



TEACHING PERFORMANCE OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS IN SELECTED PRIVATE SCHOOLS: METHODS AND STRATEGIES IN FOCUS

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge and education are the basis for all things that can be accomplished in life. Teachers provide the power of education to today's youth, thereby giving them the possibility for a better future. Teachers simplify the complex, and make abstract concepts accessible to students. Teachers also expose children to ideas and topics that they might otherwise not have come into contact with. They can expand on interests and push their students to do better. Teachers don't accept failure, and therefore, students are more likely to succeed. Teachers know when to push students, when to give a gentle nudge in the right direction, and when to let students figure it out on their own. But they won't let a student give up. Teachers can act as a support system that is lacking elsewhere in students' lives. They can be a role model and an inspiration to go further and to dream bigger. They hold students accountable for their successes and failures and good teachers won't let their talented students get away with not living up to their full potential. In conducting qualitative case study research, the sample is usually purposeful and small, and the researcher spends a considerable amount of time with the participants in the setting (Merriam, 2009). With this in mind, utilizing a smaller participant case study provides adequate opportunity for the researcher to, "identify themes of the cases as well as conduct cross-case theme analysis" (Creswell, 2007, p. 128).

KEYWORDS: teaching, performance, elementary, teachers, private schools, methods, strategies, focus

INTRODUCTION

For several decades, the importance of teaching methods (Edelson, Gordin, & Pea, 1999; Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Thomas, 2000) and their many advantages in the teaching and learning processes (Gillies, 2016; Kokotsaki, Menzies, & Wiggins, 2016; Lazonder & Harmsen, 2016) have long been known.

Accordingly, Education Ministries around the world, as well as in Israel, recommend the use of teaching methods such as project-based learning, exploratory learning, collaborative learning, and the integration of technologies into teaching (Fisher, 2015; Chu, Reynolds, Tavares, Notari, & Lee, 2017; Clark, Dyson, & Millward, 2018). Despite the increasing awareness of the importance of implementing alternative teaching methods in school, the official encouragement of Education Ministries around the world and in Israel, and the repeated attempts to increase implementation of alternative teaching methods in schools, in practice, the usage rate of alternative teaching methods remains low in Israel and throughout the world (Ratner, Rosiner, Paldi, and Freeman, 2016; Han, Yalvac, Capraro, & Capraro, 2015; Laursen, Hassi, & Hough, 2016).

The purpose of this study is to help understand the causes of the low usage rate of teaching methods in order to find out why the actual usage rate remains low despite the high awareness of the advantages of teaching methods, and despite the many attempts to apply them in schools. For this purpose, the study focuses on the teachers' attitudes toward teaching methods, the teachers' attitudes toward frontal (traditional) teaching, and the extent of experience with alternative teaching methods during the teacher training.



The study uses qualitative means and seeks to identify the factors that influence the extent to which teaching methods are applied by teachers, as well as the hierarchy of importance among these factors, i.e., which of the factors more significantly influence the implementation of alternative teaching methods. This question is of great importance because identifying the factors that have greater influence on implementation of teaching methods by teachers can greatly assist in increasing the usage rate of teaching methods by teachers.

The overwhelming feedback from teachers in the Philippines requires an update in teaching methods and more importantly a change in teacher mindsets. To make students and schools ready for the future, teachers need to become lifelong learners themselves (Macha, W., et. al., 2018). Opportunities that can inspire teachers' own education journeys, empowering their autonomy to test and apply unique perspectives in the classroom, also acknowledge the importance of dedicated support systems. And teacher networks in promoting peer learning, and discussed the role that school leadership needs to play in fostering those systems, teachers attending training that they need better tools to create a positive change in the education system.

This study aims to discover the teaching performance of teachers in some private institutions in Davao City whose teaching styles are being influenced by the methods and strategies they used in teaching. This study would somehow trace the significant role of teachers in the institution as they communicate knowledge in a specific subject, help students grow to the fullest, develop a proper attitude, and unfold their personality. This notion of teachers is deemed universal and consistent all over the world.

This study is guided by the different theories in order to measure the importance of methods and strategies in teaching alternative learning students. First, is the active learning, this idea was developed by the philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778). It influenced numerous educators in the early 20th century such as John Dewey (1859–1952) and Maria Montessori (1870–1952). The main idea is that we learn best when we can see the usefulness of what we learn and connect it to the real world. Second, is the social learning theory by Albert Bandura. The social learning theory open in new as an alternative to the earlier work of fellow psychologist B.F. Skinner, known for his influence on behaviorism.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A case study was selected for this research because it provided, “direct observation of the events being studied and interviews of the persons involved in the event” (Yin, 2009). When researchers conduct case studies, one challenge they face is determining how many participants to use because the more participants the researcher studies, the less depth the study will have (Creswell, 2007). The most important conception of qualitative research understands the phenomenon of interests and experiences from the participants’ points of view (Merriam, 2009).

In conducting a qualitative case study, the researcher “listens to hear the meaning of what the interviewees are telling them” (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p.13). A major benefit in conducting a qualitative study is, “that researchers try to get as close as possible to the participants being studied” (Creswell, 2007, p. 18). The participants for this case study were able to provide first hand experiences because they were directly involved with the parents at the research site.

I purposefully selected eight certified Elementary teachers from selected private schools in Davao City to participate in this case study research. For this qualitative case study, I conducted a onetime focus group interview with three participants, which included semi-structured questions. The next step involved individual virtual in-depth interviews with five participants. The virtual interviews also consisted of semi-structured questions, which allowed the participants to explain their personal perspectives on the issues as stated in the research questions. The semi-structured questions were developed by me and were modified based on the focus group and virtual responses.

The participants received follow-up questions electronically that centered primarily on specific solutions that addressed the problem of teacher’s performance. This process was conducted within the three-week data collection period, after the interview process. Participants were asked to respond to the email within a 2-days period.



Participants and Sampling

In conducting qualitative case study research, the sample is usually purposeful and small, and the researcher spends a considerable amount of time with the participants in the setting (Merriam, 2009). With this in mind, utilizing a smaller participant case study provides adequate opportunity for the researcher to, “identify themes of the cases as well as conduct cross-case theme analysis” (Creswell, 2007, p. 128).

The criteria for selecting participants were specified and appropriate for this case study. The primary population for this case study originated from the Elementary teachers in selected private schools in Davao City. The participants for this study were purposefully selected because, “selecting the right participants and building working relationships with them can make or break a qualitative study” (Hatch, 2002, p. 52).

The major eligible criterion for participants in this case study was participants had to be certified or licensed Elementary teachers currently teaching in selected schools in Davao City and are teaching in the elementary school. There were eight teachers purposefully selected to participate because a case study should not include, “more than 4 or 5 studies in a single study” (Creswell, 2007, p. 128). There were no income requirements to participate. Teachers were informed that their participation was voluntarily and that their identity and responses would be kept confidential.

Research Instruments

The in-depth interviews allowed the participants to state details in response to the questions and voice their opinions (Yin, 2009). In addition, the semi-structured questions developed were used “to elicit views and opinions from the participants” (Creswell, 2003, p.188). The semi-structured interview questions I developed centered on defining teachers’ tutelage performance in teaching, identifying teacher expectations, and addressing specific areas of teacher’s involvement in implementing proper conduct in teaching.

The first method of data collection consisted of purposefully selecting three certified teachers to participate in the onetime focus group interview. I informed the participants of the purpose of the research and the procedures at a faculty meeting and issued consent letters to obtain permission to participate and be audio taped. I initially conducted a onetime focus group interview to build relationships and allow participants an opportunity to become familiar and comfortable with me and the research process (Hatch 2002).

Data Analysis

Data collection and data analysis should occur simultaneously in a qualitative study during the research process (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). In conducting qualitative case study research, the following procedures suggested by Merriam (2009) are essential for data analysis: organizing, editing, interpreting, and presenting. The data analysis for this study involved using the following strategies: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Merriam, 2009). The process of open coding consisted of, “assigning codes to pieces of data” (Merriam, 2009, p. 179), axial coding consisted of “grouping the open codes” (Merriam, 2009, p. 180), and selective coding involved developing a “core category” (Merriam, 2009, p.200).

I immediately transcribed the interviews and provided transcript reviews for the participants to member-check to ensure validity and accuracy for interpretation of the data. Once the transcript reviews were member checked by the participants, “to determine whether these participants feel that they are accurate” (Creswell, 2003, p.196), I used open coding, axial coding, and selective coding to identify, classify themes, and patterns.

This process permitted me to promptly locate themes or concepts within the transcript reviews, insert definitions where needed, place labels and codes next to the data units to match themes or concepts, and record the findings to answer the research questions. Each individual transcript was coded using this procedure and compared to each other. I reported the data with a qualitative narrative, “using the wording from participants” (Creswell, 2003, p. 197), which permitted the reader to interpret the participants’ responses. The summation of the data was reported in a qualitative narrative detailing each participant’s responses.

The final step in the data analysis involved using a methodological triangulation approach (Denzin, 2006). The methodological triangulation approach consisted of analyzing multiple data sources from the focus group interview, face-to-face interviews, follow-up interviews, and unobtrusive data to combine the collected data sources from several



different participants and the school in order to address the research questions. I examined the evidence from these sources to identify a logical theme, patterns, or relationships.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Three primary themes and four corresponding sub-themes emerged based on the perspectives of the participants. As educators support children's academic success, it is crucial that they encourage student participation in class discussions, exercise flexibility in the classroom, work in partnership with parents, and demonstrate a genuine love and commitment to their work.

Similarly, the participants thought that a teacher's employment of a variety of tactics is a wise decision for appropriate learning. Additionally, they held the view that teaching Elementary school students effectively requires the employment of proper approaches. Similarly, educators must adapt their teaching strategies to the demands of their students in order to meet their needs in a timely manner. In order to create a symbiotic relationship between them, teachers must be passionate about what they do and inspire students to be committed.

Since there is no such thing as a flawless teacher in the teaching profession, evaluation of teachers' performance is necessary. One of the most important factors in ensuring appropriate academic learning is a teacher's approachability. Instructors ought to be passionate about their work and possess a solid understanding of the subject. Finally, it is imperative to leverage the power of student feedback to help students realize the areas in which they need to develop. Knowledge and education are the basis for all things that can be accomplished in life. Teachers provide the power of education to today's youth, thereby giving them the possibility for a better future.

Teachers simplify the complex, and make abstract concepts accessible to students. Teachers also expose children to ideas and topics that they might otherwise not have come into contact with. They can expand on interests and push their students to do better.

Teachers don't accept failure, and therefore, students are more likely to succeed. Teachers know when to push students, when to give a gentle nudge in the right direction, and when to let students figure it out on their own. But they won't let a student give up.

Teachers can act as a support system that is lacking elsewhere in students' lives. They can be a role model and an inspiration to go further and to dream bigger. They hold students accountable for their successes and failures and good teachers won't let their talented students get away with not living up to their full potential.

Teachers of all walks of life and subjects have the ability to shape opinions and help form ideas about society, life and personal goals. Teachers can also expand students' limits and push their creativity. Teaching is a tough job, but it is one where you can make the most impact in another person's life. If you're thinking of becoming a teacher, here are even more reasons why you should invest in a teaching career.

In light of the fact that learning is a process that involves investigating, formulating, reasoning and using appropriate strategies to solve problems, teachers should realize that it becomes more effective if the students are tasked to perform rather than just asked to remember some information. A typical learning environment with a presentation from the course teacher accompanied by a lecture neither promotes learners' participation nor build the required level of reasoning among students. Students build a better understanding of the main concepts more effectively when they are engaged to solve problems during class activities.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This study can be repeated at selected elementary schools using a quantitative study design with different questions. This method would employ using a survey to incorporate statistical data to complement the existing data. Using parents as participants, this case study can be repeated utilizing a qualitative design with focus group or face-to-face interviews, with different questions. This information would provide the parents perspectives on parental involvement. This case study can be conducted using a quantitative survey design with more than one school in this area pyramid. The study could invite additional schools to participate and involve a much larger sample. With the increase in size, more staff and parents would become more accessible to validate the above findings of this study.



The results from this study can be a part of a joint effort to assist other schools in the school pyramid that may be experiencing the same or similar problem with parental involvement during online class of their children. Other schools can benefit by presenting the study's results at the administration is service for training staff on examining their own perceptions, aid in identifying how those perceptions potentially impact parental involvement during online class, and assist in planning viable solutions to improve parental involvement to increase student achievement. Additionally, the results from this study can be submitted to educational institutions of higher learning to provide collegiate preparation for preservice teachers in dealing with identifying teacher's perceptions and examining the impact of these perceptions on parental involvement during online class and student achievement. The importance of my contribution allows me to serve as an active agent in developing and implementing parental involvement programs to increase student achievement within public elementary schools in accordance with the Parent's Teacher's Association (PTA).

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