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Flex on This! Flexible Seating in the Classroom

Meghan McGarrity
Illinois Wesleyan University

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Flex On This! Flexible Seating in the Classroom

Meghán McGarrity and Leah Nillas*

Educational Studies, Illinois Wesleyan University

Research Question

- How does flexible seating in the classroom impact student learning?

Literature Review

- Gansemer-Topf and Rands (2017) stated that flexible seating in the classroom creates student motivation and engagement.
- Harvey and Kenyon (2013) concluded that incorporating flexible seating engages students in lessons and increases their motivation.
- Merritt (2014) gives insight to the growing body of a child and how they have smaller attention spans, making it different to focus for long periods of time.
- Flexible seating should be inclusive for students with sensory processing disorders (SPD), attention deficit disorder (ADD), and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) (Stapp, 2018)

Methodology

- The participants in this research investigation were 148 sixth grade students.
- In order to receive responses from all of them, I created a flexible seating survey with 3 questions, asking the students about their experiences with traditional and flexible seating in the classroom.



Figure 1. Flexible Seating is the use of alternative seating methods rather than traditional desks and chairs. This can include couches, rocking chairs, beanbags, etc. as shown above.

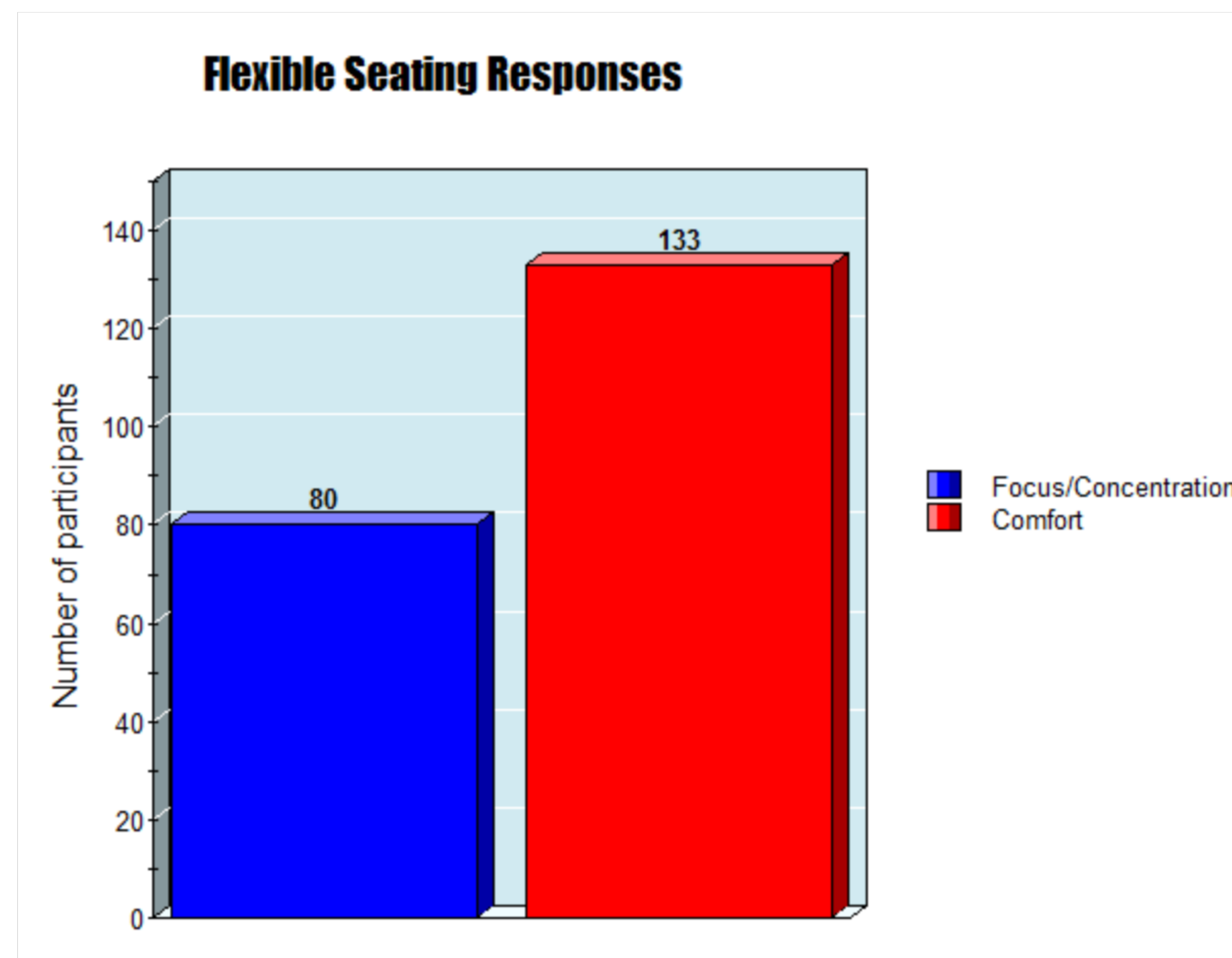


Figure 2. When coding the responses, most of the students included comments stating that they enjoyed learning in alternative seats because of the comfort and/or the ability to focus more.

Results and Data Analysis

- After collecting and analyzing the responses, I calculated that 96% of the students said that they were in favor of having flexible seating over traditional desks.
- Most of the student responses were similar in nature, stating that they could focus more during lessons because of the way their bodies felt in the alternative seats.
- Looking at Figure 1, all students were able to experience some form of flexible seating; each one giving students a more comfortable way to learn.
- Not only was the seating comfortable, but it also provided support for students who needed to see to the board by having a more open space/ lay out of the classroom.
- Students with different disabilities who needed to fidget (such as rocking) to concentrate, also benefited from flexible seating in the classroom.

Conclusion

- Overall, incorporating flexible seating in the classroom is beneficial to students' learning because it increases student motivation, as well as engagement, while giving students a more comfortable approach to learning.
- Flexible seating does have limitations due to specific classrooms, such as science, who need tables and desks for lectures, labs, and experiments.
- For further research, I would be interested in seeing if there is any correlation between test/homework scores and flexible seating. Does flexible seating influence academic scores?