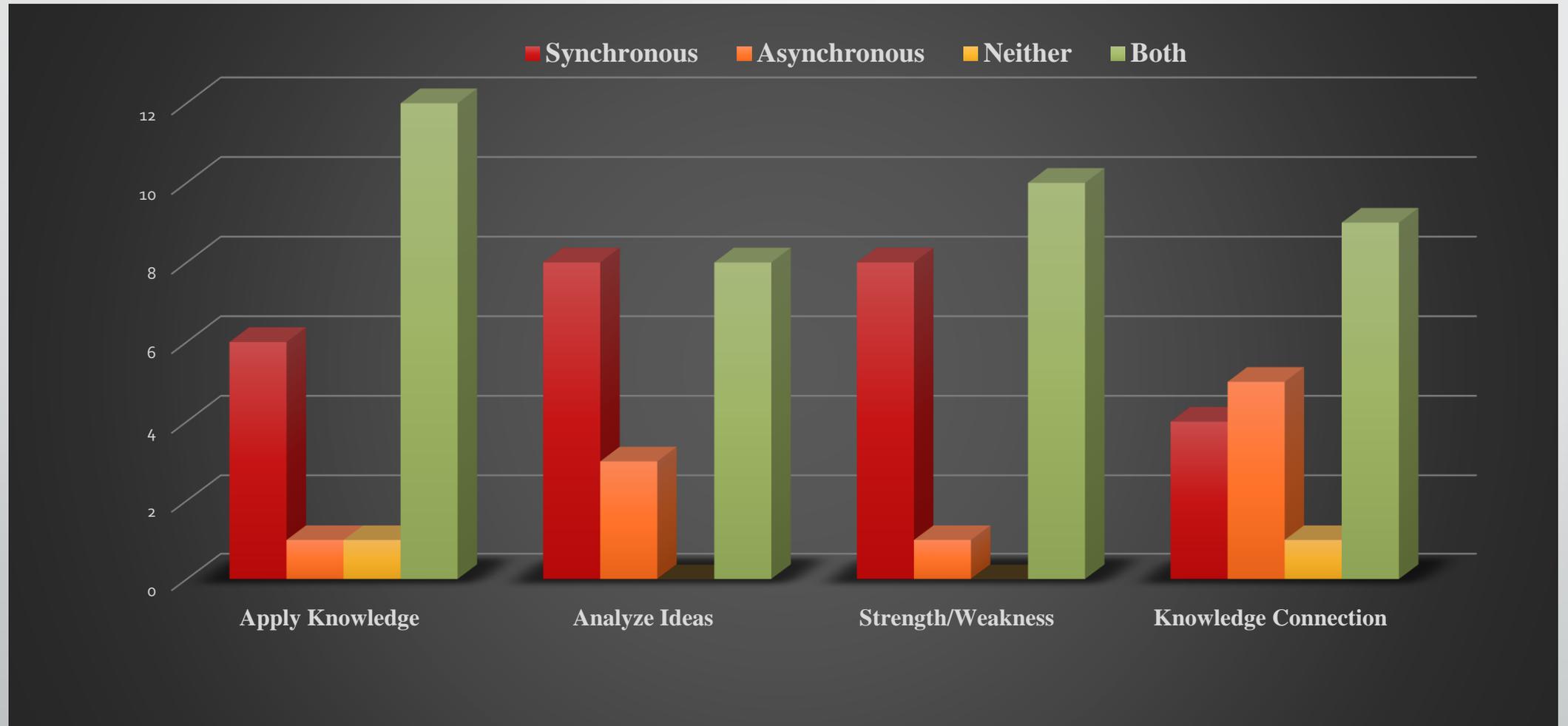
Results Survey



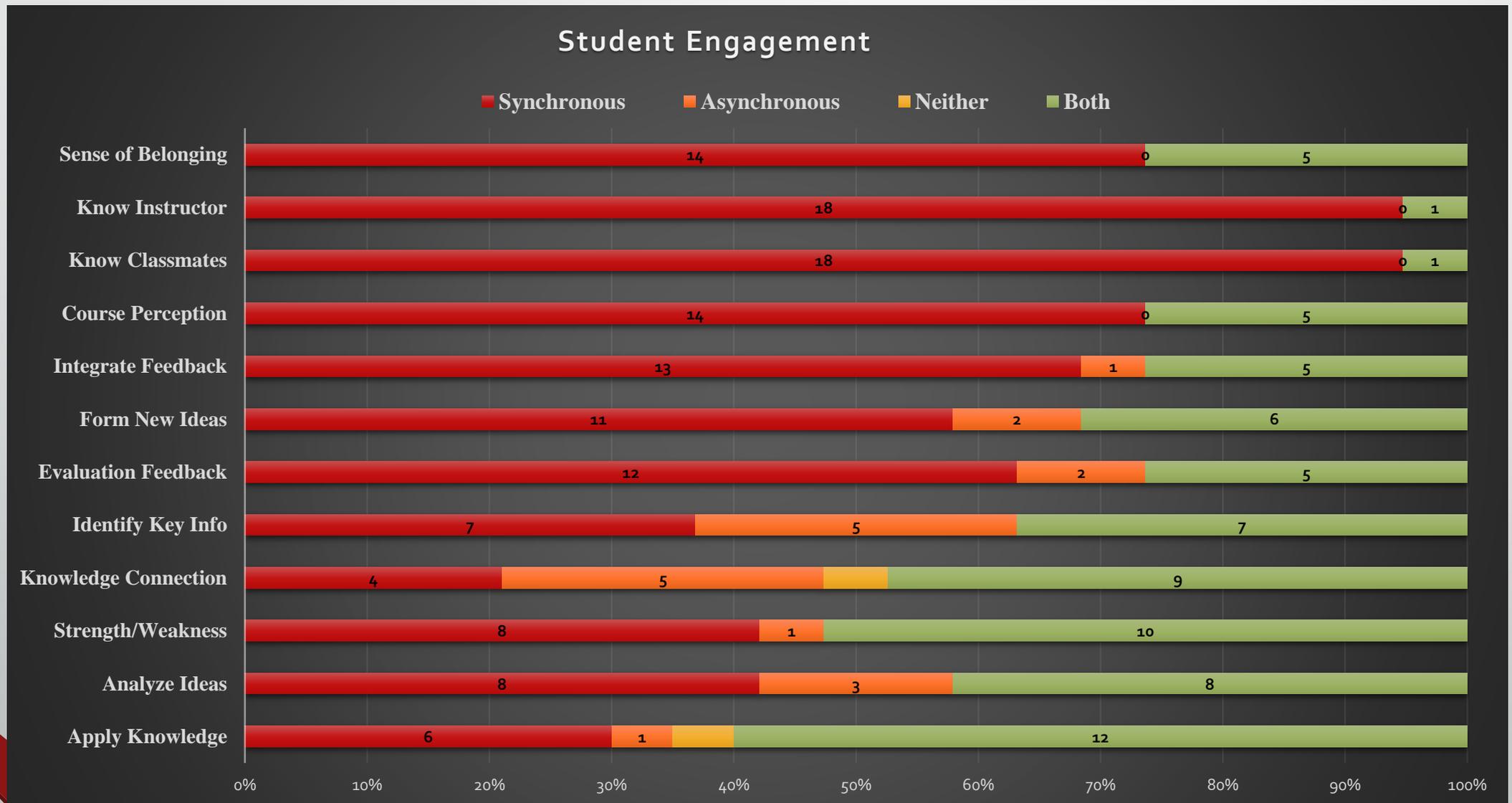
Results Survey



Results Survey



Results Overview



Results

Focus Groups

- “I feel like I can gather my thoughts together better in the asynchronous but I can get automatic feedback with the synchronous, which I like.”
- “I don’t think I have a particular preference but if asked I would like both the synchronous and asynchronous”
- “I like this [synchronous] for the fact that we are together and I see my classmates and instructor and get that instant feedback... but I really like the online piece [asynchronous] because it allows me to set my schedule...”
- “I actually like the two of them [synchronous and asynchronous]. This one [synchronous] because I like the instantaneous feedback, and the other one [asynchronous] I like the independence to work it out in a my own time...”

Discussion

- In areas related to *relationships* (sense of belonging, getting to know instructor and classmates), preference for **synchronous**
- For those items related to *content mastery* (application of knowledge, knowledge connection), preference for **both**
- Consensus from the focus groups supports the preference for asynchronous and synchronous integrated course activities.



Limitations

- Small sample size
- Self selection bias
- Participants not enrolled in same course during each of the data collection periods

Significance

- Participants overall valued both teaching methodologies.
- Students indicate a strong appreciation for the personal live interaction with classmates and faculty.
- Integration of independent study (asynchronous activities) and personal interaction (synchronous activities) appear to provide a better overall learning experience.
- Students value the integration of innovative technology .
- More research is needed related to use of synchronous activities with large groups.
- Identifying student learning style is critical to implementation of innovative pedagogical methodologies.

References

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