

The Impact of Optional Group Work on the Student Experience

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Research Question

CS education has widely accepted pair programming.

What about group work in theory courses?

The CS department has adopted optional group work in two of its 1st and 2nd year intro theory courses.

Are we helping or hurting students by giving them the option to work in groups on assignments?

Methods / Data



Grades



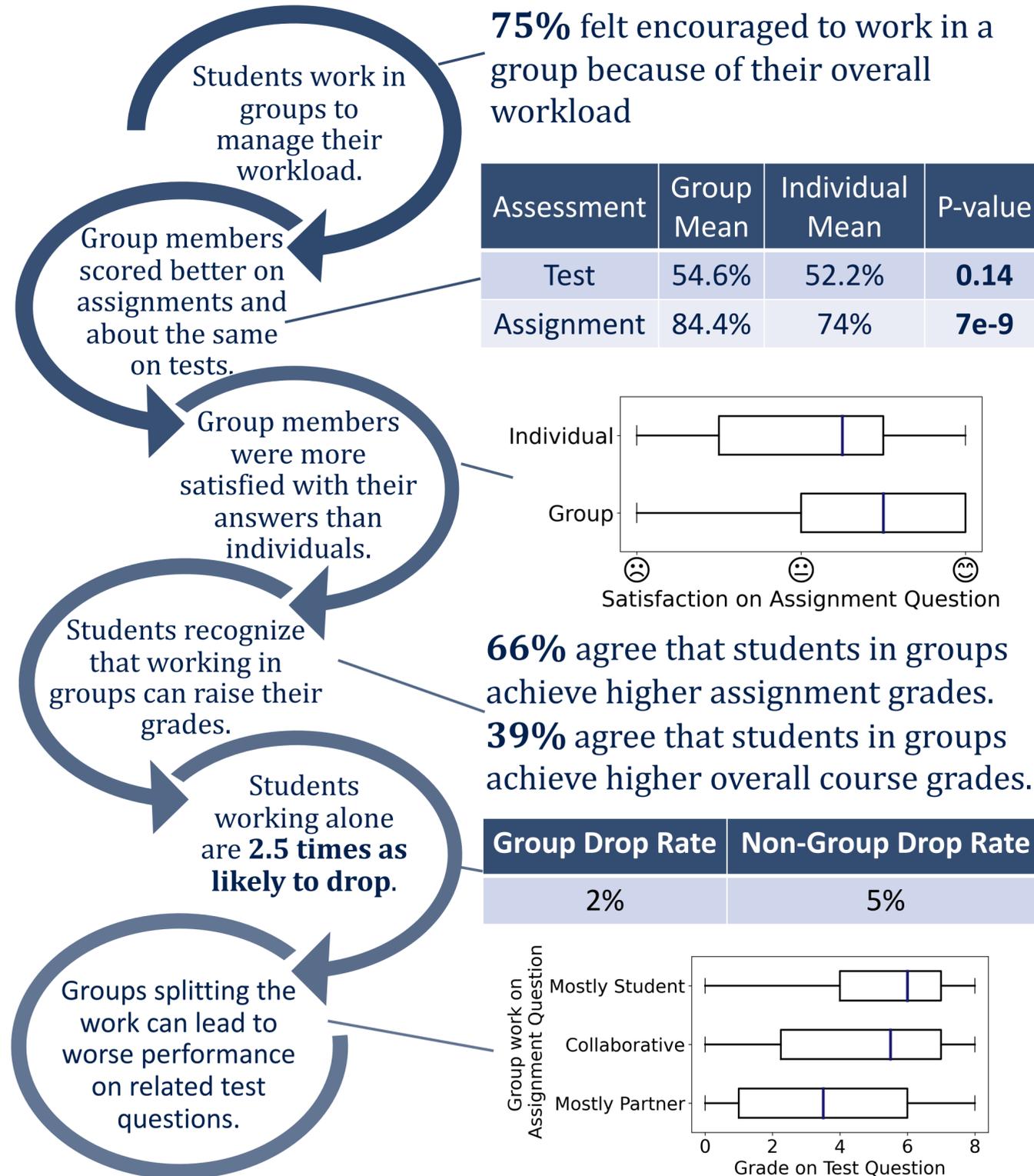
Surveys



Groups

- ✓ Data from 1354 undergraduate students: 832 CSC165 + 522 CSC263
- ✓ Grade breakdown by question on assessments and prerequisite course grades.
- ✓ Survey + group information for each assignment.

Six Preliminary Results for CSC263



Discussion

What is the impact of groups on grades used for program admission?

How has online learning impacted group formation?

Are students who don't know anyone at a disadvantage?

How can we help students find compatible groupmates?

Do we need to revisit *why* we give students the option to work in a group?

Acknowledgements

- Special thanks to Maryam Majedi for advice on the poster design