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Would like to appeal to the learned readers to send us their views, counter views, suggestions, comments, and observations etc. via “Letters to Editor” (which will be published in the next Issue) on the articles published in this Journal so that an academic discussion may start and our efforts may become more participative and thereby more meaningful and interesting.

Editor-in-Chief

The Themes for the next Issue July-2023

Section I.

1. Valuing professionalism and training in Teacher Education courses.
2. Changes in perspectives on areas of research in Teacher Education.
3. Perspectives on how learning in Curriculum and Pedagogy are demonstrated in Teacher Certification Programs.
4. Perspectives on effective Evaluation Practices in Teacher Education Programs.
5. Innovations and Innovative practices in Teacher Education Programs.
6. Diversity and Inclusion: Different International perspectives.
7. Ensuring access and equity in high quality Teacher Education programs.
8. ICT-related Innovations and practices in Teacher Education Programs.
9. Policy Perspectives in Teacher and School Education.
10. Reports on related conferences, seminars and workshops, including International offerings.
11. The Prolonged Online Mode of Teaching-learning - Challenges, Innovative experiments, Findings.
12. Tailored Interventions in Learner-centered Education.
13. Blended Learning as an outcome of Online Learning during the ongoing pandemic.

Section II. Innovative Experiments in Schools:

1. Teachers’ Professional Growth
2. Optimising Students’ Achievement
3. Holistic Learning
4. Experiments in the area of Experiential Learning.
5. Objective Evaluative Strategies During the Prolonged Closure of schools.
6. Solving School Problems through Action Research
7. Measuring Students’ all-round Achievements through Ensemble assessments.

Thanks and Regards
Editor-in-Chief
Dr. S.K. Bhatia

Editorial



Thank God – The Corona–pandemic trends, all-over the world, are on the decline. While wishing all our stakeholders a very happy 2023, we wish that nobody suffers from any disease and all remain happy and cheerful and may well proceed in fulfilling all of their constructive pursuits. As in other fields, the educational sector also has heaved a sigh of relief. Educational institutes have again started bustling with academics and the field studies that had vanished during the pandemic, are in action again. The researchers are on their toes for developing their tools and collecting the necessary data. Teaching-learning has been resumed in the offline mode and the use of educational infrastructure is being optimised. The scholars and researchers who were confined to the four walls of their homes, are visiting the study-centres and other places needed for completing their educational pursuits. The scholars and researchers are also inspired to take up and complete their studies. This has been corroborated from the trend of papers and articles received for the January 2023 issue of the journal.

Though an overwhelming number of papers were received for the present issue, our Referees' keen eyes could select only a fraction of those as they did not want to compromise with their quality. Many themes, similar to those as given on the opposite page, were circulated for the authors and the suggestions were well taken by the subscribers for the present issue. Some authors were stuck to the conventional styles, while others innovated a style of their own. One of our Fulbright referees commented on the paper "Neurodiverse Teachers and Self-Advocacy in Action" that this is a unique article with a different approach altogether and it may be accepted for publication. Further she added - "I wish to reinstate that this article brings in a fresh perspective to the position of teachers with neurodiversity in a system". This paper highlights the issue of special persons, with some or the other disability, when the International Day of Disabilities is being marked. Similarly, a few other papers are unique and deserve all praise. A few authors remain intact with the latest innovations and tailor their papers with the latest trends. Papers, like "Fifty Shades of Gay: Exploring Multiple Experiences of Gay Students", "Broken but not Shattered: A Case Study on the Experiences of Single Student-Fathers", An analysis of the Perception of Teachers towards use of Experiential Learning Approach in schools in Delhi, etc. are based on the latest trends being advocated in the arena of Education.

More and more papers are being bombarded in the field of educational technology. Of course, teaching-learning is significantly facilitated with the use of technology. Some tools like interactive whiteboards, podcasts, videos, or slideshows, Wikis or Google Docs, etc. immensely influence the teaching-learning processes, but do all such integrations encompass the emotional exchanges of the real-time encounters that take place among the principals, teachers and students? This is relatively an unexplored area and scholars and researchers may take up such comparative studies. Can technology and the emotional bonds co-exist? Let our authors work on such phenomena and concentrate on some innovative papers in this area for our next issue.

A section of our journal has been ear-marked for the school's innovative projects. The response for contributing such papers and articles is not very encouraging. School principals and teachers have an immense scope of working on projects for enriching students' cognitive, affective and psychometric domains. They can try out experimental strategies of teaching-learning and study their effectiveness on teachers' skill improvement and students' achievement over a period of time. Very little work has been done on innovative steps for optimising students' holistic learning. A good article on the various dimensions of holistic learning was

published in our last issue, but schools have yet to integrate its components while producing all-rounders in school. **This is a very fertile area to work upon and articles and papers on such themes are earnestly invited.** Many schools keep on organising many academic, social, cultural and other important events at their respective campuses. They can write down their reports and the emerging implications in the form of reports and send the same for our journal.

Many children, lacking in literacy and numeracy, may be observed, especially, in underdeveloped and developing countries. They remain at the low ebb, not only in schools, but later during all the stages of life. So timely ways and means are required to nip the evil when it starts germinating its roots at the primary stage of the school. So, the write-ups in this direction are also invited. This requires a thorough planning, effective training of the grassroot facilitators and proper teaching-learning right from the stage where roots are laid for the “3 R’s”. These are the very structures where the entire school and higher learning education and even the life-long wholesome living are based. The relevant articles for all these are also invited for the forthcoming issues.

Some educationists and even some national policies of education of different countries have recommended the integration of the necessary course contents, as well as integrating the various school subjects with fine arts, music, crafts and sports. The exponents of this approach feel that teaching-learning will become interesting and lasting through such integrations. On the other hand, another class of educationists is of the view that such forced integrations may take away the charm and the right perspective of teaching some disciplines. Therefore, we invite our worthy authors’ views on such integrations through their articles and papers.

Seeing certain problems erupting from educated unemployment, social unrest, etc. and on account of certain innovations appearing on the scene, some educationists and social reformers, often, suggest some radical changes in the system of education. On the basis of such suggestions, some journals bring out special issues or ask for experts’ views in the normal issues, and nomenclate those issues after the names of the problems/innovations and the corresponding troubleshooting interventions. The Advisory Board of our journal is in favour of giving freedom to the contributors for choosing any theme from the list given just before this “Editorial” or even any area of teacher or school education uppermost in the minds of the authors.

As stated in the beginning of this “Editorial”, a gleam of freedom from the Covid 19 has started appearing in almost all the countries, enabling the educational practitioners to come forward and resume their task of writing good papers and articles. But still the danger of this epidemic has not yet completely disappeared. It is not over, but the end is in sight. We wish that all the practitioners in the field of education remain fit and healthy along with all other people in the world and continue doing their professional and other duties earnestly.

Dr. S.K. Bhatia
Editor-in-Chief

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Inclusive Education: NEP- 2020 Perspective

Dr. Arti Bhatnagar and Ms. Neha Madan

Abstract

Each learner is unique in oneself in this diverse society. The responsibility of including all in the process of development lies on all the stakeholders involved in this path. And equal responsibility lies on the shoulder of education system of this country. Achieving this potential lies in the concept of Inclusive Education, though from centuries many efforts have been made at global level to make society inclusive but still there are barriers, which lead to lack of access. In the present paper entitled-- *Inclusive Education: NEP 2020 Perspective-- attempt has been made to highlight the attempts made in NEP—2020, to ensure inclusion. The present paper* would discuss the strategies to overcome barriers in the pathway to achieve Education for All by emphasizing on 6 E's i.e. **Equity, Equal Access, Equal Opportunity, Equal Dignity, Effective Communication and Embracing Culture** and 5R's to make inclusion possible into reality i.e., **Reach, Right, Responsibility, Relationship, and Respect**, by which diverse needs of learners can be addressed. Moreover, schemes launched by the government to ensure inclusion and strategies related to empowerment of teachers in making classroom safe place for development of all learners would also be discussed.

Key Words: Inclusive Education, NEP-2020, Empowerment, Strategies

Introduction

The right kind of education is not concerned with any ideology, however much it may promise a future utopia: it is not based on any system, however carefully thought out, nor is it a means of conditioning the individual in some special manner. Education in the true sense is helping the individual to be mature and free, to flower greatly in love and goodness. That is what we should be interested in, and not in shaping the child according to some idealistic pattern. The highest function of education is to bring about an integrated individual, who is capable of dealing with life, as a whole.

J. Krishnamurti

No one can deny in accepting the reality that education is important to live with happiness, and which enables students to do the analysis and critical thinking, while making life decisions. As we move on, life gives various survival challenges to humans but if we have education as guide to us, we can fight the failure and achieve success in life. The only one thing that can remove corruption, unemployment, and environmental problems is education itself. If we can lead life where we can stay independently on our feet, this is the real purpose of education. It should free the perception that education only deals with degrees. With this view in

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mind each nation in the world wants to bring development, through education as powerful weapon in hand. Similarly, for governments and nations, to make their country developed, their first budget allocation must be on the education, its infrastructure in schools and colleges. And progress can be ensured if all are included, that is, each human is included in the path of development.

Moreover, education today is also greatly influenced by the views of Mahatma Gandhi who regarded education as an effective medium of bringing out the best in any individual and developing his personality in a harmonious way. For this, he dreamt of “Swaraj” wherein every citizen of the country would be living a life which would be free from all kinds of exploitations and would be having the atmosphere of total equality and fraternity and this can be made realistic, only if society is Inclusive, that is, it includes all. Moreover, as prescribed by **The World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen 1995)** an inclusive society is “society for all in which every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, has an active role to play”.

And for this, various education policies, commissions came up with innovative recommendations for the progress of nation through holistic development of learners by including all. Recently National Education Policy -2020 was published (came into existence) and it is being implemented to enable its citizens to not only learn but also learn how to learn so that they can cope up with rapid changes undergoing in the knowledge landscape at global level, which is possible through Inclusive Education.

Especially with enactment of Right to Education (RTE) which mandates free and compulsory education to all children from 6-14 years of age, classrooms are getting more diverse day by day at elementary level. One of the key objectives of RTE- SSA is Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE). Three important aspects of UEE are access, enrollment, and retention of all children in 6-14 years of age. And for achievement of this objective, UEE has further been facilitated by the Constitutional (86th Amendment) Act, by making free and compulsory elementary education a Fundamental Right, for all the children in the age group of 6-14 years. This Amendment has given a new thrust to the education of Children With Special Needs (CWSN), as without their inclusion, the objective of UEE cannot be achieved and social change is not possible. In fact, inclusion of one of the groups, which is extremely crucial for UEE, is perhaps that of the CWSN and this aspect is emphasized in NEP-2020 also which focuses on Human Rights Approach aiming at-- Creating an inclusive culture in an inclusive society.

Presently, the government is coming up with many new schemes/ policies through which efforts can be made to ensure inclusion of all. But there are many gaps in the form of physical, participation and learning outcomes, which need to be overcome in reality.

Hence in the conceptual based paper entitled ***Inclusive Education: NEP 2020 Perspective*** would discuss strategies to overcome barriers in the pathway to achieve Education For All by emphasizing on 6 E's i.e. Equity, Equal Access, Equal Opportunity, Equal dignity, Effective Communication and Embracing Culture and 5R's to make inclusion possible into reality i.e. Reach, Right, Responsibility, Relationship and Respect by which diverse needs of learners can be addressed to. As in the school, most significant role played in learning process of child is **classroom**. The classroom is a platform, which offers a dynamic, productive space where ideas, values, information, knowledge are shared and conveyed between main components in the process of learning i.e., students and teachers. In the present paper recent schemes launched by government to ensure

inclusion and strategies related to empowerment of teachers in making classroom safe place for development of all learners has been discussed.

The main highlights of the paper are:

- Need for an Inclusive Society
- Meaning of Inclusive Education
- NPE- 2020 : Perspective on Inclusive Education
- Making Inclusion a reality – 6E's and 5R's
- Government Scheme: Samagra Shiksha Scheme
- Empowering teachers in the process of Inclusion

Need for an Inclusive Society

If anybody talks about progressive society then they need to reflect on **inclusive society** which is expressed thus-- *An inclusive society is a society that over-rides differences of race, gender, class generation, and geography, and ensures inclusion, equality of opportunity as well as capability of all members of the society to determine an agreed set of social institutions that govern social interaction. (Expert Group Meeting on Promoting Social Integration, Helsinki, July 2008)*

The World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen 1995) defines an inclusive society as-- “society for all in which every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, has an active role to play”. Hence such inclusive society must be based on respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, cultural and religious diversity, social justice and the special needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, democratic participation, and the rule of law-- ones which are promoted by social policies that seek to reduce inequality and create flexible and tolerant societies that embrace all people.

In the eyes of law every citizen, irrespective of other norms, is being provided equity, justice and equal opportunities and in this process legal instruments assure about the guiding principles that will guarantee that all citizens are being provided, and violators of human rights should be brought to justice. The judiciary which serves to protect just societies must be impartial, accountable, and inclusive to give weight to the opinions of those who defend the inclusiveness of the society at the local, regional, and national levels. To gain feeling of atmosphere of inclusion and participation in society, maintenance of security of all individuals is of paramount importance.

Inclusion is community. No one becomes included by receiving handouts, even if these handouts are given by public bodies and with public resources. No one becomes included by being treated by a program in which they are no more than a number or a statistic. Inclusion is connection to the network of community development, it is to become more than a speck of dust, to have a forename and surname, with one's own distinctive features, skills and abilities, able to receive and give stimulus, to imitate and be imitated, to participate in a process of changing one's own life and collective life.

(Busatto, 2007: 4)

The above quotation places emphasis on the recognition of the individual and the relationship between community and the individual. This suggests that inclusion is a mutually beneficial state for both the community and the individual and in this path **inclusive education** plays key role and it can reach peak when it leads to inclusiveness.

Meaning of Inclusive Education

Promoting inclusion is about reforming the education system. Inclusive education is much more cost effective than a segregated system, not only in terms of the running costs but also the long-term costs on the society.

--Roger Slee (UNESCO, 2005).

Inclusive education means education of all students, where all students are equal participants in the learning process. The term 'inclusive education' is a step ahead of integrated education in that, it goes beyond children with disabilities and refers to an education system that includes all.

An inclusive class may have amongst others, children who are disabled or gifted, street or working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children belonging to religious, linguistic minorities or children from scheduled tribes, scheduled castes or other backward classes. Hence, we can summarize meaning of inclusion as:

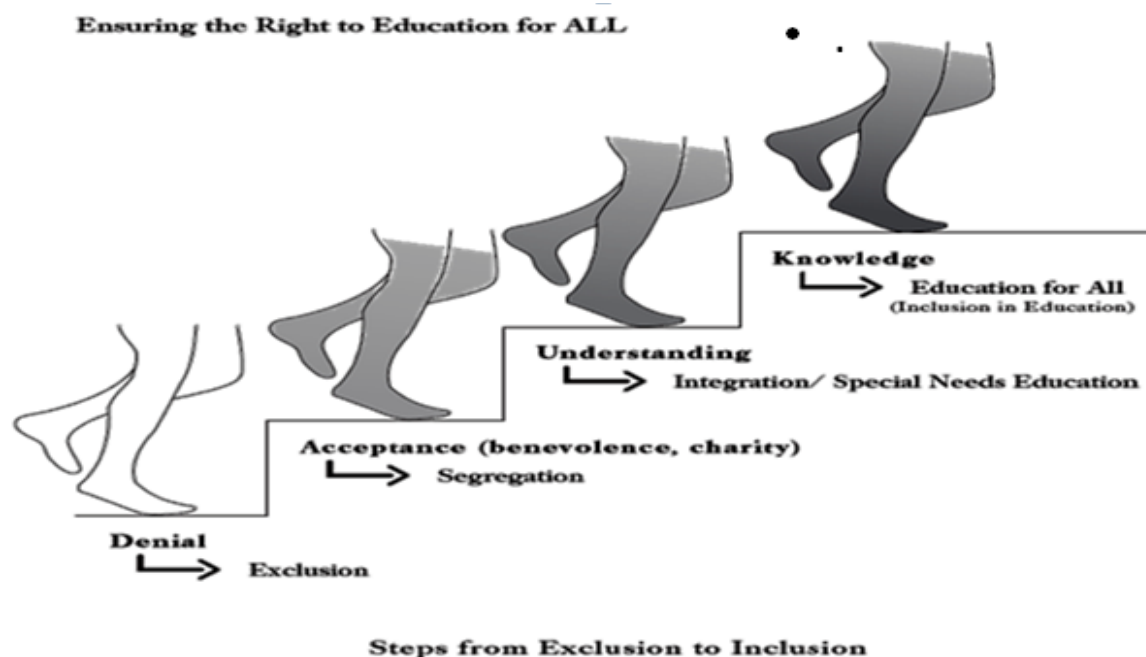
Inclusion

Inclusion is not:

- Focusing on an individual or small group of pupils for whom the curriculum is adapted, different work is devised, or support assistance is provided,
- About how to assimilate individual pupils with identified special educational needs into existing forms of schooling.

Inclusion is:

- A process (rather than a state), by which a school attempts to respond to all pupils as individuals.
- Regards inclusion and exclusion as connected processes; schools developing more inclusive practices may need to consider both.
- Emphasizes the reconstructing of curriculum provisions in order to reach out to all pupils as individuals.
- Emphasizes overall school effectiveness.
- Is of relevance to all phases and types of schools, possibly including special schools, since within any educational provision teachers face groups of students with diverse needs and are required to respond to this diversity.



Source: Lise Vislie, 2003.

NPE- 2020: Perspective on Inclusive Education

There is no doubt to accept the fact that India has witnessed visible improvement in education especially with regard to educational infrastructure and students' enrollment in the recent years. In particular, the Right to Education Act 2009 has successfully managed to increase enrolment in the upper primary level (Class 6-8). Nationally, between 2009– 2016 the number of students in the upper primary level increased by 19.4 percent. In NPE- 2020 attempts have been made to address the growing inequality and inequity-plaguing country's education system today. Through survey, the NEP- 2020 recognizes high dropout rates among socio-economic strata and vulnerable minorities. More importantly, recognition of barriers that lead to inefficient resource allocations, such as small school campuses and causes for lesser participation of the girl child in rural areas. And due to most of the children living in difficult geographical areas education needs are not met. NEP-2020 has emphasized on human rights approach and focused that every human being has the freedom to dream, thrive and contribute to the nation and to achieve this, it aims at creating an inclusive culture to build up inclusive society.

During surveys, it was found that, in reality, there are so many gaps-- such as there is lack of access to learning and infrastructural facilities which lead to lack of participation of such students. Therefore, in NEP-2020, recommendations have been given to bridge the gap by making accessible all aspects of learning, with infrastructure facilities etc. and by ensuring meaningful, age- appropriate participation of learners through adoption of universal design of learning, with a view to enhanced learning performance adaptations in terms of curriculum transaction and assessment to be followed. It broadly aligns with the objectives of The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act 2016, and also focuses on creation of Special Education Zones (SEZ).

Making Inclusion a Reality – 6E’s and 5R’s

A thought often comes to the mind of educators, when they observe children that -- *“Children have multiple and diverse identities. But why do children look similar? Imagine children at school with their school uniforms! Don’t they look similar? In fact, they do; not only in their physical appearances, but also with respect to certain perceptions about them. Generally, attributes like playfulness, innocence, purity, goodness, naiveté, etc. are used while talking about a child. A child is a child after all!”*

It is our duty as an educated citizen to ensure inclusion of all and for this if we reflect on analysis of NEP-2020, it has focused on **6E’s and 5R’s** i.e. Equity, Equal Access, Equal Opportunity, Equal Dignity, Effective Communication and Embracing Culture and 5R’s to make inclusion possible into reality i.e. Reach, Right, Responsibility, Relationship and Respect.

For implementation of 6E’s and 5R’s, empowerment of teachers in following ways can help to ensure inclusive education.

- **Establish and maintain a positive and supportive classroom atmosphere for ensuring participation of all.**

To develop sense of belonging, feeling of self-esteem, self-image motivation to achieve, speed of adjustment to the larger classroom and new demands, general behavior, and general level of achievement, positively affects the student achievement and development of personality. Fostering positive social relationships between students with disabilities and their peers requires the preparation of nondisabled peers in the classroom so that they understand the needs of their new classmates. One of the most critical things, an inclusion classroom teacher must do is to establish and maintain a positive and supportive classroom atmosphere. Students are more likely to follow directions, work hard, and exhibit positive classroom behavior when they feel wanted and appreciated by the teacher.

Creating a Positive Inclusion Classroom Climate

- Learn and use students’ names and know something about each student.
- Hold daily classroom meetings each morning to help build a sense of community and provide opportunities for conversation among students.
- Provide unstructured time (e.g., recess) when students can practice their social skills with peers and experience feedback.
- Encourage journal writing to improve self-awareness.
- Provide opportunities for students to participate noncompetitively (without (Placeholder1) tryouts or auditions) in all curricular activities. Avoid unnecessary competition among students.
- Provide ways for students to provide feedback regarding their experience at school and show them that their input is taken seriously.
- Make a point of connecting briefly and informally, over a period of several days, with individual students who are having difficulties. This establishes a relationship that will be helpful if the student’s situation requires a more formal discussion at another time.

• Enhancing Performance Through Modification in Classroom Strategies

1. Team Teaching

Team Teaching is an approach in which two or more teachers, come together, plan together, teach together and evaluate together. As an educator, we have to work out the depth in which the therapists and doctors give their inputs and how they can be related to education and behaviour of the child in school. In inclusive schools the regular education teacher and the special education teacher also work together in providing service to children with Special Needs in the classroom. In inclusive education, meeting the special educational needs of children is the joint responsibility of the regular teacher, the special teacher, and other professionals.

2. Cooperative Learning

Cooperative Learning is a strategy used by group/number of students to achieve a common goal with mutual collaboration and support. In an inclusive classroom where a large number of children with and without disabilities have been enrolled, children can be taught with the help of cooperative learning in which they have common goals. If a child with Special Need is to be taught, he/she should be placed with the children who have the sensitivity and skills to deal with them.

3. Role Playing and Observation

Role-playing is a helpful technique for engaging student interest and provides opportunities for practice and feedback. One way to establish motivation and to inject some humor into the learning process is to ask students to role-play a situation in which the identified skill is lacking. Role-playing allows students to take on roles, provide feedback to one another, and practice new skills. Role-playing enables students to simulate a wide range of school, community, and workplace interactions. For students with intellectual disabilities, role-playing can provide an opportunity to practice appropriate small talk, a social skill that is key to acceptance in the inclusive classroom.

• Modification in Assessment Pattern

National Assessment Centre, **PARAKH** will be formulated to create equitable systems of assessment for children with learning disabilities. Alternate models for schooling are proposed to advance this objective.

• Creation of Special Educational Zones

One of the standout recommendations of the NEP-2020 is the proposal to set up Special Educational Zones (SEZs) in regions with significant population belonging to Socio Economically Disadvantaged Groups. The key purpose is to spread education in the remotest and farthest places in India. This will be done by pumping extra resources and aligning multiple schemes and programmes of Centre and States to transform these backward regions.

While this idea is novel and holds promise to transform educational access in inaccessible areas of the country (such as urban ghettos with substantial minority population), the policy hasn't specified what the criterion for these zones would be and how will they be distinguished in urban and rural landscapes.

• Government Schemes: Samagra Shiksha Scheme

Another initiative taken by government is in the form of **Samagra Shiksha Scheme**. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the school education programme Samagra Shiksha Scheme 2.0 till

the 2025-26 financial year. An integrated scheme for school education covering the entire gamut from pre-school to Class XII which will deliver inclusive, equitable, and affordable school education. subsumes the three Schemes of **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)**, **Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)** and **Teacher Education (TE)**. This scheme covers **1.16 million schools**, over 156 million students and 5.7 million Teachers of Govt. and Aided schools (from pre-primary to senior secondary level). And it includes a **provision to support out of school children** from age 16 to 19 with funding of Rs. 2000 per grade to complete their education via open schooling. There will also be **greater focus on skills and vocational education**, both for students in school and dropouts.

Conclusion

NEP-2020 perspective on Inclusive Education has done well by loudly recognizing the challenges faced by gendered categories, minorities and children with special needs. It has also done well in terms of proposing a series of laudable steps including education SEZs to address the structural challenges of education in inaccessible regions. Through modifications, opportunities to all can be made accessible. As **Inclusion** means-- **Vision + Placement + Support + Resources + Leadership + 5As (Acceptance, Access, Adapted Curriculum, Adapted Assessment, Adapted Teaching)**.

Hence, we can say regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. Moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system capable of positive change itself in society.

The Salamanca Statement and Framework of Action on Special Needs Education

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Software Applications for Instructional Delivery among Business Education Lecturers in Universities

Suleiman HAYATU

Abstract

This paper reviews software applications for instructional delivery among Business Education lecturers in universities. Under this review, four software applications were considered which include; lesson planning software applications, lesson presentation software applications, classroom management software applications and assessment software applications. It was found that the availability of these software applications was confirmed and their effectiveness in aiding the design and presentation of instructional delivery was also established. It was also revealed that using software applications for instructional delivery cannot be ignored most especially in the 21st century. The paper therefore concluded that there is a need to ascertain the present training needs of Business Education lecturers in the usage of lesson planning software applications, lesson presentation software applications, classroom management software applications and assessment software applications in order to have an effective and efficient utilization of these software applications for instructional delivery.

Key Words: Software Application, Instructional Delivery, Business Education Lecturers

Introduction

Software refers to a general concept that connotes all programmes and instructions that are run on computer hardware. Daintith and Wright, (2016) defined software as a generic term for those components of a computer system that are intangible rather than physical, these include computer programmes and data stored or intended to be stored in a computer, preparatory design materials, computer programming languages and associated documentation and other information generated by a programmed computer and stored or transmitted electronically. A software may also include printed documentation that is accompanying a computer programme or database and object code programmes that are stored on tapes or disks (Bainbridge, 2010). Therefore, a software refers to the total programmes, instructions, designs and databases developed for full utilization of a computer system.

Computer software is making an immense contribution in the operation and performance of both educational and non-educational organisations. Even though there are various classifications of computer software, most of the authors in the field of computer science classified computer software into two broad classifications which include system software and application software or software application.

Software application is defined by Otuka et al. (2010) as a special package designed to perform a specific task which includes word processing, data processing, database management system, graphics, presentation,

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programming, learning, engineering, architectural, commercial, entertainment software applications. On the other hand, Haag et al. (2004) described software application as software that allows users to perform specific information-processing tasks which includes paying account payables, payroll management, inventory management, presentation and many others.

There is widespread use of software applications in various fields of human endeavour. Teachers, marketers, accountants, secretaries, engineers, doctors, journalists, architects, administrators, military and others extensively use software applications to explore different areas in their respective fields to obtain solutions to their daily challenges. Software applications are presently becoming highly important not only to teachers but also to school administrators, parents and students alike as it has the potential of revolutionizing the process of instructional delivery and research. The use of software applications by teachers has created a new and promising learning environment which not only facilitates instructional delivery and research, broadens their scope but also reduces many challenges associated with conventional instructional delivery and research.

After more than three decades, from the belief that computers may replace teachers' role, presently the talk on computers replacing the roles of teachers is less, instead, there are more conversations about computer software applications assisting teachers perform instruction, thereby transforming and facilitating instructional delivery (Doering & Veletsianos, 2009). Supporting the assertion, Arnett, (2013) argued that technology without teachers cannot improve our system of education and consequently, our system of education cannot meet the present needs of the society until we innovate beyond the traditional teaching, learning. Similarly, Kala-Prakash, (2015) asserted that applying innovative software applications in instructional delivery in the 21st century cannot be ignored by stakeholders in education particularly universities. In the same vein. Adu et al. (2013) concluded that sustaining education in Nigeria through traditional means remained difficult. This implies the use of modern means of instructional delivery. A few include the usage of computer software applications most especially among business education lecturers.

Business Education, as one of the branches of general education, has been defined by Jimoh-Kadiri and Bupo, (2011) as the inculcation of pedagogical and business competencies necessary for the teaching of business concepts, knowledge, attitudes and skills. Similarly, Business Education also refers to a specialized programme and a subset of Vocational Education that offers specialized instruction for general business orientation and office occupations (Asuquo, 2010). Therefore, Business Education is the inculcation of relevant competencies needed by individuals to enable them not only to teach business concepts, beliefs, ideas, knowledge and skills but also be able to perform effectively and efficiently in the business world. There are three broad areas/options in Business Education which include **Accounting, Marketing and Office Technology Management**. According to Ajunwo (2017), the government and other partners in education should provide the necessary ICT facilities in both hardware and software with the view to encourage their utilization in business education's instructional delivery. However, in spite of the paradigm shift in ICT, Business Education lecturers need adequate and effective training and development in order to meet the demands of the present society (Adanne & Adizi, 2018).

Instructional delivery is the interaction between the teacher, the learner, the curriculum and the knowledge, skills and values the learners will need for learning and associating with others in a dynamic world. Instructional delivery is a very complex process which needs careful and effective planning and implementation including the choice of teaching strategies and their effective usage towards achieving the

instructional objectives (Garba, 2018). Instructional objectives can best be achieved through utilization of ICTs by university lecturers in their instructional delivery and research activities, most especially in the current dispensation in which traditional teaching, learning and research strategies are being replaced with technology-oriented strategies. In consonance with the above assertion, O’Flaherty and Phillips, (2015) stated that instructional delivery must be geared towards adapting to ICTs in order to meet the present conceptual needs of the society. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], (2004), effective instructional delivery is concerned with using learners’ knowledge, beliefs, skills and background to satisfy their natural curiosities and expectations. Supporting the above assertion, Gray cited by Okenjom et al. (2016) asserted that effective instructional delivery is a systematic process of facilitating learning which aimed at providing change in the behaviour of students.

Among the software applications for instructional delivery which this paper reviews include lesson planning software application, lesson presentation software application, classroom management software application and assessment software application. Studies have confirmed the existence of these software applications that aid the design, delivery of effective instructional delivery (Monett & Weishaar, 2015; Avsar et al., 2016; Kala-Prakash, 2015; Marina, 2015). Despite the fact that availability of the above software applications was confirmed, the effectiveness of software applications in instructional delivery has also been established by various studies (Ardic & Isleyen, 2018; Doering & Veletsianos, 2009; Harris, 2011; Janowskin et al. 2014; Kala-Prakash, 2015; Neuhoff, 2000).

Lesson Planning Software Applications for Business Education Lecturers’ Instructional Delivery

Lesson plan refers to a prepared document that describes and outlines the lesson contents step-by-step and a list of specified tasks that students will undertake with the view to guide the teacher in delivering the lesson (Corner, 2020). In other words, a lesson plan is the teacher’s roadmap of what his students need to be taught and how it will be taught effectively during the lesson time (University of Tasmania, 2019). Similarly, a lesson plan is an instructor’s daily guide that describes what students need to learn, how to be tutored and how the learning is to be measured (Stauffer, 2019). According to Corner, (2020) the items included in a lesson plan are; lesson objectives, lesson materials, lesson activities, lesson goals and lesson feedback. In their effort at describing the importance of a lesson plan, Cicek & Tok, (2013) asserted that a lesson plan is an indispensable element towards achieving the national content standards as well as improving the overall outcome of teaching and learning. Lesson plan is of different types including; yearly lesson plan, weekly lesson plan, daily lesson plan, and substitute teacher plan (Farrell cited by Cicek & Tok, 2013). But in some countries, lesson plans and guide books are provided by the Federal Ministry of Education through its website where teachers can access and use them (Cicek & Tok, 2013).

Lesson planning is the systematic process of identifying and deciding what students should learn and how they should learn (Cicek & Tok, 2013). However, lesson planning is the best way for teachers in delivering an effective lesson (Corner, 2020). Lecturers are required to be up to date in the preparation of daily lesson plans which should be presented to the head of department and made available in the classroom for implementation (Doak & King, 1999). Presenting lessons using lesson plans is highly required by lecturers because Cicek and Tok, (2013) reported that review of empirical studies in many countries revealed the importance of lesson planning.

Lesson planning software applications are application software packages used for the design and preparation of lesson plans. These include; Lesson Plan Maker, Planner, PlanbookEdu, Plan board, MyLessonPlanner, Lesson Planner Advanced, Common Curriculum, StarPlanIt, Coach Diary, Plan4Me, Fun 5 Plans, Lesson Planning System (LPS), Instructional Planning Assistant System (IPAS), Eduwiki (EW), Support for Teachers Enhancing Performance in Schools (STEPS), Inquiry in Motion Dynamic Lesson Planning Tool (IIM), The Learning Designer (LDSE), Smart Lesson Planning System (SLP), TaskStream (TS), Phoebe Pedagogic Planner (Ph) and many others (Monett & Weishaar, 2015; Common Sense Media, 2020; Strickroth, 2019).

One of the avenues that business education lecturers can utilize software application in the process of instructional delivery is in lesson planning. In achieving this, there is a need for ascertaining their training needs with the view to determine their actual competency gaps in the usage of the lesson planning software applications in order to have a successful training programme.

Lesson Presentation Software Applications for Business Education Lecturers' Instructional Delivery

Lesson presentation is a systematic process lecturers follow in executing the instructional steps in delivering instructions to students. These steps can be followed through traditional face-to-face method or through the use of technology. Technology exists in today's classrooms with the view to support and improve teaching and learning process since various types of technology can be integrated into the classroom in particular and education in general (Motamedi, 2015). Similarly, technology has become a strong factor that is currently shaping our education landscape with many schools supporting the integration of technology into the classroom (Johnson et al., 2016). It was empirically established that using lesson presentation software applications in instructional delivery was reported to have improved teacher-students' interaction and increased students' understanding (Motamedi, 2015).

Lesson presentation software applications refer to the application software packages that create multimedia stacks of cards or screens which can effectively display or present a lesson in a sequential manner. These include; MS PowerPoint, HyperCard, HyperStudio, Digital Chisel, Director, SuperCard, Flash, Corel Envoy, AppleWorks, Producer, Prezi, Xerte and many others (Harris, 2011). However, lesson presentation software applications have been widely accepted as a means of instructional delivery in higher institutions of learning (De-Leeuw, 2011).

One of the avenues through which Business Education lecturers can utilize software application in the process of instructional delivery is in lesson presentation. In achieving this, there is a need for ascertaining their training needs with the view to determine their actual competency gaps in the usage of the lesson presentation software applications in order to have a successful training programme.

Classroom Management Software Applications for Business Education Lecturers' Instructional Delivery

Classroom management is a very wide concept that describes a variety of strategies that lecturers adopt in ensuring a conducive and supportive classroom environment for their students' learning. In other words, classroom management is the variety of actions that teachers carry out in creating a conducive environment

for students' academic and social-emotional learning (Evertson & Weinstein, 2006). In the words of Brophy "classroom management refers to actions taken to create and maintain a learning environment conducive to successful instruction, arranging the physical environment, establishing rules and procedures, maintaining students' attention to lessons and engagement in activities" (Korpershoek et al., 2014). However, the present society is highly technology driven that develops rapidly, in order to adapt to the paradigm shift, there is a need for schools to reform their approaches to education thereby providing reliable competencies through highlighting the significance of classroom management strategies towards achieving learning objectives (Jacob & Masuroi, 2013). Similarly, the ability of lecturers to organize their classroom and effectively manage their students' behaviour is critical to attaining positive educational outcomes (Oliver & Reschley, 2007).

Classroom management software application is a tool developed to help teachers in classroom activities in a learning environment where students predominantly use connected devices like desktops, laptops, palmtop or tablets (Nesbitt, 2016). In other words, classroom management software applications refer to the various application software packages that aid collaboration among lecturers, students and parents as well as recording students' attendance, performance, progress and controlling their behaviour among others. These include, Acadly, VersoApp, Net Control 2- Classroom, Google Classroom, TodaysMeet, Class Time Grade link SIS, ASAP Registration + Management Software, Moodle, CMS, MyKlassroom and many others (Kala-Prakash, 2015). However, Nesbitt, (2016) identifies the purposes of using classroom management software among educational institutions and teachers which include:

- To monitor the students' screens from a single computer
- To monitor students' internet activity in the real time
- To access the students' internet history
- To monitor the keyboard and create alert whenever students type inappropriate words
- To capture screenshots automatically from another device while in use
- To alert the school authorities for signs of extremism, radicalism, bad or any inappropriate behaviour

In the same vein, Patrick, (2018) identifies additional ways through which a classroom management software application can be beneficial in instructional delivery which include:

- It promotes collaboration among students in the classroom;
- It promotes students' engagements;
- It improves knowledge retention among students;
- It makes teachers' workloads light;
- It improves communication between students and their teachers.

Modern classroom management software applications are highly required in the 21st century instructional delivery in order to tap their potentials in a peaceful and productive environment (Faronics Corporation, 2012). However, according to the United Kingdom's Government Guidance Document, educational institutions

are informed that “it is essential that children are safe-guarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material” and that “children are safe from terrorist material” (Nesbitt, 2016). The recommendation of Oliver and Reschley, (2007) is indispensable in the process of achieving the above objectives contained in the Guidance Document who recommended that education institutions should provide appropriate policies, practices and incentives that will enable teachers acquire relevant knowledge and skills necessary for effective classroom management, thereby maximizing students’ learning opportunities, preventing anti-social behaviour and responding to the inappropriate behaviour.

However, effective education is the extent to which educational institutions are successfully achieving their educational objectives (Korpershoek et al., 2014). And it is a known fact that effective education cannot take place in a poorly managed classroom (Jones & Jones, 2012). Therefore, achieving effective education in our educational institutions in the 21st century requires effective classroom management by the lecturers who are instrumental in that respect. Supporting the above assertion, Faronics Corporation, (2012) indicated that effective 21st century lecturer integrating 21st century instructional resources into practice on a daily basis, requires 21st classroom management software and strategies. This assertion entails that for any lecturer to become effective in classroom management in the 21st century, he/she must be highly trained and professionally developed on effective utilization of the 21st classroom management software applications and strategies in order to effectively integrate these applications and strategies into 21st century instructional delivery. Therefore, the need for ascertaining the training needs of business education lecturers with the view to determine their actual competency gaps in the usage of the classroom management software applications remained sacrosanct.

Assessment Software Applications for Business Education Lecturers’ Instructional Delivery

The term assessment is defined in different contexts. Assessment in education refers to different tools and methods employed by lecturers to measure, evaluate and record students’ academic performance. However, assessment is a general terminology which comprises all strategies employed in gathering information about students’ knowledge, understanding, ability, motivation and attitudes (Ioannou-Goergiou, 2003). Similarly, Kizlik, (2014) defined assessment as a broad term which connotes all processes through which information relative to some identified goal or objective is obtained. In other words, assessment refers to the process of getting information used for decision making about students, educational policy, curriculum, schools and programmes (Nitko & Brookhart, 2011). Education remains one of the vital aspects of developing countries since through it the citizens struggle in developing their human capital, therefore, quality education requires good assessment (Marina, 2015). In order to maintain good assessment techniques in our educational institutions, employment of ICT based assessment tools is imperative. This is in line with the assertion of Marina (2015) who opined that since modern day educational institutions have become ICT driven in terms of their instruction, infrastructure and facilities, ICT can be used to facilitate assessment practice in different ways.

Assessing students’ progress is a regular practice of lecturers in every institution of learning. Therefore, the lecturers can utilize ICT as an assessment tool for administering tests, scoring tests, analysing the results and facilitating the assessment of students’ learning outcome (Marina, 2015). This is evident since electronic assessment (e-assessment) is gaining ground by the day in higher institutions of learning as a

means of assessing students. According to Shaheen et al. (2019), e-assessment has become an integral part of education and has remained the most reliable ICT tool for the assessment of not only key competencies but also complex competencies. In view of this, there is a need for universities to take advantage of its utility as rightly recommended by Marina, (2015) that educational institutions should strengthen their commitment in the development of a reliable assessment practice that can support both students, teachers and other stakeholders. Similarly, e-assessment has played a vital role in making students to be concentrated and motivated in performing a given task, and also allows the teacher to have access to highly standardized materials and make objective judgment (Shaheen et al., 2019).

Assessment software applications are the various application software packages used for conducting tests and examinations as well as grading students' performance. These include; Proprofs Training Maker, Easy LMS, HireVue Assessments, Test Grading, Test Invite, DigiExam, ProvExam, Transformica, OnDemand, Remark Test Grading, Codicity, Examsoft, Outmatch, Cognician Lead Quizzes, Psyft Personality Assessment, QuestBase, Questionmark, CodeMeet, FastTest, TutorPro Assessments, Brillium Solution, Assessmart, CustoMetrix, Digital Teacher, ExamN, FamilyMetrix, Gauge, HireSharp, iHiring, imPACT, Janison Insight, Journey, Kolbe Indexes, LearningBranch, Learnosity, Measured Success, Proctortrack, RCampus, testmakerhub, WeCP, Test Commander. Others include; Survey Monkey, Zoomerang, SurveyPro, HotPotToes, Quia, ExamBuilder, QuizStar, SurveyGold, Survey Gizmo and many others (Dawley, 2007; Marina, 2015). Various terminologies which include; e-assessment, Computer-Based Assessment (CBA), Computer-Based Testing (CBT), Computer administered testing and computerized testing are frequently used by educators as substitutes for one another to mean electronic assessment (Shaheen et al., 2019).

However, having highlighted the positive impacts of assessing students' electronically, business education lecturers can utilize some of the assessment software applications in assessing the academic achievement of their students objectively. In achieving this, the need for training the lecturers on how to use the assessment software applications effectively and efficiently remains highly important.

Conclusion

In order for business education programmes to have an effective instructional delivery in the 21st century, there is a need to ascertain the present training needs of business education lecturers in the usage of lesson planning software applications, lesson presentation software applications, classroom management software applications and assessment software applications. This will assist in conducting a successful training programme aimed at providing competent business education lecturers with the relevant knowledge and skills for effective instructional delivery.

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The Use of Enhanced Formative Feedback to Address Teachers' Challenges in Providing Timely Feedback in Printed Modular Distance Learning

Carlos Tian Chow C. Correos

Abstract

The use of formative feedback in the assessment will help learners' knowledge and skill acquisition. This also provided a wide opportunity for the children to express themselves and help them build new skills and knowledge easily. It also represents information communicated to the learner that is intended to modify the learner's thinking or behavior to improve learning.

This study used the descriptive method involving 3,168 teachers who formed part as respondents during the survey. It was found that most of the teachers encountered very challenging experiences in giving feedback in the results of formative assessment and providing feedback is not timely and immediate considering the modality used in distance learning.

Purposive sampling was used in the selection of teachers to become the development teams in designing formative feedback sheets in printed learning materials. The study designed a 4-step process for developing formative feedback sheets in the learning materials. Formative Feedback Sheets were developed and utilized in the whole Division of Surigao del Sur across Grade 6, 10, and 12 levels. During the survey at the end of the implementation, findings revealed that there is a reduction in the number of teachers who experience very challenging situations in the provision of immediate feedback to learners. Results also revealed that the use of formative feedback in the learning materials addresses teachers' difficulty in the provision of immediate feedback. Furthermore, the formative feedback sheets attached to the learning activity materials become one tangible alternative to the scaffold of learning in distance education.

Key Words: Formative Assessment, Feedback, Challenges in Distance Learning

Context and Rationale

The education department is in the process of adapting to the new normal form of education at present, and continuous innovations of teachers and school leaders including the active involvement of other stakeholders are the driving force for its success. Modular distance learning challenged school leaders and teachers to provide meaningful educational experiences at a distance as the education world grapples with the impact of Covid-19. Formative assessment at a distance is challenging and teachers need to check for understanding to provide meaningful feedback.

Since DepEd schools are not ready for Online Distance Learning (ODL), and TV/Radio-Based Instructional Delivery (RBI/TVBI), the department implemented Modular Distance Learning through print. This modality allowed the schools to continue education and attain its mission and vision which is to provide quality

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and accessible education to every Filipino learner (Quinones, 2020). The use of printed modular delivery required teachers to design learning activity materials that will be distributed to learners instead of textbooks and other school learning resources that are still inadequate.

Through printed modality, the teacher takes the responsibility of monitoring the progress of the learners. The use of multiple platforms via e-mail, telephone, text message/instant messaging among others is encouraged to learners for asking assistance from the teacher. Whenever possible, teachers shall do home visits to learners needing remediation or assistance or learners in marginalized situations including those in hard-to-reach areas (Llego, 2020).

As the school year continued, more difficulties were encountered in the day-to-day delivery of basic education services. These difficulties include the materials, the way content lessons are based on, the references, the materials needed for learning activities, the learning activities and assignments, the activities that would facilitate learning, and the provision of timely and relevant feedback after measuring the progress of the students' learning (NUADU Education, 2020).

Moreover, schools in Surigao del Sur Division faced issues including how teachers provide immediate, timely, and relevant feedback to ensure understanding of the lessons and how learners cope with the lessons without the assistance and guidance of teachers.

In recent survey results, most of the learners are having difficulty with the new learning modality. 90% of the learners in schools had a hard time answering their modules and half of them do not have enough time to accomplish all their modules within a week (Dangle and Sumaoang, 2020).

Additionally, most of the students cannot answer all their modules independently, which is why they badly need the assistance of others. Teachers also assume that students' answers in their modules have no validity, and most probably, mastery of the lessons is impossible to attain due to tendencies of guessing to complete the tasks in the modules.

To guide schools and learning centers, the Department of Education released DepEd Order No. 31, s. 2020, the Interim Guidelines for Assessment and Grading in light of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan which served as a guide for teachers on designing assessment and feedback mechanisms that should be used to inform and improve classroom practices and promote learning outcomes. It further emphasized that in distance learning environments, schools and teachers need to utilize alternative tools and strategies for assessing, feedbacking, and supporting learning, that will help teachers, learners, and their families.

In the study conducted in Surigao del Sur Division by Correos and Huelma (2020), teachers find it difficult to provide immediate feedback in distance learning delivery. Teachers claimed that the feedback cannot be given immediately due to the delivery scheme used. This further concludes that teachers find it very difficult to reach out to students immediately to provide feedback and corrections to their answers.

The above findings prompted Surigao del Sur Division to develop a formative feedback strategy that maximized learning support through the use of self-learning materials. Thus, the idea to use formative feedback sheets was planned and developed. Formative feedback was generated by teachers as strategies to engage learners to constantly reflect on how they can approach, orient, and evaluate learning, which leads to successful learning outcomes using the self-learning activity sheets or learning modules.

As teaching and learning in distance classes need new methods and practices, it also required teachers and school leaders to adjust the pedagogical process. This research highlighted the use of formative feedback in the learning materials as a pedagogic approach that best supports effective learning in the distance education context. This also aimed to provide a reference for teachers who will engage in providing formative assessment with formative feedback for the learner to successfully learn in distance education.

Innovation, Intervention, and Strategy

Due to the challenges of the new normal, Surigao del Sur Division enhanced the design of distance education delivery through Enhanced Formative Feedback in the learning materials or modules to ensure immediate, timely, and relevant feedback to learners. Since formative assessment is a measure of student learning in the classroom, formative feedback must be delivered during instruction immediately, allowing students to identify misunderstandings of the concepts and help them correct their errors during self-check activities.

In distance learning, the concept of immediate feedback is difficult since there are no teachers who can assist students in processing the right answers and be able to correct their answers from the formative practice activities and assessment. Therefore, the formative feedback sheets will help them understand the concepts through discussions of the right answers.

Normally, the learning activity sheets and the self-learning materials have only answer keys wherein learners will just get to know the correct or wrong answers. But there is no key to corrections that will scaffold students to explain the ideas and concepts to understand the right or wrong choices.

This intervention focused on improving the key answers available in the learning sheets and self-learning modules by adding concepts that explain the key to correct answers. The answer keys in the learning activity sheets and modules were given explanations to provide direct, immediate, and timely feedback to learners. This way, the students can self-check their answers even without the presence of the teachers. This eventually helped learners deepen their understanding after they have given instant feedback that serves as reinforcement of knowledge by correcting mistakes, affirming competence, or debunking misconceptions on the topic. This formative feedback strategy allowed also students to review the inputs and key concepts presented in the lesson and correlate their ideas, their choices, and the key to corrections.

The development and pilot testing started last September 2021, the first quarter of the school year 2020-2021. It continued to October 2021 with its rollout and series of cascading and implementation to the whole division of Surigao del Sur.

Research Questions

This research answered the following research questions:

1. What challenges were encountered by teachers in providing formative assessment?
2. What strategies/processes were done to address teachers' challenges in providing formative feedback?
3. What is the significant impact of using formative feedback on teachers in the provision of timely and immediate feedback?

4. What reflections are derived from designing and delivery of formative feedback in modular distance learning?

Action Research Methods

Participants and/or Other Sources of Data and Information

The result of the evaluation of challenges encountered by 3,168 teachers who participated in the survey about the delivery and utilization of assessment was used as the baseline data of this study. The results of these challenges were carefully analyzed to plan more comprehensive and direct actions to address the gaps.

50 teachers were selected as a poll of writers as well as trainers for the pilot implementation that runs from September to October. These writers were used for the Training of Trainers and Developers of the Pilot Materials.

30 master teachers were selected as a set of evaluators who took charge of the evaluation for refinement of the materials developed by the writers. The roll-out was conducted for Grades 6, 10, and 12 to ensure that these grade levels are equipped with the knowledge and skills in the utilization of formative feedback materials since these grade levels are crucial due to exit assessments.

Data Gathering Methods

This research used a descriptive method applying convenient sampling specifically in the conduct of the survey and evaluation of the challenges encountered by teachers in the provision of formative assessment in distance learning. A convenience sample is used because it includes all teachers who happen to be most accessible to the researcher.

Since most teachers declared that they encountered very challenging experiences in the provision of timely, immediate, and relevant feedback, teachers were conveniently chosen to become part of the survey.

In the development of Formative Feedback Sheets, purposive sampling was used in determining teachers and master teachers specifically in the development and evaluation of the material. Purposive sampling, also known as judgment sampling, involves using expertise to select a sample that is most useful for the purposes of the research.

A series of capacity building was provided to select teachers in the development and quality assurance of Formative Feedback Sheets to ensure that formative feedback delivers what it intends to deliver. The finished materials were then used, and another set of survey evaluations was conducted to assess if the gaps in assessment and feedback identified were addressed.

The researchers utilized the mean and standard deviation for descriptive analysis of the data specified in the use of a questionnaire. The researchers also used a 5-point Likert scale:

- 4.21 – 5.00 Extremely Challenging
- 3.41 – 4.20 Very Challenging
- 2.61 – 3.40 Challenging
- 1.81 – 2.60 Slightly Challenging
- 1.0 – 1.80 Not Challenging

Discussion of Results

The discussion is based on the data and information gathered through the questionnaire used in the conduct of the study.

Table 1 Challenges encountered by teachers in providing formative assessment			
Delivery of Quality Assessment	$\bar{X}$	s.d.	Qualitative Description
The provision of timely, immediate and relevant feedback to determine learners understanding and progress of assessment results	3.91	0.69	Very Challenging
The validity and reliability of formative assessment results to determine learner's progress	3.86	0.79	Very Challenging
The provision of formative practice activities in the learning materials	3.73	0.75	Very Challenging
The development of flexible formative assessment tools for learners	3.50	0.82	Very Challenging
The delivery of formative assessment to measure learner's understanding	3.50	0.83	Very Challenging
Overall	3.70	0.80	Very Challenging

Table 1 shows the challenges encountered by teachers in providing formative assessments. The overall mean of 3.70 with a qualitative description of Very Challenging is a manifestation that the teachers have encountered challenges in the delivery of quality assessment in the modular distance delivery. Bearing the highest mean of 3.91 and standard deviation of 0.69, the teachers responded very challenging in the provision of timely, immediate, and relevant feedback to determine learners' understanding and progress of assessment results. On the validity and reliability of formative assessment results to determine learners' progress, the respondents find it very challenging to manifest a mean of 3.86 and a standard deviation of 0.79. On the provision of formative practice activities in the learning materials, the teachers responded very challengingly supported by a mean of 3.73 and a standard deviation of 0.75. Additionally, the development of flexible formative assessment tools for learners and the delivery of formative assessment to measure learners' understanding of 3.50 and standard deviation of 0.82 and 0.83 respectively.

According to the Global Education Monitoring Report (2020), one of the issues in educational aspects is the assessment and feedback practices in modular distance learning. These necessitate teachers to design materials tailored fit to the needs and learning capacities of the students such as flexible feedback tools to ensure the learning of the lessons. Since lessons require a self-equipped format, materials to be given by teachers must have feedback in itself to ensure understanding even without teachers' assistance.

Moreover, Morisson (2019) believed that self-paced learning, assessment, and feedback must be given the most attention in the design of the material. Much evidence supports the concept that best learning occurs when a student works at his or her own pace and is actively involved in accomplishing specified learning activities, assessments, feedback, and experiences learning success, according to learning principles.

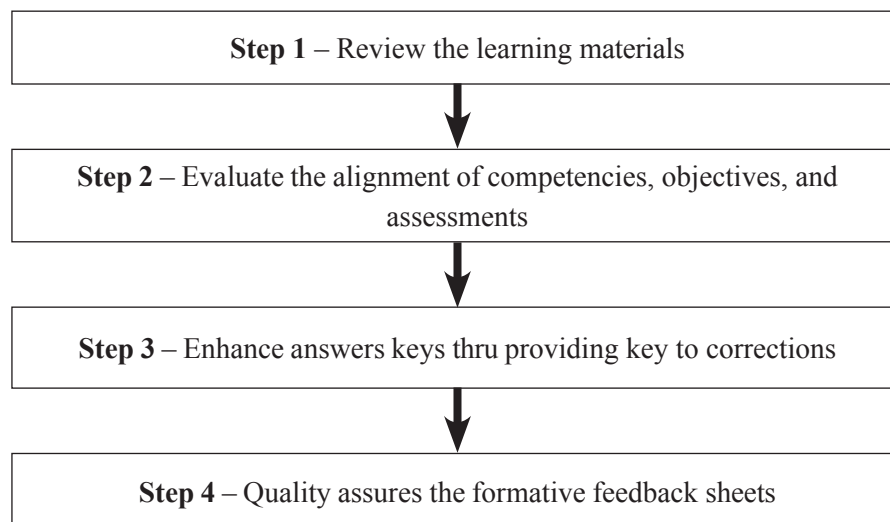


Figure 1 Strategies/processes done to address teachers' challenges in providing formative feedback

Step 1 focused on the review of the learning materials. This allowed the teachers to review the content of the learning activities or the self-learning modules. This helped teachers understand the connections between the parts of the learning materials, the contents, the activities, and the assessment toward the target learning outcomes.

Step 2 focused on the evaluation of the alignment of competencies, objectives, and assessments. Teachers are extra careful in this step because they are going to determine the comprehensiveness of all parts of the materials. If parts of the learning materials are not aligned, there is a tendency that formative assessment and formative feedback will not be organized and that affects the achievement of intended learning outcomes.

Step 3 focused on the improvement of the answers key portion of the learning activity sheets and other self-learning materials by including the key to corrections. This allowed teachers to write immediate feedback reflected in the learning materials.

Step 4 focused on ensuring the quality and alignment of the learner's materials, its assessment, and formative feedback sheets. Quality assurance is an important part of the assessment process. This QA process will provide feedback to the teachers that contribute to the quality of the developed formative feedback sheets. This process made sure that all elements and contents are aligned with the learning goals and outcomes.

An increase in students' engagement and learning is characterized by high-quality teaching and learning and this includes immediate feedback even in distance learning (Ashwin & McVitty, 2015). Instructional support from teachers is the most dominant factor determining student engagement and learning becomes more efficient and relevant to them if they develop new skills, knowledge, abilities, and attitudes using appropriate materials even in distance learning (Rivet & Krajcik, 2008).

Learning materials must offer new approaches and learning opportunities that enhance students' knowledge and help them overcome deficiencies (Gordon & Nicholas, 2013). Through timely and relevant feedback, students can get to learn more about the concepts of the lesson. Teachers also must be aware of the intervention

that could be done to address students' least mastered competencies (Herrera & Dio, 2016) so that they can provide supplemental materials appropriate to learners' needs. Thus, the developed formative feedback sheets are indeed a supplement to enhance learners' understanding.

Table 2 The significant impact of using formative feedback to teachers in the provision of timely and immediate feedback						
	Before Enhanced Feedback			After Enhanced Feedback		
Delivery of Quality Assessment	$\bar{X}$	s.d.	Qualitative Description	$\bar{X}$	s.d.	Qualitative Description
The provision of timely, immediate and relevant feedback to determine learners' understanding and progress of assessment results	3.91	0.69	Very Challenging	2.01	0.76	Challenging
The provision of formative practice activities in the learning materials	3.73	0.75	Very Challenging	3.33	0.71	Challenging
The development of flexible formative assessment tools for learners	3.50	0.82	Very Challenging	3.40	0.73	Challenging
The delivery of formative assessment to measure learner's understanding	3.50	0.83	Very Challenging	3.38	0.72	Challenging
Overall 3.70		0.80	Very Challenging	3.07	0.70	Challenging

Table 2 shows the results of teachers' responses on the significant impact of using formative feedback on teachers in the provision of timely and immediate feedback. After the roll-out and utilization of the formative feedback sheets, teachers' experiences with challenges in the delivery of quality assessment reduced from very challenging to challenging. Teachers claimed that the provision of formative feedback sheets helped them and eventually reduced the challenges they experienced in the delivery of immediate and timely feedback.

According to the teachers, since formative feedback provides a wide range of learning, they found it helpful for learners who are given immediate feedback on the materials through formative feedback sheets and enhanced their knowledge, skills, and values in the targeted outcomes even in the absence of teachers.

During an informal sharing of experiences, one teacher expressed...

"I observed that students were not anymore asking me for clarifications in accomplishing and understanding the task. Unlike before, where learning materials were just given without the inclusion of formative feedback sheets, students keep on asking how the answers will explain the real concepts".

Teachers also claimed that formative feedback provided learners with opportunities to go back to the concepts and self-correct their errors independently. The outputs of learners were manifestations that there is an improvement in learning outcomes through the aid of formative feedback.

Meanwhile, another teacher expressed also her sentiments...

“I observed that students in my subject can independently process their own answers and corrections to their answers. The feedback sheets guide them in deepening the lesson’s concept. Their results in the outputs submitted are really manifesting their understanding”.

However, one teacher saw another side of the results...

“Although formative feedback sheets lessen my burden in providing timely and immediate feedback through formative feedback sheets, I need more training on how to authentically design formative feedback sheets in my lessons and check learners’ progress in their learning.”

In conclusion, teachers need more training in the crafting of formative feedback to enhance their professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes so that they might, in turn, improve the learning of students, specifically those who were just users and not part of the development teams.

Reflections

Based on the findings of the research, the following reflections were drawn.

1. Formative Feedback through the key to corrections provided specific, detailed, and understandable explanations that help learners understand a concept or figure out where they went wrong with their answer or solution.
2. Formative Feedback through the key to corrections provided constructive suggestions and feedback to improve their learning.
3. Formative Feedback through the key to corrections provided opportunities for learners to review their responses/answers.
4. Formative Feedback through the key to corrections provided a self-correcting strategy that instantly relates to the information they are using and applying at the moment.

Recommendations

From the reflections derived from this study, the following recommendations were given:

1. There is a need to revisit the feedback practices and methodologies used by teachers in the delivery of formative assessment and feedback on the new normal.
2. There shall be designing of formative assessment tools appropriate to the new learning modality.
3. There must be ongoing capacity building for school leaders and teachers focused on formative assessment and timely feedback
4. There is a need to provide consistent monitoring, evaluation, and technical assistance to be provided to schools to address the gaps and mitigate risks and challenges in the delivery of formative assessment and feedback in the new normal.

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Fifty Shades of Gay: Exploring Multiple Experience of Gay Students

Teody Lester V. Panela

Abstract

This study used phenomenological approach in exploring the life and lived experiences of gay high school and college students in the City of Calbayog, Province of Samar. Ten (10) gay college students participated in the study. Participants met the description of a gay high school and college student: 1) bonafide high school and college student from any of the schools in City of Calbayog; 2) a biological male; 3) consider themselves as gay; and 4) willing to participate in the study. From the data analyses, three major themes emerged: (1) Stigma and Labels; (2) Outlook Distortion; and (3) More to Life. The result showed that these students experienced a difficult yet an honest form of self-expression that can inspire and boost the aspiration of gay students. The school must be extensive with the programs that catered around the members of the LGBT community. The school together with the community should conduct gender awareness seminar that tackle not only the concerns of the gay students as well as acknowledge their ability to contribute to the society. To fully fathom gay students' experiences, an intensive interview with their family, their friends, school personnel and community members is recommended

Key Words: Gay Students, Experience, Outlook, Emotion, Disposition

Introduction

In the Philippines, the lesbian, gay, bisexuals and transgender (LGBT) community have always make a stand for respect and equality from the society. During the 2011 Philippine National LGBT Conference, it was found out that despite the growing tolerance towards LGBT people, acceptance is still yet to be achieved. They still face violence and discrimination from their family, from society organizations, from health institutions, in schools, at work and from the government (Ocampo & Alonso-Balmonte, 2016).

Some would consider gayness as a form of a contagious disease, a genetic manifestation from familial heritage or an illness brought about the person's environment. However, the Psychological Association of the Philippines (2013) reaffirm its position, out of their scientific knowledge, that being gay is not a disease or disorder. There is no inherent pathology or illness behind same-sex gender orientations. In fact, it was taken out in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders 40 years ago.

Lesbians, gay, bisexuals and transgendered individuals confront pressures from the society to hide, suppress or even change their form of self-expressions and identities as conditions and requirement for social

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acceptance and enjoyment of rights. Furthermore, this discrimination and prejudice tend to be based from a rhetorical moral condemnation fueled by ignorance or unfounded beliefs surrounding this type of sexual orientations and gender expressions with maladjustment or psychopathology (Psychological Association of the Philippines, 2013).

Along with the concerns arising from being gay, the development of their sexuality often involves coming to terms with their individuality and acceptance of one's attractions, desires and feelings. Self-acceptance of one's sexual orientation is the openness of how one accepts their own sexuality (Franke & Leary, 1991). Accompanying individual acceptance is societal acceptance, which serves as a protective factor for gay. This predicts greater and positive self-esteem, essential social support and general health status preventing the occurrence of substance abuse, suicidal ideation and depression (Ryan, Huebner, Diaz, & Sanchez, 2009).

With its main objective of exploring the lived experiences, perceptions, and challenges of gay high school and college students, this study would like to answer the following questions: (1) what are the experiences, discriminating or not, of the participants; (2) what is their perception about oneself; and (3) what are their aspirations. This study is also an avenue to introduce a new form of data collection brought about the emergence and popularity of user-created electronic novels.

Review of Literature

The lesbian, gay, bisexuals and transgender (LGBT) community members are subject to prejudices rooted in beliefs and traditions about gender and sexuality. Considered as members of a social minority group, they suffer from various forms of injustice. Adding more to the fuel to the fire, is the lack of recognition from the society that ultimately affect their capacity to enjoy and fully access their rights as citizens. They are more susceptible to experience intolerance, harassment, threat of violence and discrimination due to their sexual orientation (Subhrajit, 2014).

Marginalization is at the core of exclusion of the members of the LGBT community from fulfilling their social lives in three levels, namely individual, interpersonal and societal levels. This limits their opportunities to make social contribution thus developing a low self-confidence and self-esteem resulting to eventual isolation from the society. Marginalization can be in the form of racism, poverty, sexism, and homophobia that negatively impact their mental well-being (Majd, Marksamer, & Reyes, 2009).

Furthermore, exclusion and discrimination have major impacts on the lives of gay person and resulted in the following: early dropping out of school, leaving family and home, inability to land regular jobs with lesser options, isolation from being ignored in the community, unable to access various services, moving to other areas, lack of social support, religious rejection, suicide attempts and forcibly marrying the opposite sex leading to divorce (McDavitt, et al., 2018).

Moral, religious and political beliefs of a dominant group often reinforce homophobic environment forces. It is manifested in physical attacks, jokes, negative media representation and discrimination in the workplace. The dilemma to come out or not can cause a great deal of distress to the person. Extreme harm and disruption of the lives of people can often result from it. This in turn direct individuals to dissatisfaction of the place they live in or study at, stress, loneliness, exposure to physical disturbance, and ostracism (Mayock, Bryan, Carr, & Kitching, 2009).

Members of the LGBT community often face harassment in schools every day. Most of them find it hard to speak up and complaint about harassment because it is so prominent in the culture. LGBT harassment is one of the forms of harassment that is allowed and accepted in popular culture (Ryan, Russell, Huebner, Diaz, & Sanchez, 2010).

They face considerable levels of harassment, stigmatization, and discrimination of which they learn to cope with particularly when they have the support of family and friends, and participate with social networks. However, some younger members had to cope with harassment, stigmatization, and discrimination without support. This had a negative impact on their mental well-being, leading to rejection from loved ones or religious affiliations, harassment and bullying at school, danger of physical violence in public places, casual homophobic comments, prejudice from professionals, childhood sexual abuse, verbal harassment, greater fear of discrimination and physical violence (Ryan, 2009).

Negative school experiences directly affect LGBT community members' academic achievement (Kann, et al., 2016). A negative hostile environment in school impacts their academic success such as lower grades and higher rate of absenteeism or problems with punctuality.

This study attempted to explore the gay high school and college students' experiences, perception and hope. The results of this study will be helpful in understanding the students' lived experiences and concerns prevailing in the society.

Methodology

Research Design

This qualitative study utilized phenomenological approach that aimed to investigate the experience of gay college student - how it is be gay and a student at the same time. A qualitative research study aimed to examine a phenomenon that impact on the lived reality of individuals or groups in a particular cultural or social context (Mills & Birks, 2014). A qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem (Creswell, 1998). The researcher builds a complex and holistic picture, analyze words, report detailed views of informants, and conduct the study in a natural setting. Phenomenology aimed to accurately describe the phenomenon without a pre-existing knowledge to a framework, but remaining truth to the facts (Groenewald, 2004). More so, using a qualitative research, the researcher would able to connect with their participants and to see the world from their viewpoints (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The researcher found this method most suitable to the inquiry in order to provide a comprehensive analysis on the lived experiences of gay college students.

Participants and Sampling

The participants of the study were identified using purposive sampling. Using purposive sampling, the researcher can choose their participants that will be fit for the study (Devers & Frankel, 2000). Simply put, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience (Tongco, 2007). Ten (10) gay college students participated in the study. Participants met the description of a gay: 1) bonafide high school and college student from any of the schools in City of Calbayog; 2) a biological male; 3) consider themselves as gay; and 4) willing to participate in the study.

Data Collection

In gathering the appropriate data for the study, two methods were used, namely indexing of electronic novels and a semi structured interview.

Semi-structured interview is a type of interview that has become the most familiar strategy in collecting qualitative data (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). A semi-structured interview is a qualitative method of inquiry that merges a predetermined set of open questions with the privilege for the researchers to explore particular responses further; used to understand how interventions work and how they could be enhanced. It also allows to asked follow-up question for clarification. The content of the interview guide was validated by two professionals who were expert in the field of Psychology. The researcher also provided an agreement that included obtaining informed consent, ensured confidentiality, time and place commitments, permission to record, delineating the ethical principles of research. As to data storing methods, the researcher used note taking and dialogic form interview to each deeper response of the respondents.

Data Analysis

The following steps represent Colaizzi process for phenomenological data analysis (Speziale, Streubert, & Carpenter, 2010). (1) Each transcript should be read and re-read in order to obtain a general sense about the whole content. (2) For each transcript, significant statements that pertain to the phenomenon under study should be extracted. These statements must be recorded on a separate sheet noting their pages and line numbers. (3) Meaning should be formulated from these significant statements. (4) The formulated meanings should be sorted in categories, cluster of themes, and subthemes. (5) The findings of the study should be integrated into an exhaustive description of the phenomenon under study. (6) The fundamental structure of the phenomenon should be described. (7) Finally, validation of the findings should be sought from the research participants to compare the researcher's descriptive results with their experiences.

Research Reflexivity

In the study, the researcher's approach is different in terms of other researchers' perspectives. As a member of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community, the researcher understands his stand that might lead to a different development and an equally valid understanding of the particular situation under study.

The study has a preconception with a tone of positivity of eventually creating meaning during the entire process. The position, sexuality and the background of the researcher will affect the choices made in the investigation, from an angle, with the methods that best judged the sole purpose of the study, framing, coming up with themes and the overall conclusion of it. With the intent of sharing the results to the participants of the study. Furthermore, preconception is not equated in any form of bias unless the researcher fails to mention them (Malterud, 2001).

Ethical Consideration

The study focused on the lived experiences of gay college students, their self-regard and aspirations. Therefore, the ethical considerations centered around the situations depicted solely from participants' experiences, interactions and actions observed. The issues of theoretical, theological, situational, critical

and covenantal situational approach to research ethics were irrelevant to the overall study (Tisdale, 2004). If literal transcriptions and summary were used in the narratives.

Results and Discussion

From the data analyses, three themes emerged: (1) Stigma and Labels; (2) Outlook Distortion; and (3) More to Life. The three themes and subthemes that emerged suggested that gay students are not yet genuinely accepted by people yet they still have positive self-regard or personal outlook as evident in the second theme. While they hold an unquenchable hope for equality. This study showed that these students experienced a difficult yet an honest and fulfilling form of self-expression that can inspire and boost the aspiration of gay students.

Episodes of discrimination and nondiscrimination were reflected in the first theme. Though, others may associate, right away, that experiences surrounding gay people are negative, the result of the study revealed otherwise. The first theme focused on the unknown and known treatment of the gay community.

Theme 1. Stigma and Labels

From the analysis, it can be understood that being a gay college student is not an easy task. They are experiencing difficulty in terms of the type of environment they experience, social stigma and unjust actions and slurs directed towards them. Likewise, despite the cruel reality, they are still viewed as a valuable member of the society and some were even considered a blessing by their family and friends.

- (1) "People see me as a menace to society, a non-contributing member for that matter."
- (2) "My family disowned me because of me being gay, they say that I am a disgrace to them."
- (3) "People would call me names while I pass by them, and would make me of unsure of myself and worth."
- (4) "My parents told me that I am not a priority for them, since I can be more than a beautician."
- (5) "People would make funny noises when I passed by, as if it was not enough, they would yell 150 on my face."
- (6) "Boys would not let me use the bathroom, they feel that I am peeping on them or up to no good."
- (7) "I am always considered the weakest not only in my family but at school as well."

In the first major theme, which is the unknown and known treatment of the gay community, the participants of the study talk about their negative and horrific experiences. Students in a homophobic environment would lead them to fear victimization, experience social stigmatization and cruel treatment that impedes their natural ability to develop their sexual identity and gradual disrupt their social and learning experiences (Knowles, 2005). Gay college students bear the force of acts of intolerance, discrimination, and hate. Stressing that the problem does not lie in the youth, but in the community, family and the school where the student belongs (D'augelli, 2002).

A school should be a safe place for everyone, but in the Philippines, gay students often find that their experience at school is smudged by bullying, lack of access to LGBT-related information, discrimination, and in some

cases, emotional, sexual, and physical assault. Such abuses, if not prevent or stopped, can cause deep and lasting harm and restrict students' right to education, protected under the law (Human Rights Watch, 2017).

Not solely focusing on the undesirable events but also it was revealed that some have episodes of nondiscrimination. In the Philippines, positive policies, that promote the respect of diversity and promoting LGBT wellbeing, include ordinances against discrimination and gender-based violence and code of ethics. The practice of Pride Month that started last 1994 and the election of gay students in students council also showed a different take to gay experiences (United Nation Development Programme and United States Agency for International Development, 2014).

Gay men have difficulty finding a loving family and true friends who'll accept and support you what they have chosen to be, however, some of them gain their family support, more friends and even new people same as their sexuality (Ocampo & Alonso-Balmonte, 2016).

The next theme featured a positive regard or new found respect to themselves. Their experiences taught them how it is to look on the brighter side of life and focused on things that matter most and positively influence their self-perception.

Theme 2. Outlook Distortion

Aside from the difficulty in socializing and dealing in a homophobic environment, they also shared their utmost motivation to keep going, aspiring more in their studies that they hope to give them a brighter future. They develop a good way of coping and counteracting, a trusty support system and a positive sense of self.

- (1) "It came new to me at first (talking about the series of bullying but eventually my body and mind got used to it. As they say, it is all in the mind, I don't mind them and just continue striving."
- (2) "The pain could be described as scraping an old wound to introduce a new one, it is very traumatic but I eventually got used to it and considered challenges as inspirations."
- (3) "Every day became a routine to me, the constant bullying and hitting, it came to a point that my body was numb already."
- (4) "Luckily, I've developed an immunity to it, even giving a joke as a rebuttal."
- (5) "I just don't let it get me, I often take it as it is but that doesn't mean that I let them pull me down or step on my being."
- (6) "Even if others hate me for being who I am, I don't mind at all as long as I have the support of my family and friends."

The second major theme concentrated on the unbelievable positive outlook of the gay college students. Despite experiencing a homophobic environment which further contributed to the students' difficulty in socializing with other people, they have this motivation and optimism to keep going and push further in their studies, when they view it as a ticket to brighter future and acceptance from the society. Despite the fear and adversity that gay college students experienced, each developed their ways of coping with and counteracting their unsafe, unaccepting community cultures and marginalized treatment. These allowed them to develop a

positive self-regard, sense of belonging at school and their individual affirmation (Badgett, Durso, Kastanis, & Mallory, 2013). One particular area that helped students were the understanding, acceptance and support they received from peers and adults. In like manner, if the society can offer a compelling and pointed advice for development of an accepting environment, then the school would be more inclusive and understanding regardless of the gender or sexual expression one has.

The last theme focused on the unwavering aspiration of the members of the gay community. The new found meaning gained from their experiences, gave them something to look forward to. Challenges were treated as inspiration for them to do good and aim higher.

Theme 3. More to Life

Gay students have aspirations to achieve and unwavering hope to get over life struggles. Their confidence and optimism in what they have to offer and their ability to see the goodness in everyone, in every situation and in every opportunity, and their desire for personal and professional growth.

- (1) "I always hope for the best, that such challenges exist to mold me to become a better person."
- (2) "I see myself as complete when I get to express my true self, no pretention, and I look forward to what the future holds."
- (3) "People can judge me but I will never compromise my identity, life is about being you and doing what makes you happy."
- (4) "I may look weak to them because of my sexuality but life is never complete without problems, it depends on proper perspective and standing firm to what you believe in."

Lastly, the third major theme discusses the undying hope of the gay students. like any other human being, they also have aspirations and hopes to achieve a just and fair society. Higher educational institutions are mandated to inculcate democratic principles in the pursuit of education, expected that they would treat all students fairly regardless of their gender, not obstructing their right to education. Gender rights should have become the points of contention to provide and increase the visibility of gay people, moving beyond the stereotypes and societal ignorance, showing that gay can occupy a wide array of positions in the society and life like everyone else, eventually such mindset will help the society change quicker (Thiel, 2014). A gay-friendly environment will lead to health improvement, increase performance satisfaction, build better relationships and greater commitment at work among gay workforce (Byne, 2015).

Conclusion

This study provides a description of the lived experiences of gay high school and college students. The students shared experiences of being criticized for what they believe, being bullied for what they are, stereotyped for what they become, and being discriminated for what they stand for. Despite these experiences, some were considered valuable members of a family or a group. Those acts were deliberately done by schoolmates, school personnel, family members and the society as a whole. Despite these, they remain encouraged, confident, and hopeful to themselves to pursue more and push through with their education, their aspiration, their identity and their life in general.

Recommendations

1. The school must be extensive with the programs that catered around the members of the LGBT community.
2. The school together with the community should conduct gender awareness seminar that tackle not only the concerns of the gay students as well as acknowledge their ability to contribute to the society.
3. To fully fathom gay students' experiences, an intensive interview with their family, their friends, school personnel and community members is recommended.
4. Further studies and a more in-depth investigation of the lived experiences of gay students is recommended.

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Challenges and Implications in Teaching-Learning with ICT Tools with Special Reference to Chemistry Education

Richa Aggarwal

Abstract

Today's world is globalized and the world has shrunk on account of massive strides in the development of science and technology. Technology embodies a specific way of revealing the world in which humans try and power over reality. We Indians don't lag behind in incorporating the innovative methods of technology in every field. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) at present pervades all parts of life, allowing people to network, communicate and promote their businesses via different sites, seek help at the time of need, be it war or any natural calamity, accessing bank accounts, travel booking and even booking for any event, getting reviews of the products and services of many brands etc. If we talk about our education system, ICT has provided with learners education that is high in both quality and equity. The changing digitalized knowledge inspires creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration among learners. Thus and so forth, ICT proves to be an effective tool for making a new world of education in which learners are well acquainted with the new 21st century skills and attitude.

Key Words: ICT, Technology integration in education, Innovative methods, Teaching-learning, Chemistry, 21st century skills

Introduction

Education system is the major contributor in building any nation's economy. It is a powerful tool in the hands of mankind to bring a revolutionary and positive change and make this world a better place to live in. In the past few decades, the concept of education has tremendously changed because of advanced technology and globalization. The Internal Commission on the development of Education in its report "Learning to be" (UNESCO, 1972, p. 143) emphasizes:

Education from now on can no longer be defined in relation to a fixed content which has to be assimilated, but must be conceived of as a process in the human being, who thereby learns to express himself, to communicate and to question the world, through his various experiences, and increasingly-all the time-to fulfill himself. It has strong roots, not only in economics and sociology, but also in finding from psychological research which indicate that man is an unfinished being and can only fulfill himself through constant learning. If this is so, then education takes place at all ages of life, in all situations and circumstances of existence. It returns to its true nature, which is to be total and life long, and transcends the limits of institutions, programs and methods imposed on it down the centuries.

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In the context of the above nature of education, the limits of educational research and teaching –learning practices have to be extended from the formal and conventional modes of education to the non-formal, open and innovative systems. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) can make this happen. Research has shown that appropriate use of ICTs catalyze a paradigm shift in both content and pedagogy. Now the whole approach of imparting knowledge has become learner-centered as opposed to former traditional teaching. With the advent of technology, the conventional boundaries of education has been transformed and expanded. Innovative deployments of ICT solutions have been instrumental in transcending multiple barriers in providing access to education in the country. With increasing digital literacy in the country, ICT solutions have gained momentum in driving quality education.

Operational Definition of Term ICT and ICT Tools:

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is an extensional form for information technology (IT) that stresses the role of unified communications and the integration of telecommunications (telephone lines and wireless signals) and computers, as well as necessary enterprise software, middleware, storage and audiovisual, that enable users to access, store, transmit, understand and manipulate information.

ICT in Education is the mode of education that uses information and communications technology to support, enhance, and optimize the delivery of information.

ICT tools for teaching and learning means to digital infrastructures such as printers, computers, laptops, tablets, software programs, data projectors, and interactive teaching box. These can be used to find, explore, analyze, exchange and present information responsibly and without discrimination. ICT can be employed to give users quick access to ideas and experiences from a wide range of people, communities and cultures.

Categorically, Luo and Lei (2012) suggested that there are four different common types of ICT in educational purposes, those are, (1) educational networking: online learning platforms that connect learners using social networking technologies (Classroom2), (2) web-based learning: an internet –based instructional delivery tool or online application or services allowing those who access the platform to have interactively collaboration in searching, accepting, organizing, and delivering educational content(Wikipedia, blog, podcast), (3) mobile learning: means of technologies conducted by portable devices aiding in educational activities(smartphones and laptops), (4) classroom equipment: any facilitation in the form of devices to support the interaction between the teachers and the students in classroom(projectors, interactive white boards).

Importance of Integration of ICT in Education

ICT has encompassed the total teaching-learning process involving the elements like specification of goals and behavioral objectives, analysis of the characteristics and needs of the learner, selection and organization of the content to be taught, methods and strategies of the delivery of the content, use of aid-material, software and hardware, mass media and communication techniques, effective classroom management, continuous feed-back and evaluation of the results along with the organizational and administrative activities.

Through ICTs, effective networking and collaboration, easy sharing of resources and effective accessibility to resources is also possible. Thus ICT contributes in the dissemination of knowledge and information to a larger community.

The inception of ICTs supports inclusion. With the help of ICTs the challenge in terms of special provisions and specific education can be met. Other than this, with the advent of ICT tools, non-formal education for out of school learners and adults in remote areas or regions of conflicts are also possible.

ICT provides assessment and evaluation tools to check and measure students 'progress in any exam. Teachers can use various tools in classroom such as Socrative for quizzes and questions with real time grading, Google forms for multiple-choice questions and short answer questions, Mentimeter to poll students, or ask to vote and Hotpotatoes6 for interactive multiple-choice, short-answer, jumbled-sentence, matching/ordering and gap-fill exercises and Kahoot- a game based assessment tool. These tools reflect on how well students learned and where they are struggled.

Applications of ICT Tools in Chemistry Education

The subject chemistry is the study of matter and the changes it undergoes and it considers both macroscopic and microscopic information. Chemistry is significant in our civilization because it affects our basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, energy, clean air, water, and soil, among other things.

It plays an important and useful role towards the development and growth of number of industries. This includes industries like glass, cement, paper, textile, leather, dye, paints and pigments, petrochemicals, sugar, plastics and Pharmaceuticals. In short, chemistry is the bedrock for national technological and economic development. And so, there is a great demand of chemistry professionals in the Indian as well as global market. For this reason, the teaching of chemistry at secondary school level and at higher level must be taken serious. In chemistry education, ICT can provide solutions to many of the problems afflicting chemistry and thus assist in improving students' skills and attitude towards effective performances in chemistry.

In this paper an ICT based system is proposed for enhancing teaching and learning of some integrated concepts and aspects of chemistry.

- Using ICTs Integrating ICT in chemistry class assist students in accessing digital information efficiently and effectively. They can get every type of guidance and answers of their questions Their curiosity can be easily satisfied and they can get valuable information regarding the subject and activities related to it or can take career guidance on different branches of chemistry and their future scope.
- Based on a constructive learning approach that assumes learning as a process individuals construct new knowledge based on their prior knowledge and experience (Johassen, 1991). Thus ICT help students to focus on high order thinking skills and develop problem solving ability. This emerging pedagogy makes students more productive and creative in terms of various educational outputs.
- Computer aided instructions supports student-centered and self-paced learning- Computers have the ability and capacity to provide individually tailored learning to a limitless number of learners at a time. Teaching machines present systematically programmed sequences of instructions to students and provide sufficient drill and practice by instantly display the proper feed-back and further drill work. Thus they may open a wide variety of opportunities for the improved self-learning to all types of learners. This self-learning is further facilitated by the advanced services of the computers like online dictionaries, digital encyclopedias, electronic books and journals etc.

- ü ICT provides valuable teaching aids for instruction. Students may get graphics along with texts and also hear the explanation for further understanding with the use of Presentations, Flash Movie, Interactive Multimedia (interactivity can be added using animations), Online Demonstrations/ Virtual Lab e.g. Chemlab (for any experiment that may be too difficult, expensive or dangerous to perform in class room situations), Some Fun Activities/Games e.g. Periodic table game and Mind Maps (that provide subject concisely, making even the most complex topic easy to understand and interesting) can also be used to engage students instantly.

Some e.g. of the above tools are given below:

For Presentations,

<http://www.curriki.org/>

<http://www.chalkbored.com/lessons/chemistry-11.htm>

<http://www.teacherplanet.com/resource/chemistry.php>

<http://www.worldofteaching.com/chemistrypowerpoints.html>

For Interactive Multimedia, <http://www.mhhe.com/physsci/chemistry/essentialchemistry/flash/hybrv18.swf>

<http://www.mhhe.com/physsci/chemistry/essentialchemistry/flash/molvie1.swf>

For Online Demonstrations and Virtual Labs, http://www.wiredchemist.com/chemistry/instructional/anim_dichloroethene_symmetry.html

<http://demonstrations.wolfram.com/education.html?edutag=High+School+Chemistry&limit=20>

For Games

<http://funbasedlearning.com/chemistry/chemBalancer/default.htm>

And Mind Maps,

<http://www.inspiration.com/>

www.Webspiration.com

- Application soft wares like MS Word, MS Excel, Originpro, Keleidagraph are powerful tools to write and record any document and to draw graphs, to do calculations, to show the relationship between various quantities (graphically) respectively. The latter two are widely used by research scholars also for publication of their work.
- Learning chemistry sometimes requires students to relate chemical equations and symbolic notation to real data. There are various CD-ROMs available with different strategies and focus for teaching chemistry with large databases of visual information. For e.g. 'chemistry set' <http://195.200.1.5/newmedia/products2kasp>. Amongst other things the CD-ROMs contains a picture of the periodic table in which the color of the box for each element depends on whether it is a solid, liquid, or gas. The system lets the user set a temperature. As this varied the color of the box for each element changes as its state does. This allows the periodic variation in boiling and melting point to be seen in a way that neither book nor paper based activities would allow.
- Course content/resources can easily be shared via Teacher Tube and School Tube. Collaborative learning tools like Google docs and Google sheets allow students and teachers to resource organization in addition

to streamline homework assignments and class projects. Thus using ICT enables users to communicate, share, and work collaboratively anywhere, anytime.

- ICT can arrange for Simulation, a technique that can be effectively used for training the students in an effective way through the provision of some artificial situations, and mock-ups. Or in other words, imitation of a situation or process which needs visualization. For e.g.- chemical equilibrium <http://www.chm.davidson.edu/vce/index.html>
- Simulations soft wares (in the form of flipped classrooms) are also there. We can share the links to students and then can ask students to prepare any topic (mainly sort of open education resources). One other way is we can simply play on the spot or we can also download them. For e.g. www.chemtube3d.com/lithiumionbattery.
- Modeling uses computers to generate images of atoms, molecules and atomic orbital of any organic matter through internet based project. According to Branvold (2007) computers have made two new methods of studying molecules, molecular modeling and combinatorial chemistry possible.

In molecular modeling, chemist use computers to stimulate the structure and motion of macromolecules. In combinatorial chemistry, a chemist can use robotic tools to make huge number of slightly different molecules. This set of molecules help the chemist search for useful molecules. Both of these tools are particularly useful to pharmaceutical and biological chemist.

- Scientifically proven visual techniques like Doodle Notes can be used for making chemistry learning interesting for students. Doodle Notes have brain-based learning techniques to help students with recall. They can be used to illustrate concepts, to break down steps, to examine cycles. We can use them to illustrate solubility rules, to show the steps to calculate molar mass (Source: <https://www.doodlenotes.org/in-the-classroom.html>)
- Using Offline soft wares such as Chems sketch, Argus Lab, Chemdraw (also includes Periodic table) and Marvin sketch or Online websites for e.g. <https://chemdrawdirectperkinelmer.cloud/is/sample/index.html> www.chemspider.com/structuresearch structures/reactions can be drawn/ written.
- Using <http://academia.org> and <http://researchguide.org> students and teachers may converse with top notch working scientists about scientific topics or latest researches/discoveries in the field of their interest. For e.g. The UNICEF voices of youth website <https://www.unicef.org/voy> offers them opportunities to participate in discussions on current global issues such as global warming. Thus ICT has made possible a unique collaboration and cooperation among the subject experts, teachers and students of diversified capabilities and interests for enriching their thirst of knowledge and sharing their contribution in the field of education in a distance mode environment.

Although this paper focus mainly on the contribution of ICT in chemistry education yet its role in other science subjects and areas like language learning, numeracy etc. cannot be neglected. The use of ICTs has made the subject more concrete rather than abstract for learners.

In this regard, Silvin-Kachala (1998) pointed out that, students in technology rich environment experienced positive effects on achievement in all major subject areas. Furthermore, their attitude toward learning and their own self-concept improved consistently when computers were used for instruction.

Along these lines, considering all the applications and advantages of ICTs, we can say that ICT has found its niche in education. Also, when it comes to the times of COVID-19 Pandemic, its role in the field of education was recurring and unavoidable. During that time, we had seen and experienced a huge shift from offline to online mode of education to ensure continuous delivery of content to learners through various apps like Zoom, MS office, Google meet etc. Although, our country was not well prepared for this ‘Digitalization’ of education, concerted steps were being taken by government to make the teaching-learning process easier for both students and teachers. And as Charles Darwin in his famous ‘*The Theory of Natural Selection*’ quoted, “*It is not the strongest of the species nor the most intelligent that survives adversity. It is the one that is most adaptable to change that survives.*” So we, as the stakeholders of education sector also have to be adaptable to ‘Digital revolution’ in order to survive.

Barriers and Solutions

Although the advantages of using ICT in the classroom have been demonstrated in previous section, yet barriers or challenges associated with its use still exist. To effectively harness the power of technological innovations to improve learning experiences, the following three essential conditions must be met:

- To begin with, the potential of these technologies must be exploited in order to broaden the reach of basic education, particularly in the direction of the excluded and underprivileged groups; and to enhance and improve class room teaching. For this, students and teachers whether at primary level or at university level should be provided with equal, easy and affordable access to ICT tools and resources.
- High quality, meaningful and culturally responsive digital content in all languages must be developed and available for teachers and students. Moreover, the availability of such e-content should not only be confined to disciplines of science and technology only but for other disciplines like humanities and commerce as well.
- Teachers can act as catalysts for the integration of technology through ICT. But professional development and readiness of the teacher to accept the change to promote critical thinking skills and collaborative learning practice in the learners is the key factor to the successful implementation of technology based teaching-learning.

The processes of ICT are based on computer knowledge and not all teachers are computer literate. Fundamentally, when there are new tools and approaches to teaching, teacher training is essential (Osborne & Hennessy, 2003) if they are to integrate these into their teaching. Therefore, there is a need for pre-service and in-service training for teachers, so as to upgrade their knowledge and skills in using ICTs in class room environment. In this regard, Newhouse (2002) stated “teachers need to not only be computer literate but they also need to develop skills in integrating computer use into their teaching/learning programs” (p. 45). According to Becta (2004), providing pedagogical training for teachers, rather than simply training them to use ICT tools, is an important issue. Almekhlafi and Almeqdadi (2010) stated, provide workshops that allow teachers to reflect upon effective strategies for technology integration into instruction and unveil issues that are central to understanding the process of technology integration into instruction.

Thus, if the encouragement, equipment, and necessary technological support are available from institutes for the teachers, developing an ICT class will be easier for them.

Conclusion

The author wholeheartedly agrees that technological advancements deserve the highest accolades and reflect on our scientific capabilities. This is because technological innovations have ensured maximum user/customer satisfaction in a demanding market environment. But as always, every coin has two sides, and the same is applicable here. Technology and its progress remain inevitable and critical. Simultaneously, it also leads to physical, emotional, mental and social issues. Too much reliance on technologies has minimized the human power of creative thinking. People no longer bother to read, write, or calculate without computers. ICT brought-up-generations do not have better skills of self-expression through writing. It has brought about rampant ways of copying other people's work, so to inculcate critical and analytical thinking skills in learners is a matter to think about.

Furthermore, according to Dorup (2004), the use of ICTs cannot replace the traditional teaching activities but it can be easily used as a supplement. To complement this, Ahmed and Abdulaziz (2004) summarized that "the different learning environments did not produce significant difference in students' attitudes toward technology. Students' positive attitudes toward information reveal that IT plays a role in students' learning, albeit a secondary role. Although students recognized the potential and significant role of information in teaching and learning, the recognition is limited to the use of information technology as an instructional media, and not a key determinant of learning."

In a country like India, where there is a sheer paucity of teachers, funds and resources, a proper action plan is required if we wish to implement technology based education in class rooms. First and most important, we should encourage positive attitudes among all the stake holders of the education sector about the significance of integrating ICT into instruction. With this, capacity building, curriculum development, infrastructure, and state and central government support is required to achieve successful integration of technology in education.

In the times of the COVID pandemic, technology has already started ruling over the planet. So the need of the hour is judicious use of technology with necessary checks and balances to confront and overcome any future challenges.

In future studies more focus should be given on management strategies and policies to address the key issues and challenges in the process of teaching and learning with ICT tools. If the barriers can be overcome, it is a step forward to provide education that is innovative, goal oriented and universally affordable to all without any discrimination.

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Neurodiverse Teachers and Self-Advocacy in Action

Laura N. Sarchet

Abstract

Including diverse educators, including neurodiverse teachers and teachers with disabilities, benefits school systems in an intersectional lens. Schools and other places of employment must provide reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities to ensure access to the workplace. Educators with disabilities also must use self-advocacy skills in order to navigate obtaining accommodations and being fully included in schools. Inclusion is co-conspirator work, meaning individuals with and without disabilities co-labor to ensure belonging for all individuals. This article focuses on ways neurodiverse *and* neurotypical educators and educators with *and* without disabilities can utilize elements of self-advocacy such as self-reflection, understanding rights and responsibilities, and using Circles of Support in order to support more inclusive school systems.

Key Words: Disability, Inclusion, Intersectionality, Neurodiversity, Self-Advocacy, Teaching

Introduction

Inclusive education has made excellent strides in providing opportunities for neurodiverse students and students with disabilities. True inclusion should also celebrate disability and neurodiversity of its teachers, staff, and administrators. According to Waitoller and Kozleski (2013), inclusive education is a continuous struggle toward

- a) the redistribution of quality opportunities to learn and participate in educational programs,
- b) the recognition and value of differences as reflected in content, pedagogy, and assessment tools, and
- c) the opportunities for marginalized groups to represent themselves in decision-making processes that advance and define claims of exclusion and the respective solutions that affect their children's educational futures (p. 35).

What better way to encourage critical redistribution of opportunities, value diversity, and allow for representation and decision-making of marginalized groups of students than to model this with faculty and staff in our schools? Just as schools are making efforts to hire more *Black, Indigenous, and People of Color* (BIPOC) and Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and *Queer/Questioning* (LGBTQ) teachers and staff, schools also have a long way to grow in terms of employing more educators with disabilities.

Even if neurodiverse and disabled educators find positions in schools, there are challenges with accessibility, inclusion, and belonging when working in an environment that was created with able-bodied and neurotypical

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people in mind, as with most of our society. While we are co-conspiring in making our schools more inclusive places, the other side of this double-edged sword is the reality that neurodiverse and disabled individuals must learn self-advocacy skills in order to gain access in the schools, the workplace, and the community. This article discusses the benefits and application of self-advocacy skills for teachers who identify as neurodiverse and/or disabled as they navigate their jobs in the school system.

Positionality Statement and Notes on Language

I would like to describe myself to give helpful context to this paper. I am a white, heterosexual, cisgendered, English-speaking female. I am autistic, and I insist on the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in all parts of society, while acknowledging their unique experiences, challenges, and assets.

As of the People First Respectful Language Modernization Act of 2006, Person-First Language replaces Deficit-First Language (sometimes called Disability-First Language) to state that a person *has* a disability rather than *is defined* by their disability (Office of Disability Rights, 2014). For instance, Person-First Language says “person with a disability” instead of “disabled person.” Person-First Language also limits the use of derogatory terms in regards to disability, such as prohibiting the r-word and refraining from using language around disability to carry negative connotations. Other examples of Person-First Language would be phrases such as “person with a mental illness” or “student who uses a wheelchair,” instead of “insane person” or “wheelchair-bound student.”

Some individuals in the disability community use Identity-First Language (such as “I’m autistic” or “I’m Deaf”) to emphasize that their disability is an integral part of their person and something to be proud of (Brown, 2011). In the field of Disability Studies, many individuals who identify as having disabilities themselves choose to use Identity-First Language instead of (or in addition to) Person-First Language. Identity-First Language is not the same as Deficit-First Language, though it may sound similar because of the placement of the disability before the person in the sentence. Examples of Identity-First Language include “wheelchair user,” “autistic person,” “d/Deaf,” and “disabled faculty” (instead of the Person-First “person who uses a wheelchair,” “person with autism,” “person who experiences deafness,” and “faculty with a disability”).

As an autistic person myself, I identify as disabled and use Identity-First Language when referring to myself, and use Person-First Language when talking about students (unless I know that they have an individual preference towards identity-first language). When writing, I use Identity-First Language (“disabled teachers”) in congruence with the Disability Studies field. For myself and many other disabled scholars and Disability Studies academics, the reason behind using Identity-First Language is both a reclaiming of disability status and a recognizing that disability/neurodiversity is an integral part of our intersecting identities; it is a difference, not a deficit (although we still are presented with challenges in an able-minded society). I use Identity-First Language (“I am autistic”) when describing myself because I would not *be* myself if I was not autistic. While many individuals with disabilities do prefer Person-First Language (i.e., “students with disabilities”) over Identity-First Language, it is necessary for professionals and organizations to consider all of these perspectives. According to the Association of University Centers on Disability (AUCD), “It is important to note that whether a person with a disability prefers people-first or identity-first language is not universal. If you are unsure as to whether you should use people-first or identity-first language in order to be respectful, the best thing to do is to ask people themselves” (AUCD, 2011). For consistency, and for the

reasons described about my personal choice to use Identity-First Language, this paper will refer to autistic, disabled, and neurodiverse individuals/teachers using Identity-First Language. The terms “autistic” and “on the autism spectrum” will be used interchangeably.

My experiences as a special education teacher and an instructor in advanced teacher education programs are lived and practiced through the lens of being autistic. I have a unique, detail-oriented perspective and strategic way of thinking about problems. I also face social and sensory challenges every day. I was not diagnosed as autistic until after I graduated college, so I did not realize the source of challenges with the social and emotional aspects of school while I was facing them. I am able to share resources with my students, both K-12 and postsecondary or graduate, through first-hand experience. Many hours of self-reflection have propelled me to encourage my students to value their support networks and utilize out-of-the-box resources. I teach my graduate students the benefits of neurodiversity and can share a perspective they may not have encountered before. Even though I am autistic, I only fully know the experience of one autistic person. My experience as a neurodiverse person makes me passionate about inclusion and belonging of individuals with disabilities. As a disabled person, social justice is important to my research and practice to strive toward equity for all individuals and groups of people, especially those traditionally marginalized.

Self-Advocacy in Action

Self-Advocacy in Action (SAA, see Figure 1) is a curriculum developed to teach self-advocacy skills to students on the autism spectrum and with other disabilities (Sarchet, 2022). SAA was originally iterated to support autistic middle school students with the beginning of transition process for their Individualized Education Plans, because students on the autism spectrum are least likely of all students with disabilities to participate in their transition planning meetings (Griffin et al., 2014). Since its initial creation, SAA has been used with school-age students with and without disabilities K-12 and in postsecondary settings, such as college transition programs, inclusive higher education programs, and teacher education programs.



Figure 1: A blue and white image with the letters “SAA” going up stairs, and the words “Self-Advocacy in Action”.

In this paper, the topics of a few of the lessons in SAA are described and applied to practical use for situations neurodiverse (and neurotypical) teachers and educators may face that would necessitate self-advocacy skills. While some of the lesson topics are defined as prerequisites or sub-skills of self-advocacy, as with many soft skills, self-advocacy is a broad array of skills that a person is always growing in and refining. There is no need to feel mastery in a topic before diving into another topic within self-advocacy. When teaching SAA with students of any age, I encourage teachers to space lessons apart by at least a week to have time to facilitate natural application of the skills learned in each lesson, and to also revisit past lessons throughout the school year or semester to help students engage in self-reflection about how their skills have grown and how to continue to use the skills in new ways. For educators, the lessons can be more self-paced, and the topics are meant to be referred back to at any point. Some of the vignettes may be especially helpful when you run into a similar situation on the job, or when you have time to reflect back on past experiences.

What Is Self-Advocacy?

Self-advocacy is defined as communicating one's strengths, needs, preferences, and interests. Communication includes, but is not limited to, verbal speech, writing, use of technology and assistive technology, body language and facial expressions, and physical action or behavior. For example, someone can self-advocate by speaking up in a meeting about their preference for participation in a project. A self-advocate could also physically move away from a group of people discussing a topic that makes them uncomfortable. These are just a few examples of how communication can look in different ways across instances of self-advocacy. It is important to note that one person doesn't always communicate the same way when self-advocating as well. Many autistic individuals and other people with disabilities have to work at practicing to communicate, generalizing communication strategies across settings, and consistently applying communication skills. I may be comfortable in one setting using verbal speech, and more inclined to use writing or typing in another setting; this can even vary day to day.

Rights and Responsibilities

As a person with a disability, you have rights and responsibilities, just as you have rights and responsibilities as a member of your school, union, and country. Many rights we have access to, are also our responsibility to advocate for. For instance, we have the right to accommodations in the workplace with the responsibility to tell human resources or an administrator what accommodations we need.

Teachers at one school where I taught did lunch duty, supervising students in the cafeteria. After my first day doing lunch duty immediately after teaching a class, I had a meltdown due to sensory overload. Thankfully, when I went to my principal, they accommodated me by giving me another administrative duty during that time: overseeing the library. The quieter environment, fewer fluorescent lights, repetitive nature of book cataloging, and smaller number of people in the library was a needed alternative that still allowed me to complete my responsibilities outside of my teaching load, but it was my responsibility to advocate for that accommodation.

Freedom to disclose information about my disability to whom we choose is another right we have. While I personally choose to share my status as an autistic individual with all of my colleagues in order to work towards dismantling ableism, it is not necessary to disclose in order to receive accommodations, and it may

be some individuals' preference not to disclose because of their identity relationship to their disability. It is also okay to disclose to some people, such as a person we are close with at work, and not disclose to other people.

Other rights and responsibilities as a neurodiverse or disabled educator include: access to assistive technology and support knowing how to use it if appropriate, telling someone trusted if you have been discriminated against, knowledge of resources available, and being allowed to participate in communities you choose. Advocating for staff training on disability and neurodiversity can benefit all educators at a school, and may assist with inclusive attitudes of colleagues. This creates more of an environment of belonging for all educators.

Circles of Support

Self-advocacy is not a journey we must take alone! According to Ryan and Deci (2000), relatedness, belonging or relationships with others, is one of the main factors in motivation and well-being for all people. Identifying individuals and groups that we celebrate with and ask for help from is called Circles of Support. Circles of Support reflect Person-Centered Planning (Mazzotti et al., 2015) in that the individuals with disabilities decide who is part of their Circles of Support. Primary supports are the people closest to us whom we feel most comfortable with and who are most helpful in advocating alongside us. Family and friends are other supports who are close and can rally for us and celebrate with us. Community supports are those who we may seek support from in specific situations. See Figure 2 for a blank template of Circles of Support.

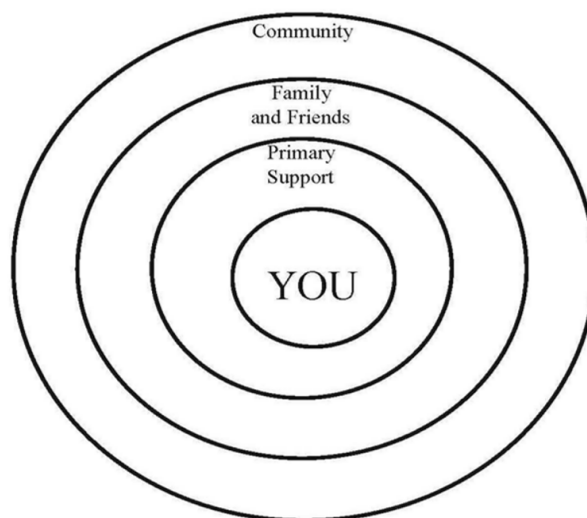


Figure 7: Circles of Support Template

Figure 2: Circles of Support blank template, four concentric circles, starting from the innermost circle with “YOU,” “Primary Supports,” “Family and Friends,” and “Community”.

In my Primary Circle, my husband and my best friend are my most important advocates. These are the first people I go to when I have something exciting to share, when I need advice, and when I am feeling overwhelmed. Family and Friends include siblings, parents, and other friends from church. I am likely to

seek support from these people on a regular basis. Community Supports for me are my boss, my doctor, and other colleagues. These supports are important in specific settings, such as when I have a question about work or my health. All of the people in my Circles of Support are those who I trust and that I know have my best interest in mind. They advocate with me and for me, and encourage me in my self-advocacy skills and growth.

Conclusion

Teachers with neurodiversity and disability are an asset to our schools. Leaders should make efforts to welcome diverse faculty and staff. Neurodiversity and disability are part of human variance that can be celebrated (Armstrong, 2010; Gillies, 2014; Higgins, 1992; Jones, 1996; Rosqvist et al., 2020; Wendell, 1996). Encouraging all educators to utilize self-advocacy skills makes schools more inclusive and better models for our students.

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The Concept of Imperialism in George Orwell's Shooting an Elephant: An Analytical Study

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Abstract

Literature is the spontaneous expression of somebody's thoughts, emotions in written form. Through literature we can envisage different facets of life whether they are political, social or environmental. Imperialism is one of the political notions that are used by different writers in their literary works. George Orwell, the pen name of Eric Arthur Blaire, the author of numerous novels, short stories and essays has been enlisted among the erudite writers of the 20th century literature. Orwell's political writings focus upon popular political concepts of his time. The present study scrutinizes an important political essay 'Shooting an Elephant' by George Orwell in the light of imperialism. This study is qualitative in nature, in the sense that the data will be in the form of words or quotations. In terms of sources of data and how the data is interpreted, the study can also be categorized as a content analysis study. This study will help the theoretical writers to understand how imperialism has been molded in George Orwell's 'Shooting an Elephant'.

Key Words: Imperialism, Literature, Burma, Colonizers, Elephant.

Introduction

"Literature is a uniquely human activity, born of a man's timeless desire to understand, express and finally share experiences" (Pickering, James and Hooper, Jeffrey D, 1981). Literature is not an esoteric form of art, rather it is a written expression of human life through a story which is created by the writer not only to amuse but also to convey an educative message to the readers.

Wuntu (2015) has stated that "A literary work which has affective nature is a significant power to touch the deepest sense that can produce perfect consciousness, as it successfully carries out its mission as a form generator of human consciousness." Sabudu (2014) also states that "literature is the reflection of human life whether in the society or in their private life, every phenomenon that found in the society usually reflects in the literary works such as poem, novel, drama or short story." George Orwell's political essay 'Shooting an Elephant' represents the nature of imperialism. Imperialism is a practice to control the people by implementing its colonial policy. It can be viewed in terms of culture and policy when a prodigious country takes control over a small nation and overrides its people.

George Orwell's political writing evolved him into a worldwide figure. What is important about Orwell is that he worked in Indian imperial police in Burma for about five years (1922-1927). As a result, his colonial

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writings have contained deep and perceptive implications on colonies, colonizers and the colonized. The significance of “Shooting the Elephant” lies in how the occurrence portrays the diverse facets of imperialism. In this essay, the evidence of the elephant and the British officer assist to demonstrate that imperialism is a double-edged sword. The “Shooting of an Elephant” exposes that imperialism perpetrates damage on both parties in imperialistic relationships. In his essay ‘Shooting an Elephant’ Orwell delineates his works as the sub-divisional police officer of Moulmein, a town in the British colony of Burma. The Elephant is the principal emblem of the story. The liberty of the ‘Elephant’ is restricted like colonized people, and it becomes violently unruly only as a response to being fettered. The British officer, Orwell, acts as a puppet under the institution of imperialism.

Significance of the Study

There is opprobrium about imperialism. George Orwell’s ‘Shooting an Elephant’ is a perfect example of how the maltreatment of animals is often condoned. There is often an endeavor to make human messages just at the cost of infringement of nature and the animal world. The focus is not only on the killing of the animal but also on divulging the concept of imperialism through this essay. This article presents how imperialism is presented to the readers in the form of a British police officer and the shooting of the elephant.

Research Objectives

1. To investigate the concept of imperialism in George Orwell’s ‘Shooting an Elephant’
2. To find out the effect of imperialism through analysis of the text ‘Shooting an Elephant’

Literature Review

‘Shooting an Elephant’ goes beyond the mere denigration of British imperialism and colonization; it is actually the loss of freedom for both the colonized and the colonizers.

According to Merriam-Webster’s Advanced Learner’s English Dictionary (2016) is ‘Imperialism’ a policy or practice by which a country increases its power by gaining control over other areas of the world or the effect that a powerful country or group of countries has have in changing or influencing the way people live in other, poorer countries.

According to A.S. Hornby, Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (2020) defines ‘Imperialism’ as a system in which one country controls other countries, often after defeating them in a war or the fact of a powerful country increasing its influence over other countries through business, culture etc. Volkan Sari (2020) in his article talks about imperialism focusing on ‘Shooting an Elephant’. In his article, he talks about the effects of imperialism in the light of ‘Shooting an Elephant’.

The Encyclopedia Britannica (2010) defines the essay as ‘an analytic, interpretative, or critical literary composition usually much shorter and less systematic and formal than a dissertation or thesis and usually dealing with its subject from a limited and often personal point of view’.

Elliot ([1957] 2002:340) stated “The strength of ‘Shooting an Elephant’ is more than literary; it is moral too. The essay is in part a confession of the author’s weakness and wrong-doing and the ring of the prose is

absolutely true; it is also that high kind of confession in which the writer sees his deed as being at once his own, typical of the class to which he belongs, and human beyond person and class, so that both the low deed and the seeing of it are made the reader's own as well."

Williams (1984:39) stated in his article "Orwell, through the recount of the 'incident', identifies the exact moment he realizes the true nature of imperialism and at the same time, the discernment of a literary and social role which would lead to his rejection of all forms of oppression and characterize all his future writing: 'Writing the act of awareness and rejection he would not, probably, have been a writer at all'".

Howe ([1969] 2002: 352) stated that "Shooting an Elephant depicts the epiphany, the absolute revelation that imperialism and all forms of political oppression, divest man's freedom of action and thought, 'For the first time, his characteristic fusion of personal and public themes is realized, and the essay as a form-vibrant, tight packed, nervous becomes a token of his meaning'".

Dasture, P. & Aniruddha, J.S. (2016) in their article state that Orwell "intends to bring to the fore the importance of the elephants in Burmese society, with the imperial threat looming large over the political horizon. Where the elephant represents a symbol of the oppression of the Burmese society, its death is a parallel of how the British Empire struggled to suppress the natives."

Montgomery, Katherin (2013) in her article discusses "how the British built their empire and the effects their policies had on the African colonies in the light of this essay".

This article tries to discover the opprobrium of imperialism as portrayed by George Orwell in his essay 'Shooting an Elephant' with a correlation of incident of the British police officer and shooting the elephant.

Data Analysis

Reading 'Shooting an Elephant' as a postcolonial text, where Orwell as a writer portrays colonized people and colonizers as his subject matter and throughout the essay criticizes imperialism.

George Orwell (1903-1950) was born in Motihari, India, in 1903, and attended school in England. He went to Burma as an assistant superintendent of the Indian Imperial police after failing to win a scholarship to university. He spent five years in Burma (1922-27) after which he left the police service embittered due to British treatment of the native Burmese: "I spent five years in an unsuitable profession, and then I underwent poverty and the sense of failure. This increased my natural hatred of authority and made me for the first time fully aware of the existence of the working classes, and the job in Burma had given me some understanding of the nature of imperialism" (Orwell [1946]1984:25).

Orwell is a prolific writer in the essay genre not for his variation of the non-fictional prose but also his treatment of various political, social, cultural commitment related topics. In addition, his personal consternations are scattered throughout his diary. Orwell in 'Shooting an Elephant' tries to do the same where he organizes his experiences in an essay to achieve a literary effect.

Raymond Williams points out, 'The distinction between 'fiction' and 'non-fiction' is not a matter of whether the experience happened to the writer, a distinction between 'real' and 'imaginary'. The distinction that matters is always one of range and consciousness. Written human experience of an unspecialized and primary kind must always be recognized as literature. Particular forms, and the origins of the material, are secondary

questions. Orwell began to write literature, in the full sense, when he found this ‘non-fictional’ form; that is, when he found a form capable of realizing his experience directly’ (1984:49).

‘Shooting an Elephant’ can be viewed as a work that results from personal experience. It is the way that Orwell tries to depict his experiences through his artistic knowledge of language. He uses suspicion and rationalities to expose the basic realities of everyday political and social life in order to share his notion of the world.

Orwell uses the essay mode as a vehicle of self-discovery, to understand the concept of imperialism, which leads him to leave the imperial police and change his perception of political ideas as a writer. He had experienced imperialism during his staying in Burma and his observation of England was from a perspective of ‘eyes full of his experience of imperialism’.

“I felt I had to escape not merely from imperialism but from every form of man’s dominion over man. I wanted to submerge myself, to get right down among the oppressed, to be one of them and on their side against the tyrants. It was the first time that I had ever been really aware of the working class, and to begin with it was only because they supplied an analogy. They were the symbolic victims of injustice, playing the same part in England as the Burmese played in Burma”. (Orwell [1937] 1983: 247)

The setting of the essay ‘Shooting an Elephant’ is in Moulmein, a town in southern Burma during the colonial period in the 1920s, when the country was a province of India. Orwell tries to assert his views on British imperialism and the social effects of imperialism on a colonized land. The essay defines the imperialism from three points of views. Firstly, Orwell depicts the social plight of the Burmese from a British officer’s point of view; secondly, he points out the British officers’ attitude towards the Burmese and foregrounds his repellent view for British imperialism; finally, he reveals the horrible effects of imperialism on both the colonized and the colonizers.

The essay was written after nine years of his leaving the Indian police. Orwell, in his writing puts into the narrator’s words and ideas the concepts, feelings and attitude of a young officer who loses his freedom during his service period. The duality in the essay underlines the motif of the effects of imperialism. Orwell’s subsequent position against imperialism constitutes the structure of the text and context which established the relationships between all the protagonists. It is when the protagonist understands that he should shoot the elephant that he realizes that he has to do it even if he does not want to.

The essay is outlined through two aspects of the experience; the experience of a young police officer, who takes up a journey to meet and shoot the elephant gone wild, and another of an older Orwell, who harks back to the event after years of observation. Orwell, as he looks back at the young Orwell, comprehends issues his younger self could not have known or seen. Through these two perspectives, experience becomes self-discovery ‘the key point is the persona, the ‘outside observer’ that is Orwell. An essential link between the two parts is indeed this character; ‘inside’ and then ‘outside’ ‘the experience’ (Williams 1984:51).

Orwell’s nine years of experience in Burma and as a protagonist narrating the experience, gives him the dual role which allows him to give the reader a complete picture of imperialism. The ‘young’ and ‘older’ roles interact with each other, and information comes from both sources. Orwell, the narrator, introduces the setting with the opening remark “I was hated by large numbers of people- the only time in my life that I have been important enough for this to happen to me”(ibid:266). Orwell points out that he was hated for

his power that he was sub-divisional police officer and contextualized in the relationship between colonizers and colonized. The attitude of Orwell, the protagonist of the essay, is immediately made clear in the prelude:

“For at that time I had already made up my mind that imperialism was an evil thing and the sooner I chucked up my job and got out of it the better. Theoretically and secretly, of course I was all for the Burmese and all against their oppressors the British. As for the job I was doing, I hated it more bitterly than I can perhaps make clear. In a job like that you see the dirty work of Empire at close quarters” (Orwell [1936] 1984:266).

The young Orwell felt ‘oppressed’ with an intolerable sense of guilt’ (ibid). He had observed the exploitive actions and reactions of the British Empire and, as a servant of the colonial regime, he absolutely bemoaned his role. It is thought-provoking to note that the older Orwell justifies the younger as he ‘could get nothing into perspective’ (ibid) not only because of his age but also because he was ‘ill-educated’ (ibid) and that he had to sort out his problems ‘in the utter silence that is imposed on every Englishman in the East’ (ibid). Ensnared between hatred of the empire he served and rage against the Burmese, he posited, “with one part of my mind I thought of the British Raj as an unbreakable tyranny, as something clamped down, in *Saccula Saeculorum*, upon the will of prostrate people” (ibid).

He scorns the Burmese as they loathe and that perturbs him as their foreign oppressor; but he understands their hatred and tormenting, as he even takes their side privately. But the older Orwell understands the political insinuation in the umbrage of the Burmese: the colonized react to colonization utilizing the only means they have, and this can only be of a violent phenomenon because it is the only ‘language’ the colonizers speak.

Employing the first-person narration, interweaving essayistic considerations and reflections, the reader is immediately drawn into the setting and comprehends the nature of imperialism, the effects on the colonized but at the same time the effect of colonization on the colonizers. Orwell continues to give the account of the episode of the shooting of elephant, “which in a roundabout way was enlightening. It was a tiny incident in itself, but it gave me a better glimpse than I had had before of the real nature of imperialism the real motives for which despotic governments act”(ibid.).

The elephant story itself is an allegory and the elephant symbolizes the effects of the devastating power of imperialism on the colonized territories. The elephant represents British imperialism both as an economic and political power. Orwell’s awareness of the suppression of imperialism is similar to the elephant’s frenzy state which cannot be controlled. Imperialism having the same deportment has reached a state in which it cannot be controlled, and it plunders the resources and creates a horrible situation to the countries and populations it encounters. Orwell, in order to understand imperialism, has to see what imperialism was inflicting onto the colonized people. The elephant had ravaged the bazars, symbolizing the catastrophic effects of British colonialism on Burmese people. Imperialism, by imposing its own culture, systems of belief, and forms of government, absorbs the colonized countries and thus creates a hegemonic control and concurrently destroys their institutions and cultures. This is emphasized as Orwell gets nearer to the elephant, “It had already destroyed somebody’s bamboo hut, killed a cow and raided some fruit stalls and devoured the stock; also it had met the municipal rubbish van, and when the driver jumped out and looked to his heels, and turned the van over and inflicted violence upon it” (ibid: 267).

The climax of the essay is highlighted by shooting the elephant and the protagonists’ feelings of ending imperialism, but Orwell is still young and has difficulty in understanding the full implications of his future actions. His decision

to shoot the animal is not without anguish, “As soon as I saw the elephant, I knew with perfect certainty that I ought to shoot him, (ibid: 268), “one ought not to do it if it can possibly be avoided” (ibid: 269).

“Moreover, I did not in the least want to shoot him” (ibid). “The people expected it of me, and I had got to do it” (ibid). “But I did not want to shoot the elephant” (ibid.), considerations which culminate in the decision being taken, “I had got to shoot the elephant” (ibid).

The act of shooting the elephant was done against the young Orwell’s will and moral make up. He could not act according to his freewill, but chose to do ‘the right thing,’ simply to avoid looking a ‘fool,’ continuing to work as a British officer, and acting as a tool of imperialism and also doing his duty as a colonial policeman.

The shooting of the elephant is a dramatic travesty where Orwell, the narrator, acts as an actor of a play written by imperialism and the people watching him are none other than the audience, “The crowd grew very still, and a deep, low, happy sigh, as of people who see the theatre curtain go up at last, breathed throats” (ibid: 271).

The travesty is referred to in the use of metaphors, “Here was I, the white man with his gun, seemingly the leading actor of the piece, but in reality I was only an absurd puppet pushed to and fro by the will of those yellow faces behind,” (ibid: 269). “They were watching me as they would watch a conjuror about to perform a trick,” (ibid.) the replications become an inner dialogue between the older and younger Orwell, “He becomes a sort of hollow, posing dummy, the conventionalized figure of a sahib,” (ibid.) “A sahib has got to act like a sahib,” (ibid.) “He wears a mask, and his face grows to fit it.” (ibid.). “He has got to appear resolute, to know his own mind and do definite things” (ibid.). It is in this moment that the younger Orwell realizes that his will is not his own, “And suddenly I realized that I should have to shoot the elephant after all. The people expected it of me and I Had got to do it; I could feel their two thousand wills press me forward, irresistibly” (ibid). He is completely conscious of what is expected of him, a police officer, the authority, representing British rule.

The elephant ratifies the death both of the British Empire and the imperial project as a civilizing mission. Depicting imperialism, it finds itself from its situation and in that moment. The narrator, Orwell states that he, the younger Orwell, “did not even know that the British Empire is dying” (ibid: 266); after shooting the elephant Orwell, both the protagonist and narrator, became conscious of the fact that imperialism is in fact dying, “powerless to move and yet powerless to die” (ibid: 272), due to the role it imposes on those it controls but the death of an empire will take time as in the allegory of the dying elephant and its fall will not be without political and economic consequences worldwide.

He had not wanted to be laughed at, and he knew he was playing out a role not levied by the crowd but by imperialism itself; his uneasiness was the result of his realization of his loss of freedom and paradoxically, through this simple proclamation Orwell, through the essay, unveils an appeal to end the colonial situation since this molds both the colonized and colonizers.

Conclusion

Orwell used the essay genre as a vehicle for social criticisms and political analyses because of its springiness, its conciseness, and its potential in covering diverse topics. It also allowed him to shape events by developing them into literary processes through which he spoke his mind and investigated the world of his time.

Orwell, through the recount of the ‘incident,’ identifies the exact moment he realizes the true nature of imperialism and, at the same time, the discernment of a literary and social role which would lead to his rejection of all forms of oppression and characterize all his future writing. As an anti-imperialist writer, Orwell promoted the understanding of the evils of imperialism through the essay ‘Shooting an Elephant,’ where he pointed out that imperialism destroyed both the conqueror and conquered.

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The Effect of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) on School Leavers in Adamawa State, Nigeria

Professor D. K. Diraso and Abdullahi I. Haruna

Abstract

Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is understood to include education, training and skills development related to a wide range of occupational fields, production and livelihoods. It is in this context that this study seeks to find out the effect of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) on school leavers in Adamawa State, Nigeria: 109 small-scale informal sector technical employees, graduates of technical, and vocational schools in Adamawa State were used as the population of the study. The study found out that the recession in the economy, explosion in the population and poor state of the education sector could not allow graduates of technical and vocational schools to be self-employed. Highlight of the recommendations is that, technical and vocational schools should re-structures their training to market demand by making strenuous effort to employment opportunities and improving their chances of becoming self-employed.

Key Words: School Leavers; Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

1.0 Introduction

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) refers to all forms and levels of education and training that provide knowledge and skills relevant to occupations in all sectors of economic and social life through formal, non-formal and informal learning environments (UNESCO-UNEVOC, What is TVET? 2017) [1]. Likewise, TVET, can take place at secondary, post-secondary and tertiary levels as part of lifelong learning, including work-based learning and continuing training and professional development which may lead to qualification. Furthermore, TVET also includes a wide range of skill development opportunity attuned to national and local context, learning to learn, the development of literacy and numeracy skills, transversal skills and citizenship skills which are integral part/component of TVET ([UNESCO (GC) 2015) (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2012) [2][3]. Therefore, TVET is recognized as panacea for unemployment, training individuals or groups to acquire skills and knowledge in different fields/vocations in order to become fully self-reliant, but the opposite is true as certain challenges hinder the process in some of the developing countries in the world especially in African.

Several studies have shown that hunger, disease and unemployment have been the bane of many developing countries in Africa. A major challenge facing governments in these countries is how to provide employment

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opportunities for functional living. (Manabete, 2018) [4] Therefore, there are many reasons for going to school, but the most prominent is access to income-generating/employment opportunities. However, like in several other countries, Nigeria is looking for jobs for its growing educated population that continue to prove one of the knottiest problems despite the many years of effort (Apagu, 2003) (Diraso, 1998), (Chime, 1988), (Yusuf, 1988) (Callaway, 1964) [5][6][7][8][9]. Scholars and public communicators alike never tire or lack suggesting remedies, some of which have been tried. Recently, however, considerable attention has been paid to the concept of stimulus as a way of absorbing and channelling its enormous energy towards improving national productivity, generating economic growth and promoting national development. Most importantly, it is hoped that, as large number of young persons take up self-employment, the large and growing army of the unemployed will be demobilized making it easier for the remaining few to be adequately placed into jobs in the formal sectors.

However, experience often shows that the choice of self-employment is not easy either. For an individual or group to muster courage and venture into the uncharted waters of self-employment, the individual or group must first have the necessary skills, habits and attitudes to successfully seize the available opportunities (OKusami, O.F.,1998); Yusuf, OP. Cit, (Meredith, 1991), (Moorman, 1993) [10][11][12]. To prepare school leavers for the challenges of self-employment, government, policy makers, scholars and public commentators have long argued that TVET is, inter alia, an ancient tool which provides the most effective way in which individuals are prepared to accept wage or self-employment (Clahane, 1997) [13]; Diraso, Op. Cit.; World Bank,1991). Perhaps, it is from this of view that the architects of the 6-3-3-4 system of education gave so much prominence to TVET in the schools' curricula. Also, the new National Policy of Education states clearly, among other things, that TVET is to give training and impart the necessary skills leading to the production of craftsmen, technicians, technologists, and other skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self-reliant.

The policy also specifies that pre-vocational programs be introduced in the Junior Secondary Schools, while some parts of the Senior Secondary Schools, the technical schools, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education (Technical) and similar institutions should provide TVET programs. (Wahba, 2013) [14].

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Since the inception or introduction of the 6-3-3-4 system of education, many young people have received some form of TVET, at least within the context of the diversified council. Nonetheless, large number of unemployed educated people continue to congregate without any problems to convey away the mass. The Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) reported that the composite rate for Adamawa/Taraba States alone was 0.7% during the quarter April-June, 1995. Of this mass, about 0.3% were in rural sectors of the two states while 11.5% were to be found in the urban sectors. In addition, previous research has shown that unemployment has become rampant, especially that TVET graduates of most Nigerian youth tend to fall into poverty (Lawrence, 2016) (Abubakar, Jul.-Aug. 2013) [15] [16]. This situation has led to stagnation in productivity, wealth creation and overall quality of life, with the consequent result that we are now witnessing a wave of anti-social activities such as looting, robbery, banditry, kidnapping, Boko haram, burglary, theft, vandalism, hooliganism, drug peddling, and drug abuse etc. The natural question that arises is: Has the widespread provision of TVET failed to meet the goals and objectives of the new National Policy? Or as (Akinkugbe, 1994) [17] put it, have we failed to achieve our goals and objectives? This project seeks to shed light on the fact that TVET has been an important factor in the development of private small-scale income-generating initiatives in Adamawa States.

1.2 Objective of the Study

Find out the effect of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) on school leavers in Adamawa State

1.3 Research Question

What is the effect of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) on school leavers in Adamawa State?

2.0 Research Methodology

After reviewing the literature on this issue, this study of 109 small-scale informal sector skilled employees was conducted in all local governments of Adamawa State to understand the impact on school leavers who benefited from TVET and to understand how it has boosted their self-employment amid shrinking economy and lack-jobs. Fieldwork was conducted from March-April 1995. The researchers worked on randomly selected streets in various parts of the state. The first establishment was randomly selected, including the type of activity that establishment was carrying out. Then find and interview the first five workers as possible, including the proprietor and apprentice. Respondents were asked about their education, training and previous employment as well as their current income. Several other questions were also raised. The interviews took 10 minutes and cooperation was good and cordial. Refusals were less than three percent.

Table 1 Profile of Small Entrepreneur and their Workers in Adamawa State, 2000				
S/ No.	Characteristics	Masters%(N)	Workers%(N)	Apprentice % (N)
1	Position in establishment	29.4 (32)	37.6 (41)	33 (36)
2	Reasons for starting/joining the establishment			
	a. Realization of business potential and self actualization	41 belong to	all the group	
	b. Inheritance	6 belong to	all the group	
	c. As last resort	15 belong to	all the group	
	d. Others	38 belong to	all the group	
3	Highest level of education			
	a. Tertiary	—	2.4(1)	2.8(1)
	b. Technical School	—	4.8(4)	2.8(1)
	c. Senior Secondary School	25(8)	31.7(13)	25(9)
	d. Junior Secondary School	21.9(7)	2.4(1)	22.2(8)
	e. Primary School	43.8(14)	36.6(15)	41.7(15)
	f. No formal education	9.3(3)	17.7(7)	5.6(2)

(Continued)

Table 1 Profile of Small Entrepreneur and their Workers in Adamawa State, 2000— <i>cont'd</i>				
S/ No.	Characteristics	Masters%(N)	Workers%(N)	Apprentice % (N)
4	Mode of TVE Training			
	a. Apprentice to master	90.6(29)	75.6(31)	100(36)
	b. Trainee in company	—	4.8(2)	—
	c. Government work	—	—	—
	d. Government sponsored scheme	9.4(3)	4.8(2)	—
	e. Trainee in formal education	—	14.6(6)	—
5	Previous job experience			
	a. Start/joined establishment	31.3 (10)	48.8(20)	44.4(16)
	b. Merchant/Trader/Owner of other business	6.3(2)	14.6(6)	19.4(7)
	c. Employee of this line of business	15.6(5)	12.2(5)	2.8(1)
	d. Others	25(8)	7.3(3)	22.2(2)
6	Years spent in establishment			
	a. Less than one year	3.1(1)	7.3(3)	30.6(11)
	b. More than one year but less than two years	—	4.9(2)	30.6(11)
	c. More than two years but less than 5 years	15.6(5)	26.8(11)	22.2(8)
	d. More than 5 years	81.3(26)	63.4(26)	16.7(6)
7	Average Month's income			
	a. Under ₦500.00	6.3(2)	12.2(5)	38.8(14)
	b. ₦500.00-1000.00	15.6(5)	17(7)	22.2(8)
	c. ₦1000.00-N3000.00	21.9(7)	14.6(6)	—
	d. ₦3000.00 and above	50.0(16)	56.1(23)	27.8(10)
	NA	6.3(2)	—	—

Table 2 Type of Training to be most helpful			
S/No	Item	N	%
1	General schooling	19	18
2	Technical/Vocational (Formal)	48	45
3	Previous Job	13	12
4	Apprenticeship	26	24
TOTAL		106	100

Table 3 Type of Employment and Most Preferred			
S/No	Item	N	%
1	Government work	18	17
2	Private company	24	22
3	Self employed	65	61
TOTAL		107	100

Table 4 Source of Information about the Existence of TVET Opportunities			
S/No	Item	N	%
1	Acquaintance with practitioners	11	19
2	Advice from relations/peer	31	54
3	Through teachers/School work	2	4
4	Others	13	23
TOTAL		57	100

3.0 Results of the Study

There is often consensus in the literature that the rise in unemployment in Nigeria can be traced directly to:

1. The nature of the Nigerian economy, which is profit oriented and does not take into account the motive - the satisfaction of human needs;
2. Economy recession caused by oil glut, balance of payments problems, falling agricultural prices etc.;
3. Discrimination of unemployed people over in terms of employment choices and workplaces;
4. Explosion in the population of Nigeria and the corresponding rapid development of education; and
5. The poor state of the education sector

(Chime, 1988), (Akintola, 1984) [18], (Olusanya, 1981) [19], (Yesufu, 1969) [20]

People, who are self-employed or workers in the informal sector, however, think differently. When the question on the causative factors of unemployment was put to the respondents in the survey, 54% of them thought that most young persons are today unemployed because they (the youth) don't have the right habits and attitudes. The respondents thought that many of today's youth who are roaming the streets are lazy, spoilt, and undisciplined. No well-meaning employer can hire such calibre of workers and neither could they make it on their own as entrepreneurs. In addition, training, qualifications, and competencies, 8% thought that since the society is so generally corrupt and the government negligent, any person who does not have a godfather or cannot afford to give bribes is not likely to get a job. Only 13% of the respondents

gave some of the usual reasons cited for unemployment in the literature such as the poor state of the economy etc.

When asked which type of training would be most suitable preparation for someone aspiring to be self-employed or working in the informal technical sector, 45% mentioned formal technical/vocational schooling while 24% thought apprenticeship under a master was to be preferred. 18% thought that general schooling could help and 12% said experience gained from a previous job can be helpful. The contrasts between technical training in school and training under apprenticeship to a master in the informal sector are however not lost on the respondents.

3.1 Technical/Vocational Skills Training Services

At present, Adamawa state has three technical colleges, two polytechnics and University of Technology which provide technical/vocational oriented education in addition to the pre-vocational courses offered at the junior secondary school level. Technical colleges run a three-year craftsman/artisan training program; polytechnics provide advanced skills training for candidates who have already received secondary education. At the very top is Federal University of Technology, Yola also known/Changed to Modibbo Adama University of Technology and now to Modibbo Adama University, Yola which offers undergraduate and postgraduate programs in engineering and technology. Courses offered by polytechnics and university include industrial training attachment (training internships) of 4-6 months duration in companies, factories or government establishment. However, the regular courses of this government-established institution are used almost exclusively by applicants working or aspiring for a career in the formal wage sections. Table 1 show that only 6% (six percent) of the sample in the survey had been to technical education institutes. Although the fee charged by these institutes is moderate- a maximum of two thousand Naira (₦2000) as of then, those presently employed in the formal sector of Adamawa State claim they cannot afford to pay the fees in addition to providing for their board, feeding and books as is the requirement.

Furthermore, while only a quarter of informal sector workers have an education above the Junior Secondary School level (see Table 1), polytechnics and university often require applicants to provide a Senior Secondary School certificate. Adamawa Sate also provides formal technical and vocational skills to other government agencies with the stated goal of training entrepreneurs and workers for self-employment. Notable among these are the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and the Works Training Centre (WTC). According to (Abdulraheem,2014) [21], (Chime, 1988), NDE was established through the Youth Employment and Vocational Skills Development Program (YEVSD), Small scale industry and graduate employment scheme (SS1), Agricultural Program and Special Public Works (SPW). For entrepreneurs and workers in the informal sector, the National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (NOSA) and the school on Wheels Project on NDE were designed to provide employment. However, Table 1 shows that only about 3% of the population in our survey was trained in these government sponsored schemes. Many of the people working in the informal sector are either seen as not unaware of the training and services provided by these agencies or discouraged by the lack of flexibility in admitting applicants and managing their training needs.

The limited impact of training provided by government agencies and formal technical training institutions on the production of entrepreneurs and informal sector workers can be attributed to several factors.

First, trainees under these schemes appear to have become too mature for employment in the informal sector and therefore prefer to seek employment elsewhere for promotions and higher wages.

Second, the limited hands-on practical training provided by educational institutions is not likely to build in the graduates' sufficient confidence to venture out on their own as entrepreneurs.

Third, institutions and institutional trainees lack quality skills and business experience that can be imparted to trainees.

Fourth, most of the latest equipment used by these colleges for training is hard-earned, so the graduate feels that he needs to wait for a long time to get funds to buy the equipment and setup.

Finally, a lack of flexibility in adapting training needs to market demands, can also be an obstacle (Apagu, 2003); Saha and Sallah, 1984). The foregoing perhaps explains the popularity of the apprenticeship under an informal sector master as a mode of vocational training for those in self-employment.

3.2 The Apprenticeship System in the Technical Trades Industry of Adamawa State

Most of the sample firms in the survey appear to have survived the high mortality rate characteristic of the establishment. More than three-quarters of them have been in operation for more than five years. In the past two years, only two 2% of companies have been established.

As for the nature of their work, the most common are metal engineering, engine repair, welding, welding and fabrication, auto body, blacksmithing and scrap metal, smelting and tinkering. Between them they employ 69% of the informal sector workers.

The rest of the sample firms are repairing batteries and other auto electrical parts, refrigerators, home appliances, generators, radios, televisions etc. others are engaged in woodwork and furniture making.

Masters/entrepreneurs, who own and operate these small-scale business deals with hiring workers who have professional skills and have been trained elsewhere, especially in formal technical training institutions. Only about 15% of the wage workers were found to have been trained or receiving training at a technical school. Those referred to as workers in this sector are mostly former apprentices who are either unable to set up shop immediately or those who have failed in a previous attempt at self-employment. The few who report had formal technical schooling said they were working here to acquire practical "business sense" and also to save enough money and buy tools.

Although the number of apprentices in the formal sector is many times higher than that of the wage workers who are sometimes referred to as "job men", the number of the job men appears to be higher in the sample compared to the apprentices 38% against 33%, chiefly because the master/entrepreneurs permitted their apprentices to respond to the questionnaires less than the job men.

The way apprenticeship system works is that the master/entrepreneur takes an apprentice, on a fixed-term-contract, usually three to four years. At the start of the contract, the sponsor of the applicant usually brings the master/entrepreneur a deal. If the deal fails and the applicant is accepted to train under the tutelage of the master/entrepreneur, the trainer is paid. A formal contract is usually only signed after a six-month probationary apprenticeship to ascertain whether the applicant is trainable. At the end of this probationary

period, the terms of apprenticeship contract will be spelled out, including the rights and obligations of the trainer and the means of “settling” during the same apprenticeship.

Typically, the apprentices perform other chores and a run errand for the master, while the master feeds and spends hours each day demonstrating to his apprentices how to do the job. The apprentices just watch until the demonstration was repeated enough time for them to do the job on their own. Master has nothing to do, he spends more time teaching. A master is not only instructor/mentor. Mentor is also supplemented by experienced apprentices with more than two or three years of training. The same goes for junior masters or job men, wherever they are.

There are two forms of settlement at the end of the apprenticeship. In one case, a party was held for a graduating apprentice, and the master presented the apprentice with tools and some cash so he could set out his own. In the second form of settlement, the master can set up the graduate apprentice in what is commonly referred to as a “joint venture”. From time to time, the master monitors the progress of the business, provides counseling and injects additional capital/funds as into it as needed. At the end of two years, the business is liquidated and the profits are divided between the now mature entrepreneur and his former master and partners.

Available literature assumes that only school leavers who have unsuccessfully attempted to secure jobs in the formal wage sector will re-rely on the apprenticeship to acquiring skills that will enable them to become self-reliant and /or employable. On the other contrary Table 1 shows that only apprentices in the sample admitted to joining the master/entrepreneur to learn skills as a last resort. The rest gave other reasons such as inheritance and self-actualization desires and the realization of a business potential.

In any case, more than half (about 56%) of the apprentices interviewed were aged below 18 years and like their masters only about a quarter of the apprentices were educated beyond the junior secondary school level. This suggests that even if all things were equal, the problem of unemployment would still have been much greater among this category of youth without the apprenticeship system.

To further underscore the importance of the apprenticeship system to skills and entrepreneurial development in Adamawa State it is worthy of note from Table 1 that more than 90% of the masters/entrepreneurs in the survey had previously served as apprentices. While other master/entrepreneurs admitted receiving training under a government-sponsored scheme (NDE and WTC), none of the proprietors had benefited from formal technical/vocational training and only one quarter had been educated beyond the junior secondary school level.

3.3 Prospect for Informal Sector Technical/Vocational Trainers

As noted somewhere in this report, informal sector jobs are considered by many to be primarily inferior jobs, and as formal sector wages increase, demand for and participation in these jobs will tend to decline. Despite seemingly distorted earnings reported by respondents, half of the masters and half of the workers reported incomes above the Adamawa State minimum wage due to apparent fear of tax assessments, of ₦3000.00 as of then in an average month (see Table 1). Even some of the apprentices (about 28%) though not paid by their masters reported receiving more than three thousand Naira a month from their aside deals.

Regarding the time lapses between when they completed their training and when they joined or started the present establishment 31% of the masters and 22% of the workers reported engaging in other forms of

employment in a line not related to what they are currently doing. And only less than 10% of the masters and workers have been with the present establishment for less than two years.

When asked which type of employment they would have preferred, the majority of the respondents (61%) named self-employment while 22% would love to work with a private company. Only 17% thought government work would be most desirable (see Table 3).

Finally, it does appear that often claimed suspicion that school leavers regard technical/vocational courses and skilled employees as the second class have no basis in reality. Table 4 shows the majority of the respondents in the survey were influenced by their parents, relations, and peers to take up training in technical/vocational skills (54%) while 19% did so because they were acquainted with technical trade practitioners.

4.0 Conclusion

Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET), once considered inferior, now holds great promise for making young people employable. It is designed to develop learners' ability to solve technical problems and make individuals aware of the place of technology and industry in our society.

The government has so far invested heavily in providing TVET to its citizens, hoping to build a workforce of tech-savvy entrepreneurs to solve the nation's employment problems and improve general productivity. Although statistics are not readily available, it is believed that a significant portion of the Nigerian population has benefited from one form of TVET or the other. In Adamawa State, several educational institutions withdrew, with hundreds of technically educated school leavers annually. In addition, other government agencies in the state provide technical/vocational training services.

However, the unfortunate observation is that rather than producing self-reliant technical masters/entrepreneurs, it appears that the impact of formal technical/vocational education on young people is to shift them from self-employment to white-collar wage employment in the formal sector. A classic case of Callaway's "vocational school fallacy". The main reason for this phenomenon is that the technical education passed in these formal institutions is actually narrow-band general education suitable for school leavers, rather than further training. Such people will not be able to enter competitive realm of free market enterprise because they lack the technical skills, entrepreneurial ability, and the target knowledge that is needed today.

Additionally, research indicated that most of school leavers who receive some form of pre-vocational education in a diverse curriculum lack the right habits and attitudes to get a job or settle down to acquire marketable skills. There is no doubt that such opportunities exist, whether in Adamawa State start-ups or in existing workplaces. But to successfully seize these opportunities, an individual must proactively acquire the necessary skills that the opportunity calls for. Furthermore, he must be able to cultivate the correct work habits and attributes such as the ability to work with other people, assume responsibility, interact acceptably with fellow workers and customers etc.

Fortunately, in addition to the training provided at formal technical/vocational institutions and agencies, another mechanism exists in Adamawa State to develop skills. Apprenticeships provide most of the specific technical and business training needed by those seeking a career in self-employment. Where formal sector jobs have become difficult to find, graduates of formal school can move to the informal sector and adopt

or acquire skills suited to different conditions. These people will of course be privileged, as they will be able to use their general education background to modernize this traditional industry where technology is often outdated and standards are extremely low, especially in manufacturing, accounting and finance, where working conditions are terrible and operations are mainly engaging in illegal activities such as material and parts theft, tax evasion, etc. in addition, these persons will have greater mobility to be able to change their occupations and industry whenever necessary.

5.0 Recommendations

On the other hand, what technical/vocational institutions and agencies in the public sector can do to improve their courses offerings and the opportunities for their graduates to become self-employed are:

1. By striving to link these forms of technical/ vocational training to employment opportunities, structuring their training to respond to market needs, and
2. Reorganizing their councils to identify, plan and manufacturing products and systems that meet those needs and opportunities. This is what actually happens in the world outside the classroom anyway.

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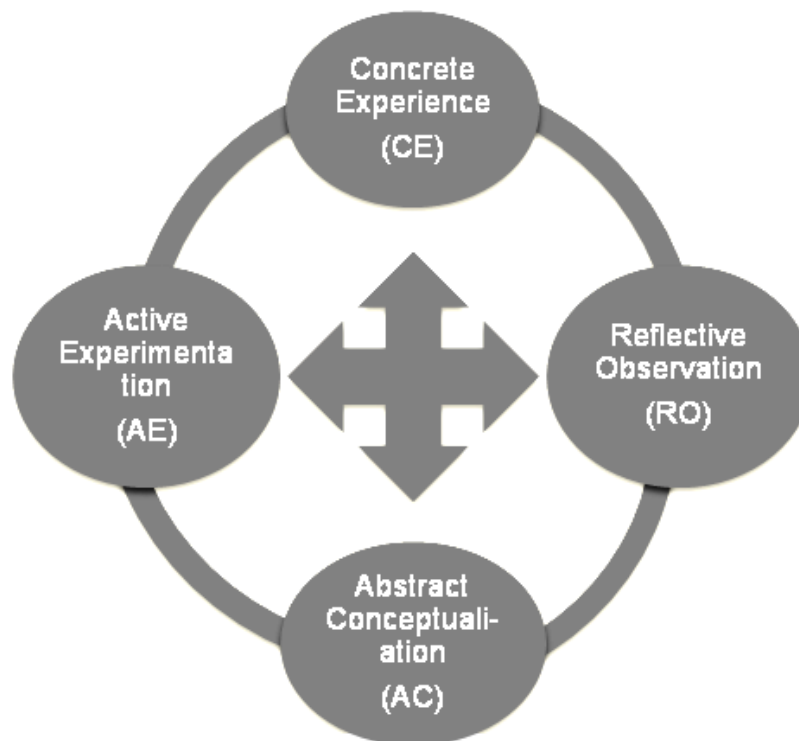
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of Learning and Cognitive Development. Various scholars tried to define ‘Experiential Learning’ based on models they developed. Dewey (1971) stressed, “The student learns by doing: or to put this in other words, he tests hypotheses in the laboratory of real life” (p. 10). For Kolb (1984), “Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience” (p. 38). Kolb & Kolb (2005) understood it as “a learning cycle or spiral where the learner ‘touches all the bases’- experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting-in a recursive process...Immediate or concrete experiences are the basis for the observations and reflections”. North-eastern University defines Experiential Learning as that “learning process that takes place beyond the traditional classroom and that enhances the personal and intellectual growth of the student. Such education can occur in a wide variety of settings, but it usually takes on a ‘learn-by-doing’ aspect that engages the student directly in the subject, work or service involved” (Katula and Threnhauser, 1999, p. 240).

Kolb emphasizes that experience plays a central role in the learning process. Kolb’s learning model (1971) is considered as the most established model of experiential learning, where he delineates two aspects: two empirical means of experiencing concrete experience and abstract conceptualization and two ways of transferring experience between Reflective Observation and Active Experimentation.

The cycle of learning begins with an experience (concrete experience), followed by reflection (reflective observation). The reflection is then assimilated into a theory (abstract conceptualization) and finally these new hypotheses are tested in new situations (active experimentation). The model is a recurring cycle within which the learner tests new concepts and modifies as a result of the reflection and conceptualization. The learner could enter through any one stage depending on his/her learning styles but has to go through all the stages to complete the learning process. The Experiential Learning Model is a cyclical process of learning experiences. For effective learning to transpire, the learner must go through the entire cycle.



An Analysis of the Perception of Teachers towards use of Experiential Learning Approach in Schools of Delhi

Ashok Kumar and Nancy Frida Lakra

Abstract

With progressive changes in the curriculum frameworks and educational policies, the learner has gradually shifted from the periphery to the centre of the teaching learning process. There is a common consensus among educationists and policy makers that curriculum must be relevant and meaningful to the learners. This relevancy can only be ensured when the curriculum and teaching-learning activity is connected to the social and cultural milieu of the learner. In this context, it is believed that Experiential Learning has the potential to make the learning process student centred. The existing literature on pedagogical strategies highlights the effectiveness of Experiential Learning in facilitating permanent betta learning of the students. In the recent decades, many policies and commissions have emphasised on the use of Experiential Learning Approaches in the classrooms for active learning and making the courses more relevant to the day to day life of the students. This paper tries to examine the perception of school teachers on the use of Experiential Learning as a pedagogical approach.

“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn”

—Benjamin Franklin

Introduction

Education is a lifelong process, which goes from womb to tomb or cradle to grave. In all civilized modern societies, the primary aim of education is to facilitate overall development of a child. According to Mahatma Gandhi, “Education is an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man-body, mind and spirit.” We can simply understand ‘Education’ as act or experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character, and physical ability of an individual, and in its functional sense, Education is the process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, values, and skills from one generation to another through institutions and processes (Cummings et. al, 2009). Thus, one of the main aims of Education is to develop the human personality in all dimensions - physical, intellectual, social, emotional, moral and spiritual. Learning becomes a pre-requisite in moulding an all-round individual to sustain a meaningful life. Individuals take on different roles as students, teachers, parents etc and immerse themselves in learning through experience and reflection. Thus, learning is an ongoing process that goes on throughout an individual’s life.

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A majority of our learning is rooted in our everyday life experiences. Our experience pervades all forms of learning. The child begins to learn from his or her surroundings even before the child enters into formal schooling. Children are continuously observing, listening, exploring, experimenting and asking questions to gain familiarity of their surroundings. For instance, a child knows merely through experience that if he/she throws a ball towards the sky, it is bound to fall back on the ground. The child may not be aware of the concept of 'gravity' but has certain information related to it which is derived from observation and reflection. Similarly, the child looks at the mirror or any shiny surfaces and notices his/her own image in it. The child realises that the same image does not appear on other solid surfaces like wood or a wall. The child may not know about the concept of 'reflection' but learns about it through day-to-day experiences. Thus, a child learns about numerous things while he/she is observing, listening, playing and actively participating with the environments. This prior knowledge is essential in developing a link between the everyday life of the child and textbook knowledge. As the child grows, he/she builds new knowledge upon the existing knowledge with the help of teacher, peers and parents. In this context, any pedagogical approach that acknowledges the experiences of the child in the learning process can be considered as experiential learning. Active engagement is one of the basic tenets of learning, involving the person as a whole viz., cognitive domain (thoughts), affective domain (feelings) and psychomotor domain (physical activity).

Experiential Learning has been an imperative pedagogy since a long time. Eminent philosophers like John Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky etc. have worked on a similar concept of learning that takes into consideration the prior experiences of the child. This approach is commonly known as the constructivist approach. The concept of 'Basic education' by Gandhi is also heavily based on the approach of experiential learning. Many of the Commissions and Policies in the post-independence period have emphasized this approach of learning. The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 suggested that children learn in a variety of ways—through experience, making and doing things, experimentation, reading, discussion, asking, listening, thinking and reflecting, and expressing oneself in speech, movement or writing—both individually and with others like family members and peers. In the year 2019, CBSE in collaboration with UNESCO developed a manual on the use of Experiential Learning for school-teachers in Indian classrooms (CBSE, 2019). The recent National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 also reiterates the need and importance of Experiential Learning in Indian classrooms. One of the major objectives of this policy is to foster Experiential Learning and critical thinking among students. This major shift has been taken to address the learning crisis in the Indian education system and increase employability of students. The NEP emphasises that Experiential Learning will be operationalised at all stages of school education by including hands-on learning, arts-integrated and sports-integrated education, and story-telling-based pedagogy within each subject. In the current scenario, Experiential Learning is considered an essential learning approach because it seeks to shift from traditional teacher centric approaches, based on rote learning and memorization, to child-centred approach, focusing on learning by doing through experience and activity.

Theoretical Understanding of Experiential Learning

Experiential Learning Theory can be traced back to the works of John Dewey, Lewin, and Piaget. David Kolb is considered to be the pioneer of Experiential Learning Theory (ELT). Kolb created a model that describes how people learn from their experiences. He based his theory on the already well-known works of Lewin's Model of Action Research, John Dewey's Model of Experiential Learning, and Piaget's Model

Stage 1 - Concrete Experience (CE):

The learner empirically learns a lot more from his/her surroundings and real-life experiences rather than just depending on reading or observing. He/she needs to actively participate in the experience by feeling/using all the five senses-sight, hear, touch, smell and taste. The idea is to immerse the learner in the experience to generate data/information.

Stage 2 - Reflective Observation (RO):

This is the second stage where the learner uses his/her cognitive abilities to reflect about the situation/experience before forming any opinion. The learner engages in the process of thinking and re-thinking about the experience that he/she has undergone and tries to evaluate in a systematic manner. Reflective observation focuses on observing and perceiving.

Stage 3 - Abstract Conceptualization (AC):

At this stage, the learner creates theories to explain his/her experiences. After collecting concrete information and reflecting upon it, the learner generalises the experience into reasoning. He/she develops a theory or draws conclusions of his/her own and justifications for the same. It is at this stage; the information is transformed into knowledge and gets stored in the child's brain. This focuses on learning by thinking.

Stage 4 - Active Experimentation (AE):

This is the final stage where the learner uses the conclusion drawn by him/her in the previous stage as a hypothesis to put it into practice for testing. This way he/she would indulge in a process where he/she is constantly changing or renewing the old ways of doing or thinking.

In his theory, Kolb emphasised on the following points - Kolb and Kolb (2005) :-

- Learning is best conceived as a process, not in terms of outcomes.
- All learning is relearning.
- Learning requires the resolution of conflicts between dialectically opposed modes of adaptation to the world.
- Learning is a holistic process of adaptation to the world.
- Learning results from synergetic transactions between the person and the environment.
- Learning is the process of creating knowledge.

Another important aspect of Kolb's theory of Experiential Learning is the individual learning styles. The Experiential Learning theory acknowledges that individuals have different learning styles and ability to imbibe things. In the year 1971 David Kolb developed the Learning Style Inventory (LSI) as an educational tool to understand different approaches through which individuals learn through experience. Some individuals learn by doing and some learn by just thinking and reflecting. Kolb in his theory identifies four styles of learners based on how they acquire knowledge. These are diverger, assimilator, converger and accommodator.

There are four types of learning styles. Firstly, divergers are such that individuals prefer to learn through Concrete Experiences (CE) and process it through Reflective Observation (RO). They are good at

brainstorming and producing new ideas. They are also characterised with the ability to imagine things, having broad cultural interest and easily communicating with different people. Secondly, accommodators who fall under this category prefer to learn through hands-on experience. They collect information through Concrete Experience (CE) and engage in Active Experimentation (AC) to test those ideas. These individuals rely on instincts more than logical analysis. They depend on other people for information, are willing to take risks and very adaptive. Thirdly, an assimilator prefers to approach knowledge through Abstract Conceptualization (AC) and process it through Reflective Observation (RO). These individuals gain a wide range of information and arrange it in logical form. For them any theory must have a logical underpinning or justification. Their strengths lie in inductive reasoning and ability to create theoretical models (McCarthy, 2016). The assimilators are more interested in ideas and abstract concepts than on people. And fourthly, conversers are the people who have this particular style of learning, approach knowledge through Abstract Conceptualization (AC) and process it through Active Experimentation (AE). They are more interested in technical tasks and problem solving than with social and interpersonal issues. They are also good in decision making and putting ideas into practice.

Need for Experiential Learning in Classroom Teaching

- **Promotes Student-centric Learning Environment:** Experiential Learning theory emphasizes that students are capable of constructing their own knowledge based on their experiences and reflecting on those experiences. It moves away from the traditional classrooms which were teacher centric and provides the learner control over what he learns and how he learns. The teaching learning process is designed in a way which caters to the needs of the learner.
- **Let Students have Control on their Learning:** Learners occupy a central role around which all the teaching-learning process takes place. The learner takes decisions on what, why and how knowledge is to be acquired. The experiences of the learner are an integrated part of the curriculum. The learner also takes control of the methods of acquiring knowledge depending on their individual learning styles.
- **Enable Students to think Critically, Evaluate, Make decisions and Construct Knowledge:** The ELT encourages the learners to draw conclusions or generalizations or develop a theory only after due process of observing, reflecting, testing the information, applying it to practical use, making changes to the pre-existing knowledge and engaging in continuous process of experimentation. Thus, by immersing oneself in this systematic process of learning, individuals acquire critical thinking skills, rational decision making, ability to question pre-existing beliefs and notions and establish new knowledge.
- **Make Learning Experience Cooperative, Collaborative and Independent:** Experiential Learning Approach encourages interaction between peers, teachers, experts etc. for the purpose of exchanging information and converting it into knowledge through dialogue. A healthy dialogue would entail discussion, agreement, disagreement, respect for difference in opinion and a collaborative effort to come to consensus. While this approach recognises independent learning and self-reflection, it also promotes teamwork and collective activities.
- **Bridge Gap between Theory and Practice:** One of the important components of this theory is that the creation of knowledge is looked at from a continuous point of view where the theory learnt is put into

practice and rigorously tested to make generalisations. This is a cyclical process where the generalisation made at a particular time could be tested again and replaced or updated with a new idea.

- **Change in mindset of the learners:** In the existing system of education, the learners are bound to perform well in examinations and get good grades to demonstrate their intelligence. This sort of approach only promotes rote learning and memorisation in order to reproduce information at the time of examination. Experiential Learning Approach helps the students to realise the real purpose of learning and attaining knowledge which is to understand the concepts through different dimensions, critically evaluate it and apply it in their daily lives.
- **To Promote Retention:** Since Experiential Learning is inclusive of the daily experiences of the learner and this makes it easier for the learner to relate to what is being taught in the classroom. When the curriculum is related to the experiences of the students, the child feels motivated to explore more about the particular concept. The students fully immerse in the process of learning and do not feel aloof or alien to the course content. This helps in retaining the school in the schooling system and reduce the number of dropouts amongst learners.
- **To facilitate Learning beyond the Classroom:** A major problem in today's teaching-learning process is that we are heavily dependent on textbooks as a source of information used in a classroom setup. This has resulted in a narrow perception amongst students and teachers that authentic information can only be derived from the textbooks. However, the learner can acquire knowledge from a variety of sources: environment, society, markets, movies, interaction with others etc. Experiential Learning acknowledges that there are no limits for a learner to acquire knowledge. Thus, it encourages learning through discovery, experimentation, play method, joyful learning etc. Students are pushed to move beyond the classroom and explore on their own to seek answers to their questions and arrive at solutions.

Review of Literature

Experiential Learning is not a new concept and hence there is no dearth of literature on the effects of Experiential Learning Approaches as a pedagogical practice. Various studies have been conducted since the development of the Kolb model in 1984, exploring its potential as a pedagogical technique. Experiential learning techniques have been employed by educators in school as well as higher education. Experiential Learning practices have been identified by Kuh (2008) as high impact educational practices that have been shown through research to increase student retention and engagement. In this top 10 list of high impact educational practices, four are directly connected to Experiential Learning: diversity/global learning (which often is accompanied by study abroad or other experiential learning in the community), internships, undergraduate research and service learning/community-based learning. He additionally provides data that shows service learning and study abroad both are perceived by students to be of high impact in terms of deep, general, personal and practical learning.

In the context of school education, studies (Voukelatou, 2019) have highlighted that use of Experiential Learning drastically enhanced the learning achievement of students. Majority of these studies suggested that employing Experiential Learning techniques in the pedagogy made the learning experience more creative and engaging for students. Fulford (2013), in his article on learning readiness, pointed out that 75% of knowledge was mastered through Experiential Learning, while only 5% was learned through conventional

learning. Manon LeBlanc *et.al* (2015) have conducted case studies on the application of Experiential Learning and recommended that teachers and administrators should try to involve parents in a concrete and more meaningful way, prepare lesson plans with regard to active student involvement in the learning process, include opportunities for reflective observation in connection with the conveyed concepts hence students must be encouraged to have experiment, and make predictions in relevant contexts, thus leading to more meaningful learning. Similarly, Chesimet M.C (2016) employed ELA to teach Mathematics and concluded that the post-test mean score of different groups suggested that ELA had positive effects on students' mathematical creativity. In her study, Sachdeva (2017) emphasised the importance of Experiential Learning, which promotes discourse, involves students, and requires them to engage and participate. The investigation focused on how pupils in Indian classrooms feel when they are taught through Experiential Learning.

It has been observed that Experiential Learning is more widely used in higher education. Scarce (1997) suggested that carefully planned field trips can be an effective tool to help students and educators concretely experience social phenomena in everyday settings. The author concluded that application of Experiential Learning in the form of field trips provides for a highly intensive and rewarding pedagogical technique. Another study conducted among university students of Geography showed that experiential based learning significantly improved the spatial thinking abilities and agreed that the class was more enjoyable compared to lecture based methods (Flynn, 2018). Similarly, Bedawy (2017) found positive response from Business Education students on the effectiveness of Experiential Learning Approach.

Rationale

In the current context, the aims and expectations from education and ways of learning are constantly undergoing changes due to the changes in policy frameworks and socio-economic and cultural factors. The requirement of today's students/learners seems to be changing; teachers and students are now more focused on the practical skills required to succeed in life. Therefore, there is a need to promote learning based on a learner-centred approach. The idea of experiential learning provides a meaningful learning experience among the students. The above literature clearly highlights the effectiveness of experiential learning in classroom teaching at the school level as well as higher education. It emphasises that experiential learning approach enables the learner to engage, participate and reflect on the classroom teaching rather than being passive recipients of knowledge. There were several gaps that were noticed in the above literature, especially in the context of learners situated in the Indian social and geographical set up. While most of the studies were conducted to test the effectiveness of the learners' achievement through ELA, none of the studies examine the perception of teachers' towards ELA. This study tries to fill this gap in the existing literature and aims to provide new insights on teacher perception towards experiential learning in school education.

Research Methodology

The objectives of the study are:

To understand the perception of school teachers towards Experiential Learning Approach.

To examine the gender wise perception of teachers towards experiential learning.

To examine the perception of teachers according to the designation in school.

To examine the perception of teachers in relation with the subjects taught in school.

Method

For the purpose of the study, a survey method was used to collect primary data. Sample of 100 Secondary school teachers was selected through random sampling technique for the purpose of this investigation. The sample population of school teachers consisted of Primary teachers (PRTs), Trained Graduate Teachers (TGTs) and Post Graduate Teachers (PGTs). A questionnaire consisting of 20 questions was developed to check the perception of secondary school teachers towards ELA in Delhi Government schools. The questionnaire aimed at capturing the perception of teachers towards different aspects about Experiential Learning. The respondents were presented with certain statements related to ELA. Each question was provided with five options -Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

Statistical Techniques: The data obtained through questionnaires were carefully analysed with the help of Statistical Package For The Social Sciences (SPSS).

Data Analysis

This section provides a detailed analysis and explanation of the primary data obtained from school teachers. Table 1 shows the gender wise perception of school teachers towards Experiential Learning Approach. The data suggests that female teachers strongly agree with Experiential Learning Approach as a curriculum as compared to male teachers in school. Around 76.1 percent of teachers agree that Experiential Learning Approach would be beneficial in initiating permanent learning among students. While only 23.9 percent male teachers agreed on the same.

Table 1 Gender wise analysis of perception of school teachers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	27	23.9	23.9	23.9
	Female	86	76.1	76.1	100.0
	Total	113	100.0	100.0	

Table 2 analysed the perception of teachers according to their designation as PRT, TGT, PGT and others. The data highlighted that a majority of Primary Teachers (PRTs) agree with the effectiveness of Experiential Learning in improving the learning achievement of students. Around 61.9 percent of Primary Teachers perceived that Experiential Learning has positive effects in improving learning outcomes. Similarly, Trained Graduate Teachers (TGT) got 15 percent and Post Graduate Teachers (PGT) scored 10.6 percent. The category of other got 14 percent.

Table 2		Designation wise analysis			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Others	14	12.4	12.4	12.4
	PGT	12	10.6	10.6	23.0
	PRT	70	61.9	61.9	85.0
	TGT	17	15.0	15.0	100.0
	Total	113	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 depicts the relation between the perceptions of teachers with the subjects taught in school. The data points out that a majority of language teachers agree that Experiential Learning is beneficial in teaching students at school level. Around 31 percent of teachers who agreed on the positive effects of Experiential Learning taught various languages in school. This was followed by Social Science teachers (12 percent), Mathematics teachers (10.6 percent), and Science Teachers (9.7 percent).

Table 3		Subject (Teaching)			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		8	7.1	7.1	7.1
	Language	35	31.0	31.0	38.1
	Maths	13	11.5	11.5	49.6
	others	34	30.1	30.1	79.6
	Sciences	11	9.7	9.7	89.4
	Social Sciences	12	10.6	10.6	100.0
	Total	113	100.0	100.0	

Discussion and Conclusion

This study brings to light the perception of teachers towards Experiential Learning as a pedagogical approach. The study found that more female teachers as compared to male teachers felt that Experiential Learning is an effective technique to facilitate permanent learning among students. It was also found that teachers at the primary level held a positive perception towards Experiential Learning. Lastly, a majority of language teachers perceived that Experiential Learning would enable the child to learn better, based on the constructivist approach. The detailed review of literature establishes the fact that Experiential Learning has had a positive impact on students' learning not only in school education but also in higher education. The results from this study align with the existing literature to suggest that overall teachers share positive perceptions towards Experiential Learning. In the light of the National Education Policy (2020) and emerging practices related

to pedagogy, we can use the outcomes from this study to inform training and professional development programmes for teachers to support them in adopting learner-centered practices.

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Broken But Not Shattered: A Case Study on the Experiences of Single Student-Fathers

Ryan S. Digan

Abstract

The case study aimed to discover the unique characteristics, common and distinct practices, and elemental considerations of the single student-fathers in Tagum City. In this study, three (3) participants aged 12-19 were chosen to participate in in-depth interviews, who were the single student-fathers who became father while in school, who were able to experience the central phenomenon of the study. Thematic analysis was used in analyzing the data. From the unique characteristics of each case, the result revealed three major themes such as overwhelming responsibilities, losing freedom, and poor academic performance. On the common and distinct practices, three major themes were extracted such as support system, following parent's advice, and being focused. Three themes were extracted from the elemental considerations in single student-fathers such as learning from experience, facing responsibilities, and facing problem squarely. With the result of this study, it implies that single student-fathers could discover and put into considerations the attributes and behaviour of a father which will enable them to produce quality fatherhood. Moreover, this study is deemed significant to single student-fathers and other single student-fathers in a certain locality.

Key Words: Single Student-Fathers, Teenage Fathers, Qualitative Research, Case Study, Thematic Analysis, Tagum City.

Introduction

Parents of dependent children now make up almost one in four students pursuing postsecondary education, as parents seek postsecondary credentials to increase their incomes and improve the status of their families. However, student parents, especially single parents, face significant challenges to success in postsecondary programs. Barriers to success in postsecondary programs for student parents can be identified in data from the 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey, administered by the U.S. Department of Education. Indicators show that basic literacy skills of student parents lag behind those of students without children. Upon arriving at postsecondary institutions, student parents are more likely than non-parents to have SAT Verbal scores of less than 400 or equivalent ACT scores and to have taken fewer than four years of high school classes. Once enrolled, student parents are also more likely to take remedial classes than are students without children. These comparisons are true for both single and married student parents, but are even more dramatic for single parents (Smith, 2017).

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Furthermore, Steve (2017) stated that although student parents face many challenges, student parents can and do succeed in completing postsecondary credentials at all levels. Access to academic counselling, financial aid, public assistance, and child care can help student parents obtain postsecondary credentials that place their families on a path to economic self-sufficiency. Single parent student mothers and fathers are in a unique position while pursuing degrees in institutions of higher education and they face multiple challenges in attempts to pursue higher education. Access to graduate or post-graduate education may present insurmountable obstacles to parents who must fill both parenting roles, work full-time to provide for dependents while maintaining benefits to ensure their family's survival.

According to Centre for Marriage and Families (2016), children growing up without their own married parents are linked with higher rates of stress, depression, anxiety and low self-esteem during the teenage years, problems that can significantly reduce their ability to focus on classroom work and to achieve in school. Billy et al (1994) comment that adolescent females and males between the ages of 15 and 19 years, who are reared in homes without fathers, are significantly more likely to engage in premarital sex than adolescent females reared in homes with both a mother and a father. As a result, most of these children either fail in schoolwork or are likely to be expelled from school for such habits. Single-parents have little time to follow up their children's academic progress

Being a teenage parent is one of the most crucial role in parenting. However, what matters most to children is what their parents do, not what age their parents are. When parents raise their children in nurturing, warm, sensitive, responsive and flexible ways, children grow and develop well. All parents navigate challenges as their children grow and develop. Many of these challenges are the same for teenage parents and older parents. But if you're a teenage parent, you might have to navigate some special challenges, like trying to finish school while looking after a baby. You might also feel judged for being a teenage parent or overwhelmed by the responsibility of raising a child at a young age (Eamon, 2015).

Literature Review

It has been demonstrated via research on parenting that there are considerable disparities between genders with regard to parental duties and the division of labor in the home, including child care on a daily basis. The societal constructs of mothering and fathering, which have inherently carried out different tasks associated with them and influence the day-to-day care of children and child-rearing, are among the gender roles associated with parenting (Castillo 2010; Chesley 2011; Coles 2002, 2009; Coltart and Henwood 2012; Doucet 2004; Johansson and Klinth 2008; Hofner 2009; Miller 2011; Nelson 2006; Respler-Herman et al 2011; Riina and Feinberg 2012; Schindler and Coley 2006).

Parenting is typically thought of and recognized to take place in heterosexual, two-parent families. Significant research has been done on the gendered roles incorporated within child-rearing in the setting of two parent, heterosexual couples because of the typical arrangement, which includes a mother and father who are both residing in the home and responsible for this function of parent (Chesley 2011; Doucet 2004; Dufur et al. 2010; Wall and Arnold 2007). In the past, mothers have been more responsible for supplying daily needs, routines, care, and nurturing, while fathers have historically handled more of the financial, fun, and disciplinary parts of parenting (Dufur et al. 2010). These duties will be described in more detail below in respect to dual parent families, as well as how these are typically separated.

Furthermore, gender relations, social hierarchy positioning, and one's role all affect how one acts out their masculinity. The hypothesis contends that while there are several and various masculinities, one is more socially valuable and predominate based on particular traits. Although the characteristics of this hegemonic or dominating masculinity evolve with time, they continue to have a significant impact on males in society. According to research, the characteristics of hegemonic masculinity in America today include economic security, achievement in education and the workforce, authority and domination, and heterosexuality (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005).

Every parent has long struggled to find work-life balance, which has been linked to various feelings of guilt, stress, anxiety, and time pressure (Dyk 2005; Wall and Arnold 2007). In certain dual low-income households, both parents typically change their work hours so that one can be at home while the other is at work and vice versa. This helps to reduce the costs of child care while also reducing some of the direct stress (Doucet 2004). As with low-income and working class families, middle class families also deal with managing child care and rigorous schedules, feeling guilty for not spending enough time with their children, and worry about these decisions (Greenhaus 1985).

Some middle-class families also practice what is known as "split shift shared parenting," in which parents plan their lives so that one parent is at home while the other is at work, much like dual-income households (Harris and Giuffre 2010). This is undoubtedly a challenge for many parents. On the one hand, when one parent is at home, there is a parental influence and direct interaction with the child(ren), and they are not in day care, but on the other hand, the family is frequently split up, and it has been demonstrated that parental engagement with children in these circumstances is actually reduced (Coltart and Henwood 2012; Dyk 2005). It has been hypothesized that mothers may experience additional stress and hardship in dual parent families.

Methodology

Design

This research is qualitative research employing case study. This method is chosen primarily because through it, the researcher will be able to gather data directly from each of the (3) single student -fathers. These data will include clear descriptions of their experiences as single student-fathers. Qualitative methodologies are most useful when researches are to strive to collect data based on human perceptions and understanding (Stake, 2010). Qualitative research focuses on working to identify the quality and themes of responses or data rather than quantify the numerical data (Creswell, 2013). It involves the use of qualitative data such as interviews, documents and participants' observation data to understand and explain social phenomena (Qualitative Research Consultants Association, 2015). The desire to understand an event or perception drives the need for qualitative methodologies to make something better (Stake, 2010). Moreover, Creswell (2013) defined case study as an in-depth exploration of bounded system such as activity, process, event, institution, social groups, or individual based on extensive data collection. Furthermore, Yin (2003), stressed that the need for case study is based from the desire to understand complex social phenomenon. It permits the researcher to maintain real life events. Case Studies combine a selection of statistics series techniques such as interview, questionnaires, observation, archive, and records (Lincoln and Guba, 1985 p.200) The researcher purposefully selected single student-fathers as sample to share their realities. The sample is

purposefully constructed up in a serial way of the use of the criteria including single student-fathers who are prospective information lush for the design (Vohra, 2016). In this research study, qualitative case study design is the most appropriate in which the researcher identifies the essence of human experiences about a complex social phenomenon as described by participants (Creswell, 2013). It focused on how a group of single parent-fathers adapt on the challenges and struggles they have faced. The Researcher gathered the untold viewpoints and perspectives of some single parent-fathers by using the in-depth interview which focused on three research questions and interview guide regarding the experiences, coping mechanisms and insights of single student -fathers. The interview helped determine the views of single student-fathers about their experiences and struggles as student-fathers..

Participants

In this study, the Researcher applied purposive sampling as supported by Polkinghorne (2005) Purposive sampling is a technique to get the rich information from respondents and where the Researcher selected the participants based on their willingness to explain their experiences to the researcher. Case studies are among the most difficult types of qualitative research to classify Creswell (2007) recommended no more than 4 to 5 participants in a case study. In this study, the Researcher chose the single student-fathers of one of the selected schools in Davao del Norte Division. Since the focus of study was the single student-fathers, the criteria in selecting the personnel are the following: First, the participants are single student-fathers. Second, the student-fathers are enrolled in a public school in the Division of Davao del Norte Third, these single student-fathers must have a child or children without a wife. The Researcher followed the recommended number of informants of Creswell hence, the informants of the study were for the three (3) single student-fathers in the Division of Davao del Norte. Furthermore, the three informants were given pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality in the conduct of the study. The first informant is The Against All Odds. He is the one who is very responsible in caring and working for his child despite his young age. He always ensures that every time he goes to school, everything is okay and sees to it there is someone who takes care of child. The second informant is the Fighter. This pseudonym is suited to this him since he always faces problems even if he is too young for a responsibility. He doesn't care about what other people say about his status, instead he fights for the sake of his child. The third informant is The Caring. This informant is given this pseudonym because he sees to it that his child is okay and in good hands before going to school. He always take care of his child and sees to it that his child is in good health always.

Data Sources

Qualitative researchers typically used different forms of data gathering procedures such as interviews, observations and documents (Creswell, 2007.) The data for this study were taken from the participant's experiences and observations, which are obtained through in-depth Interview (IDI). Aside from writing responses of the participants, voice recorders were used to make sure that responses will not be misinterpreted. The written and recorded responses were analyzed carefully. Moreover, the Researcher formulated the guide questions. The guide questions were aligned to the statement of the problem to attain the purpose of the study. The experiences, personal beliefs and views of the participants were included during the interview. The setting is in the public schools in Division of Davao del Norte. The single student-fathers interviewed were currently a student in the said division.

Results

Table 1 Essential Themes and Thematic Statements on the Experiences of Each Case	
Essential Themes	Supporting Statements
Overwhelming Responsibilities	feeling so much burden of responsibilities at my young age working, caring for my child at the same time studying my lessons. Facing difficulty in studying. Feeling of being not ready to be a father. Waking up early to fix everything before going to school.
Losing Freedom	I cannot decide on my own. I always worry my child, everywhere I go. I cannot go with my friends I am bullied being a student-father. I have to consult my parents for every decision I make.
Poor Academic Performance	I cannot manage my time caring my child and studying. I have less time in studying my lessons. I am always late in going to school. I cannot focus on the discussion of the teacher. I always fall asleep in school. I am struggling in coping the lessons.

Table 2 Essential Themes and Thematic Statements on Coping Mechanism of Each Case	
Essential Themes	Supporting Statement
Support System	My friends are supporting and giving me advice. I get some support from the people around me. My teacher also gave encouragement. I have classmates who understand my situation.

(Continued)

Table 2 Essential Themes and Thematic Statements on Coping Mechanism of Each Case—cont'd

Following Parent's Advice	I always follow the advice of my parents. I listen to the words of my parents. My parents gave me words of encouragement. I follow what they say
Being Focused	I looked on the positive side I kept on thriving for my ambition. I made my child as my inspiration. I became focused in my life.

Table 3 Essential Themes and Thematic Statements on the Insights of Each Case

Essential Themes	Supporting Statements
Learning from Experience	You should not involve yourself in teenage relationship You should not rush myself in a relationship. You must avoid myself to an intimate relationship with my girlfriend. You must focus in your studies.
Facing Responsibilities	I cannot do what I want anymore. I have a lot of responsibilities already I faced bigger responsibilities in life
Face Problems Squarely	I have faced many problems because of my decision. I have faced the consequences of my wrong deeds. I am struggling to continue my studies. I have faced so many problems even in my young age.

Conclusion

Based upon the results of the study, the Researcher enumerated several remarks. **First**, with the personal and academic struggles of single student-fathers, we always look at them as irresponsible individuals who

do not have direction in life. We used to discriminate them because of what had happened in their lives but then we do not know their experiences and struggles even their stories. It is not joy and happiness that they are experiencing everyday but pain and they are fighting their own individual battles in life. We may not understand them, but those experiences taught them how to live the life they have now. Their experiences taught them how to become better men who wanted to be the best father of their own child. **Second**, the coping mechanisms of single student-fathers are brought by the happiness their child can give. They also cling to the support of their parents, friends and the people around them. The moment that they became student-father, they really needed not only the financial and moral support of the people around them but the most important is the support and love of their parents. It is the assurance that they are loved and will be loved by their parents that helps them stand strong.

Upon probing in to the stories of these single student-fathers, advices came out. Their insights were essential that teenagers must not engage in pre-marital sex, in fact they should not get into a relationship at an early age and they must not watch pornographic scenes. Single student-fathers also aspire to give a good future to their child.

The results of this study help everyone to sympathize the struggles of the student-fathers and for them to be understood and never be looked as delinquent individual in the society. They are also victims of the societal cancer that proliferate across youngsters. The society must help them to stop this.

- To the Department of Social Welfare and Development that they must strengthen their intervention program and information drive campaign about pre-marital and even teenage pregnancy and responsible parenthood.
- To the Department of Education that they must take a more effective guidance advocacy programs that would cater to the needs of the students and hone the students holistically.
- To the parents that they must be the source of love, guidance and support to their children especially when their son become student-fathers.
- To the teachers who do not understand instead criticize them, this study will enlighten their mind that these students are fighting their own unique battle in life.

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Silent Sustained Reading and Literacy

Dr. Santosh Chawla

Abstract

Research has pointed to different outcomes for Silent Sustained Reading in classrooms. One view is that students who enjoy reading for its own sake also read more books and develop better literacy skills in reading comprehension, spelling, vocabulary, and writing. The second view is that without accountability, students' reading skills cannot be gauged. Furthermore, it does not improve struggling students' comprehension and fluency. The third view is that there is no benefit to SSR. The author maintains that in today's mandated curriculum era, where reading has taken a backstage and test-taking skills have dominated the classroom time, it is important that to develop life-long learners, SSR be allowed to be used as deemed appropriate by the classroom teacher empowering both teachers and students.

Key Words: Silent Sustained Reading, Voluntary Reading, literacy, Struggling or Successful Readers, Accountability

What Does Research Say about Silent Sustained Reading (SSR)?

Introduction

Evidence of the value of free voluntary reading or recreational reading continues to accumulate, and testimonials from several areas persist that those who do more recreational reading show better development in reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary (Krashen, 2004). According to literacy expert, Richard Allington (2002), a prominent literacy expert, once students have mastered basic reading skills, the surest road to a richer vocabulary and expanded literacy is wide and sustained reading. However, in these days of high accountability, many teachers are so busy trying to follow the federal and state guidelines that they don't have time to allow recreational reading in their classes. Fisher (2004) quotes one of the teachers involved in a study on Sustained Silent Reading, "Non-accountability is definitely the most difficult concept for me to grasp in terms of Sustained Silent Reading (SSR). As a teacher, I'm accountable for everything – standards, state tests, student attendance- everything. For SSR, this non-accountability is a different idea and I'm not sure how I will know if my students are reading. I see them reading and they seem to like it, but how do I know what they are getting out of it" (p.147). So, there is an emerging argument on how to implement SSR to get the most effective use of this instructional time.

History

SSR was originally conceptualized by Lyman Hunt in 1967. Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR) was based on six guidelines that allowed students to read self-selected materials (a book, magazine, or

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newspaper) silently; teacher modeled reading silently; students read for the entire time period; a timer was set for this reading time; no records were kept, and everyone participated in this reading time (Pilgreen, 2000). Five decades later it can be found as referenced by many different names: Free Voluntary Reading (FVR), Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), Positive Outcomes While Enjoying Reading (POWER), Students And Faculty All Read Independently (SAFARI), but perhaps the most commonly used name is Silent Sustained Reading (SSR).

Three Different Viewpoints

Review of this strategy showed mixed results and the emergence of three different ideologies. Most researchers demonstrated a positive correlation between reading habits and SSR and stated that in-school free reading programs show outstanding results in promoting the development of reading comprehension. According to these researchers, in-school silent reading programs are consistently effective (Gardiner, 2001; Krashen, 2000; Trelease, 1989). Other researchers raised the issue of non-accountability and recommended implementing SSR with interventions or with certain guidelines. Studies by these researchers propose taking the silent from SSR and recommend implementing voluntary reading as social practice (Pilgreen, 2000; Preddy, 2007; Reynolds, 2004). The third group of researchers - Collins, 1980; Langford & Allen, 1983; Rosenshine and Stevens, 1984, and Reutzel and Hollingsworth, 1991, to mention a few - used by the National Reading Panel to make its recommendations - has either no positives or no changes to report about reading comprehension or fluency. The National Reading Panel (2000) was unable to find a positive relationship between programs and instruction that encourage large amounts of independent reading and other guided oral reading.

Support for SSR without Intervention

There is substantial literature to support the effectiveness of Silent Sustained Reading (SSR) without intervention despite the National Reading Panel's findings. Eight million young people between fourth and twelfth grade in America struggle to read at grade level and some seventy percent of older readers require some form of remediation. But most of them don't have trouble decoding or reading the words; their most common problem is the issue of comprehension (Biancarosa and Snow, 2006).

Educators realize that they need to ensure that research-based reading programs are implemented in the schools to support so many struggling readers. According to Krashen (2006), research strongly suggests that free reading is the source of our reading prowess and much of our vocabulary and spelling development, as well as our ability to understand sophisticated phrases and write coherent prose" (p. 43). Krashen reports that tests of reading comprehension showed positive results after the implementation of SSR. These tests showed that students in SSR outperformed comparison students (Pilgreen, 2000). Again, Krashen shares two powerful examples that mention an ESL student, Lomb Kate, possibly the world's greatest polyglot (speaks 17 languages!) who credits FVR for much of her language acquisition, as well as Richard Wright who also attributed his language development to novels, not English grammars. Wright says, "I wanted to write and I did not even know the English language. I bought English grammars and found them dull. I felt that I was getting a better sense of the language from novels than from grammars" (Pilgreen, 2000, p.ix). Similarly, Stephen Krashen (2001) clearly favors giving choice to the readers.

Nationally recognized expert in the area of reading aloud to children and author of *The New Read-Aloud Handbook*, Jim Trelease (1989), devotes a full chapter to Silent Sustained Reading, read-aloud's natural partner. In 1994, 9-, 13-, and 17-year-old students who reported reading for fun at least once a week had higher average reading proficiency scores than students who reported never or hardly ever reading for fun. According to Trelease (1989), Silent Sustained Reading is a powerful means of developing reading comprehension ability, writing style, vocabulary, grammar, and spelling. It is pleasant, promotes cognitive development, and lowers writing apprehension.

Gardiner (2001), who conducted action research in his English class, found in his research that many students and teachers felt that they did not get the leisure time to read for pleasure, and running an SSR program is the cheapest way to build literacy in schools. Furthermore, he portrays the good and successful reader in his research and makes a case for SSR without any intervention.

Many other supporters of SSR (Fisher, 2004; Beers, 2003), it is important to provide unadulterated time to students to read silently because students want to read books of their choosing. According to Kylene Beers (2003), "Giving students time for daily, uninterrupted, sustained silent reading is critical. Studies show that giving students as little as fifteen minutes a day for SSR can impact attitudes, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension" (p.199). One of the critical factors is the impact of SSR on students' overall literacy, reading capacity, and writing fluency. The more these students read good models of exemplary writing, the more they improve their internal comprehension of excellent writing.

There are some disadvantages to this methodology, despite these researchers' good intentions to continue the tradition of silent sustained reading which has been prevalent in many American classrooms for decades. Some students will get marginalized with this group's emphasis on reading silently and without accountability. I believe that many minority, ESL, and struggling & reluctant readers will be left behind. This group of students might not get the support needed to make good choices in the selection of books to read and to benefit from the activity until someone walks them through the process that good readers follow automatically. Therefore, educators need to ensure that there are research-based protocols in place before implementing SSR in all classes. In addition, the oral literacy that comes from the social aspect of learning will not be realized that accompanies the silence. SSR proponents certainly empower good readers and teachers who support choice and autonomy for their students. The group that will benefit will be the strong readers who like to read naturally.

The Results of No Child Left behind and Accountability Measures

Many administrators and principals are pulling this program out of schools despite the availability of the above-mentioned research, because they want "real" teaching going on in their classes. Edmondson and Shannon (2002) describe a conversation with a reading teacher who reports that she cannot implement SSR in her class anymore, that she is supposed to be getting ready for Reading First initiative, and that she is to stop Silent Sustained Reading in her class and "do more teaching." Administrators in her school wanted a research-based reading program in line with the state and federal guidelines that refer to the NRP (2000) report.

Many teachers are afraid that in the aftermath of NCLB, the days of accountability, teacher merit pay, and standardized testing in many ways, they don't have time for their students to read for leisure. Broemmel,

Boruff, and Murphy-Racey (2007) report, that under these conditions, the teachers are so daunted by the thought of “covering the curriculum that the school day schedule allows very little time for students to actually read” (p.65).

A new high school principal warned teachers that students should be “focused on the instruction at hand” rather than “sitting around reading” during class time (Fisher and Ivey (2005). In a discussion about these policy changes, the principal explained, “students have to be taught. We need more time focused on direct instruction.”

It is important to know that over 7000 students drop out of high school every school day (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2006). One of the reasons for this drop out is that the students do not have the literacy and/or cognitive skills to keep up with the increasingly complex high school curriculum. Many of these students become disenchanted and disengaged readers and ultimately drop out (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006). Many teachers and researchers are looking for alternate research-based ways to engage these disenfranchised and reluctant readers to reach these struggling readers and in their quest to continue to allow these students reading time in school. These teachers are recommending that SSR be implemented with some kind of intervention or accountability measure built into it. This group proposes that it is important that teacher or adult-led literacy discussions during SSR time be provided to engage disenchanted readers (Pilgreen, 2000; Preddy, 2007; Reynolds, 2004).

Marilyn Reynolds (2004) reports her success with Sustained Silent Reading program with her “reluctant teen readers.” With the kind of students she has (juvenile offenders), she recommends that keeping a reading log or some tool to help kids keep track of their reading on a daily basis is a great way to keep kids engaged. Before she started SSR program called SAFARI in a juvenile detention facility, she found that only four out of her fifty students read for pleasure. However, “by the end of the second week most students were reading something of interest to them, and they looked forward to SAFARI time... They were becoming a community of readers” (p.47).

According to Pilgreen (2000), in studies that lasted less than 7 months, 5 showed positive results in reading comprehension, 13 showed no difference, and there were 3 negative reports. However, in studies that lasted between 7 months and 1 year, the 3 showed positive results, 8 showed no difference, and there were no negative results. But studies that lasted more than one year, positive results in reading test scores were shown in 8 studies, 1 showed no difference and again 0 negative results.

Leslie Preddy (2007), a Perry Township Media Center Director, captures a poignant moment of one of her struggling students when she is able to read at her own level after going through the Sustained Silent Reading Program and enjoys some measure of success by blurting, “*Does that mean I am not stupid?*” – Seventh-grade student (p. xiii). Her book’s title *SSR with Intervention*, speaks for itself.

Other researchers report on the success of reading with strategic implementation of other measures such as metacognitive conversations and writing in journals after reading, providing opportunities for instructional conversations, and teacher modeling to increase student engagement and on-task behavior (Methe and Hintze, 2003; Reutzel, Fawson, and Smith, 2008; Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko, and Hurwitz, 1999; Tharp and Gallimore, 1988). Without accountability, non-engaged readers remain passive and inactive. Wherever possible, they avoid reading, minimize the effort they invest in reading, and derive little enjoyment from it

(Guthrie & Wigfield (2000)). This group's ideology has its own biases – both positive and negative. It empowers students and teachers. It also sits on the fence by trying to appease the school administrators and the federal or state education authorities who bring in NCLB and the NRP's report into the picture. This group's belief system favors the minority students who will benefit from SSR with intervention. They will profit from the modeling of the teacher and some form of an adult-led literacy or social conversation in the classes. However, there are also many authors who will earn revenues by recommending books they themselves have written. For example, Marilyn Reynolds writes teen novels for troubled adolescents. Jim Trelease has written books that promote read-alouds from books he recommends, thereby creating a market for his own books. However, the good reader will be penalized by being accountable for his reading just because someone else needs intervention and support. This reader might end up being disenfranchised because of unnecessary supervision and accountability measures. Much of the research in this group comes from individual teachers who want to keep administrative forces and government interference out of their classrooms.

National Reading Panel Report and SSR with no Significant Impact on Reading Practices

SSR is scarcely mentioned in National Reading Panel's federally funded study of reading practices. Most of the studies that made through all the filters in place by NRP, only about fourteen were selected the first time and then those studies were further trimmed, most of which were conducted in the 80s. This report encouraged many schools to discontinue using SSR because the report raised the specter of some students who are not engaged in reading during SSR time. Collins' (1980) analysis of the impact of SSR on the reading achievement of 220 students from ten classrooms in grades 2-6 for fifteen weeks did not show any significant differences in vocabulary or comprehension when they were administered various standardized tests to measure the reading growth.

When Reutzel and Hollingsworth (1991) compared reading practices of sixty-one 5th graders and fifty-three 6th graders, they found no significant difference between skill and drill and SSR. Langford and Allen (1983) scrutinized the impact of SSR on the reading attitudes and achievement of eleven 5th and 6th graders. The results showed that the SSR group had performed slightly better in word reading, but the data was not statistically significant. Furthermore, the data did not reveal any significant differences in reading attitudes because of the intervention. Rosenshine and Stevens (1984) identify behaviors such as "day-dreaming, socializing, doodling, not paying attention, sharpening pencils, and the like" as being indicative of non-engagement (p. 78).

Overall, in this group, researchers reported growth in some areas but not in others. Some other studies found no differences in the experimental and control groups in reading comprehension (Holt and O'Tuel, 1989; Cline and Kretke, 1980).

In conclusion, most of these studies, that the National Reading Panel used to draw its conclusion, suggested that reading comprehension and/or fluency did not improve and stayed static. They disregarded all the studies that showed positive results in fluency, vocabulary enhancement, or comprehension augmentation. In fact, when NRP stated that the results were the same between skill and drill and SSR and reported this in very neutral tone, this information should have been looked upon favorably. Instead of spending millions of dollars on skill and drill programs, the kids should be given the opportunity to read on their own, because that

will be cheaper, more enjoyable, and in the long run make more kids life-long readers. However, by stating that the Panel did not find any statistically significant improvement when teachers used SSR, this group disempowered teachers and students both.

Moreover, this group further exacerbates the problem by recommending that phonics teaching and guided oral reading are the ways to improve reading and fluency. In the wake of this report, textbook companies are investing thousands of dollars in reading packaged programs, such as A to Z, Reading First, Fast Forward, and Achieve 3000. Each of these programs claims that it is the only program to prepare our students for the demands of 21st century. There is an influx of and leaning towards scripted lessons. Indianapolis Public Schools and Warren Schools have both used and continue to use scripted programs in many of their elementary, middle, and high schools (personal experience and interview with a teacher (anonymous) from Warren High School). In addition, NRP did not conduct its own studies that could be more scientifically controlled. The Panel used pre-existing studies whose intentions or methodologies might originally have had a different purpose.

Conclusion

As a response to the NRP report, Edmondson and Shannon (2002) state So, apparently we are out of step with our teaching because we recommend and use many practices that have not been validated by NICHD studies or the panel's selective logic. It is quite easy for us to justify being out of step, when the one who pays the fiddler and calls the tune hasn't helped many children learn to read. Yet many children *have* learned to read well by finding the time during the school day to read a good book. We know because we've watched some do it" (p. 454).

Much of the literature reviewed suggests that there is ample evidence to promote some kind of silent or sustained reading for a particular period of time on a daily basis or few times a week for pleasure alone. However, in the aftermath of NRP Report, NCLB, and during these days of curriculum covering, benchmarks and standardized testing, in order to convince the administrators and legislators, more research is needed to find out what methods will work best in the interest of about 8 million struggling students to help them achieve 21st century literacy skills. So, there is obviously a serious lack of understanding on the part of many administrators, teachers, and researchers who disagree about the success of SSR, or the methodology in implementation of SSR. We are still asking questions about how long the SSR period should last. How many days should it be implemented? Should it be rewarded or have accountability measures to make it successful?

With thousands of students dropping out of high schools everyday (All4ed), we need to make sure that we bring some kind of relevance back to the classroom. Deborah Hicks (2001) in her article, "Literacies and Masculinities in the Life of a Young Working-Class Boy," discusses the personality of a young boy, Jake, who takes on the literacies of his home but is reluctant to read because he cannot "hybridize these literacies" to develop a reader's identity and "do" (p. 433) the school right. I believe that giving the students choice and opportunities to read extensively, the education community will be giving these children new avenues to explore this world to "read the word to read the world" (Friere, 2007).

Finally, research still shows that reading for fun has the added benefit of having access to books. It, as mentioned earlier, connects with aggrandized vocabulary beyond the zip code of where the children live.

Reading nonfiction is valuable, but recent research has pointed that reading fiction helps build background knowledge and cements memory in keeping information that connects one event to the other and cause and effect issues. “SSR can also offer a calm, contemplative start to the school day, or an afternoon after a rowdy lunchtime. Reading lots can lead to more learning. Silent reading has value” (Quigley, 2020).

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