

Teachers' Perception on their Knowledge and Literacy Facilitation in the Interior Sarawak Elementary School

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Abstract

Although the course of study is often the same, the ways teachers instruct and facilitate are distinctive. Despite having obtained specialized instruction in their particular subject matters, educators must always remain attentive to any alterations that take place in the field of education concerning both administration and the syllabus. Administrators, particularly headmasters, are the pivotal figures in charge of the student maturation process, in terms of academic material, extracurricular activities, or personal growth. They play a pivotal role in being a role model to teachers and guiding teachers through the process of educational transformation. Geographically, the schools in interior areas are scattered. However, the government policy did not marginalize children in the interior and ensured they received a proper education. Therefore, this research was conducted to analyse the 'learning and facilitation' stages implemented by teachers in interior areas precisely in Sarawak, Malaysia. This research employed a quantitative method with a sample of 417 individuals. Set of 'learning and facilitation' questionnaire adapted from SKPMg2 (Malaysia Education Quality Standard Wave 2) is used in this research. IBM SPSS Statistic 21 was utilized to process the scoring analysis to estimate the level of the practices. The data collected showed that the lowest value of learning and facilitation proficiency among interior teachers is particularly high in mean score ($M = 4.238$). The results show high mean score values, but further exploration is necessary to uncover what teachers do during teaching sessions. Nevertheless, focusing on certain components is necessary to ensure constant quality improvement in teaching and facilitation.

Keywords: Teaching and Facilitation, PDPC, SKPMG2, Interior, Teachers Perspective, Quantitative Study

Introduction

Educational institutions around the world have been established to cultivate knowledge, as well as to shape the development of the individual among youth. The primary purpose of the school is to provide instruction and facilitate learning according to pre-established guidelines. The 1974 Cabinet Committee Report stated that schools are formal establishments that have a major impact on human, community, and national development. To put it another way, schools have a substantial impact on the advancement of social

progress (Jaafar, 2004). In order to nurture excellent students, it is fundamental to initiate admissions education at the age of five. Assessing the quality of a school includes looking at the learning and facilitation, which will influence the student's growth as a whole.

The educational system is a powerful device that can raise the country's competitive capacity. A large number of nations, including Malaysia, are attempting to adjust their education systems in order to keep up with the ever-changing world. Particularly, the effects of international education standards and incorporating technology into the education system is a demonstration of the advancement of the Malaysian education system (KPM, 2013). The Malaysian Institute of Teachers (2011) recognizes the significance of this transformation and emphasizes the quality of teaching hours that can upgrade teaching and learning activities (Supermane & Mohamad, 2018). Education is an endeavour to improve student understanding, wherein the student's ability to understand the teacher's perspective is essential. Consequently, comprehension of a lesson causes attentiveness to grasp something taught (Ventura et al., 2019).

The culture of instruction is no longer limited to the traditional approaches. Quah (2011) states that legacy technology has helped to build a new image and identity in education that is more supple, creative and inspiring, which can motivate the growth of students' potential. The school improvement section continues to maintain a fine equilibrium between institutional transformation and individual effort, inner and outer sources and notions, responsibility pressure and support for alteration, liberty and collaboration. Each educator has endeavoured to attain higher learning results for all students (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2014). The emergence and expansion of the educational world is also supported by policies that continually foster development in line with changing needs (Tonich, 2021).

The term of 'teaching and learning' is worldwide acceptable in education, however in this study, the term of 'learning and facilitation' is considered to be more appropriate and align with the dimensions studied. Therefore, the abbreviation of PdPc (*Pembelajaran dan Pemudahcaraan*) which reflects 'learning and facilitation' will be used throughout this study.

Literature Review

21st Century Learning was included in the PdPc process through Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025. It is aimed at delivering PdPc characterized by creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, as well as pure values and ethics. These characteristics are inherent in HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skill), the dynamic learning space, and the use of technology in PdPc (Abdullah et al., 2018). The implementation of 21st Century Learning in 2014 involved the application of the 3C1T1V fundamentals within the PdPc framework, including *communication, critical thinking, creativity, teamwork, values and ethics*. The 21st Century Learning conceptual framework is aligned with Standard 4: Learning and Facilitating (PdPc) in SKPMg2, which was established in 2017. Numerous workshops have been conducted over a range of levels since 2017. However, creating a society that encourages progressive thought is a process that takes a substantial amount of time. Echoing the remarks of Mohamed et al (2018), the ideal educational programs and PdPc activities should be done with consistency. Nevertheless, with specific consideration to PdPc, which is teaching and learning, this is because learning is an experience-based process that leads to true change in knowledge or behavior (Woolfolk, 2001). Hashim et al (2007) also held the same opinion by indicating that learning is present when there are adjustments in treatment, thinking, perception and affective in students.

Yahya and Wira (2018) asserted that teachers are the support structure of educational activities, particularly those associated with teaching and learning. Teachers seriously affect the teaching and learning experience. Thus, in the administration of education, the part of educators in the triumph of education is regularly upgraded to raise the quality of human resources. Results in educational activities are not always ideal for all teachers. A teacher who is truly remarkable would possess learning capabilities, a profound understanding of both academic and social matters, and a favourable attitude towards their work. In this regard, administrators should take on the role of a tutor to help teachers who lack proficiency. The teacher's teaching quality is an essential component in fostering effective student learning (Ladin et al., 2018). According to Supermane and Mohamad (2018), a study showed that teachers who are inexperienced are not as eager to obtain information from experienced teachers. This verifies the difficulty of teachers not grasping PdPc concepts completely due to an absence of zeal for expert advice.

Mohamed et al (2018) identified a range of issues with teaching and learning, including the need for teachers to emphasize skills such as critical, creative, analytical, logical, and reasoning thinking, causing teachers to be uncertain of the methods or strategies that should be implemented in the classroom. Therefore, administrators, as instructional leaders must take a more active role in guiding and supervising teachers. Empowering teachers to assemble proficient teaching methods should be supported (Kyriakides et al., 2015). Administrators who are effective are adept at supervising instruction, whereas those who are not effective are the opposite (Liebowitz & Porter, 2019). Goldhaber et al (2019) discovered that a principal with a high value-added had earlier been successful in augmenting the reading and calculating capabilities of their students.

Ventura et al (2019) provide evidence that the content of teaching and learning is still to be investigated through the paradigm of the student. The traditional method is typically based on the experiences, perspectives, and comprehension of processes during childhood. Additionally, the research revealed that students were more likely to discuss their teacher's behavior (like providing instructions, models, and teaching aids, or providing practice and homework) than mental factors (like trying to influence knowledge or emotions). They suggest advancing the comprehension of students regarding the learning process by implementing classroom activities that meet the requirements of students for planning, recording, editing, reconstructing, comparing, and developing classroom practice assessment.

Research Method

Scholars have adopted a quantitative approach, otherwise known as the positivist stance, that provides an image of reality of something that is able to be viewed, quantified, and existing (Merriam, 2009; Punch 2005). As indicated by Lay and Khoo (2015), they also explain that investigators who accept the positivist philosophy, also referred to as "empiricists" or "objectivists", assume that a phenomenon can be observed and measured to comprehend its structure, external truth (external reality), reliability, parsimony, and generality. The use of quantitative approaches highlights the need to recognize and create research issues and hypotheses, to pick sites and samples, and to determine the data search and analysis techniques that investigators will undertake (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The quantitative paradigm explains epistemology as a mode of predicting or interpreting social inquiry through the behaviour, norms and causal relationships (Falconer & Mackay, 1999).

This study took place in primary schools within interior region of Sarawak. Thirty-eight questions that examine the eight dimensions of learning and facilitation have been presented. This survey questionnaire has been adapted from the instrument of PdPc that is found in the SKPMg2 (Malaysia Education Quality Standard Wave 2) Standard 4. Researchers used different sampling techniques to effectively depict the complete population to obtain a high degree of confidence in making inferences (Konting, 2000). To start, stratified sampling techniques were used to make an overall snapshot of the population. Subsequently, the group sampling technique was implemented to detect similar features, and the random sampling technique was the concluding step, with 30% respondent for each selected school. A total of 417 respondents participated in the survey from various regions.

Research Objective

The primary goal of this study is to analyse the degree of 'teaching and facilitation' practiced by elementary school teachers in the interior of Sarawak.

Outcome and Data Analysis

The learning and facilitation variables registered a minimum score of 'Very High', with the 'Controller B' dimension having the highest minimum score of 4.366 and the 'Proactive' dimension having the least minimum score of 4.238 as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Mean score for each dimensions in PdPc questionnaire

| Item | N | Mean | Standard deviation | Score mean |
|--|------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------|
| The teacher designs the implementation of PdPc with; Planner (P1): | 417 | 4.314 | .357 | very high |
| P1AI : Provide a lesson plan that contains measurable objectives and appropriate learning activities | | 4.3357 | .52118 | |
| P1AII: Determine the method of estimation in PdPc | | 4.3789 | .57624 | |
| P1AIII : Providing teaching aids/ICT | | 4.2278 | .66751 | |
| The teacher monitors the learning process with ; Controller A (P2A) | 417 | 4.331 | .388 | very high |
| P2AI : Manage lesson content / designed learning scopes | | 4.2878 | .55787 | |
| P2AII : Managing PdPc's time aligned with learning activities | | 4.3381 | .58286 | |
| P2AIII : Provide opportunities for active student participation | | 4.3693 | .59873 | |
| The teacher supervises the learning atmosphere with; Controller B (P2B) | 417 | 4.366 | .382 | very high |
| P2BI : Monitoring student discussion in PdPc | | 4.3405 | .59977 | |
| P2BII : Monitoring the behaviour of students during PdPc | | 4.3837 | .71490 | |
| P2BIII : Assign student positions | | 4.3237 | .65650 | |
| P2BIV : Create fun learning atmosphere | | 4.4149 | .67800 | |
| The teacher guides the students with; Mentor (P3) | 417 | 4.296 | .361 | very high |

| | | | | |
|---|------------|--------------|-------------|------------------|
| P3AI : Provide teaching instructions / instructions / guidance on mastering lesson content / concepts / facts related to the lesson | | 4.3741 | .62334 | |
| P3AII : Provide teaching instructions / how-to instructions / guidance on mastering skills in learning activities | | 4.3046 | .61300 | |
| P3AIII : Guide students to make decisions and solve problems in learning activities | | 4.2830 | .67690 | |
| P3AIV : Guide students to use / utilize educational resources related to the lesson | | 4.2206 | .63113 | |
| P3AV : Combine/release/relate lesson content with other titles/units/ themes/values/skills/subjects in learning activities | | 4.3070 | .60190 | |
| The teacher encourages students' minds in carrying out learning activities with; Motivator A (P4 A) | 417 | 4.265 | .364 | very high |
| P4AI : Encourage students to communicate | | 4.2254 | .63702 | |
| P4AII : Encourage students to work together on educational tasks | | 4.2158 | .66248 | |
| P4AIII : Posing questions that lead to critical and creative thinking | | 4.3141 | .73355 | |
| P4AIV : Asking questions / creating situations that lead to making decisions and solving problems | | 4.2854 | .70547 | |
| P4AV : Facilitating opportunities for students to lead | | 4.2110 | .65675 | |
| P4AVI : Encourage students to ask questions related to the lesson content | | 4.2878 | .59134 | |
| P4AVII : Encouraging students to acquire knowledge and skills independently | | 4.3333 | .64051 | |
| The teacher encourages students' emotions in carrying out learning activities with ; Motivator B (P4 B) | 417 | 4.274 | .374 | very high |
| P4BI : Give praise / encouragement for positive treatment | | 4.3118 | .61526 | |
| P4BII : Rewarding outstanding work/ideas | | 4.2566 | .56659 | |
| P4BIII : Encourage students to ask questions / give response | | 4.2542 | .63748 | |
| P4BIV : Paying attention to the needs of the students | | 4.3957 | .66091 | |
| The teacher carries out the assessment with ; Assessor (P5) | 417 | 4.315 | .356 | very high |
| P5AI : Using various assessment methods in PdPc | | 4.3118 | .62302 | |
| P5AII : Implementing remedial/enrichment activities in PdPc | | 4.3070 | .71842 | |
| P5AIII : Give exercises / assignments related to the lesson | | 4.3285 | .59644 | |
| P5AIV : Doing reflection on PdPc | | 4.2902 | .60822 | |
| P5AV : Evaluating the results of work / activity / exercise / assignment | | 4.3141 | .65016 | |

| | | | | |
|--|------------|--------------|-------------|------------------|
| Students engage themselves in the learning process with ; Proactive (P6) | 417 | 4.238 | .354 | very high |
| P6AI : Responding to the content of the lesson | | 4.2206 | .60785 | |
| P6AII : Communicate in carrying out learning activities | | 4.2110 | .48889 | |
| P6AIII : Implement learning activities collaboratively | | 4.2278 | .48871 | |
| P6AIV : Providing responses that lead to critical and creative thinking related to class content | | 4.2254 | .55212 | |
| P6AV : Make inquiries related to the lesson material | | 4.2302 | .51399 | |
| P6AVI : Relating the contents of the lesson to the student's life / local issues / global issues | | 4.2854 | .53494 | |
| P6AVII : Making decisions / solving problems related to learning activities | | 4.2638 | .56539 | |

Discussion

Educators in interior areas confront multiple obstacles, particularly in terms of the absence of essential amenities like paved roads, fresh water, electricity, and very restrained telecommunication and Internet access. There is an inadequate amount of information technology equipment, such as computers, printing machines and projectors, in many interior schools. A large number of schools are yet to benefit from this convenience and technology. Schools in certain areas may experience difficulty in accessing the latest services and technologies due to geographical constraints. The primary means of transportation for schools located in interior areas are rivers and logging roads. Nonetheless, interior teachers should not let the hardships they face be an excuse for not excelling in teaching.

This was proven in this study that revealed that all eight elements of teaching and learning achieved a remarkably high level in Sarawak interior elementary school. The 'Controller B' dimension was the highest when it came to the minimum value, while the 'Proactive' dimension had the least minimum value in regards to teaching and learning variables. The 'Controller B' dimension is composed of four components, which are: communication regulation with students, overseeing student care, positioning students and providing an enjoyable learning environment. When examining the item, nothing appears to be particularly novel. It was determined that teachers practiced the four items adequately, in comparison to the 'Proactive' dimension that encompassed seven items. Applying critical and creative thought, and problem-solving in education is a demanding feat. Despite this, the minimum score for 'Proactive' is still quite high.

Musa et al (2020) established that supervision of teaching and learning by teachers revealed 12% of practice at a high level of understanding, 38% at a satisfactory level and 50% at an unsatisfactory level. This stands in stark contrast to Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2025. The study further highlighted that instructional leadership from administrators is often disregarded, however, it is necessary for them to be involved in developing teaching and facilitation processes to determine the success of the school. Blasé and Blasé (2000) asserted that if instructional leaders supervise and give feedback on the learning and facilitation process, the lesson planning will become more detailed and focussed. Their investigation also discovered that a lack of involvement from school administrators in instruction oversight and assessment had an unfavourable effect on teacher and student performance. A good deal of research studies have concluded that three aspects of teaching, cognitive activation, classroom management and supportive culture, influence student learning (Atlay et al., 2019). In addition to the study conducted by Bush et al (2017) which found that leadership is

the second most important factor in influencing student learning after teaching, Day et al., (2016) also concluded the same. It is believed that the chamber of the classroom can affect the culture through the practices and behaviours they promote.

Most educational experts agree PdPc methods should be in sync with the most recent technological developments, since traditional teaching methods do not sustain student interest (Abdullah et al., 2018). They have suggested that educators should use more dynamic and imaginative methods when presenting learning material. Despite the eagerness of students and the convenience of resources and technology, the main hindrance in implementing 21st Century Learning is the willingness of teachers. Although the 21st Century Learning does not emphasize the use of technology per se, the use of the Internet and computers is strongly promoted in the 21st century PdPc to expose students to the Internet industry (Ladin et al., 2018). Educators have difficulty applying the appropriate strategies and methods in PdPc, Mohamed et al. (2018) noting the necessity of instilling in students the skills of critical, creative, analytical, logical and reasoning thinking. Abersek (2017) suggested the utilization of higher order thinking skills (HOTS) in learning and facilitating, considering the disparities in knowledge between various fields, and the utilization of present-day strategies in problem-based learning, together with integrating basic techniques and communication of information technology in different fields (Ladin et al., 2018).

Simultaneously, the quality of teaching has been identified as one of the school environment factors that influences academic achievement (Atlay et al., 2019). The investigation revealed that student success in teaching and learning may be affected by the diversity of the students' socioeconomic backgrounds. They argued that quality learning and facilitation have an essential influence on academic achievement. The study further revealed that there is a scarcity of research regarding the practices of teachers while teaching. It was determined that the leading teaching strategies for maximizing student achievement are not effective for all students of varied socioeconomic backgrounds. It is their consistent belief that this method will expand the discrepancy in student success. This study proves that there is no single approach to literacy and learning that can improve the academic level of all students. This indicates that the creativity, observation and response of a teacher must always be sensitive to the needs of each student to make learning and facilitation more meaningful.

Conclusion

Overall, the practice of PdPc among teachers in the interior Sarawak is at a high degree. Subsequently, leaders should provide opportunities for teachers to stay apprised of the most current trends in order to remain on par with non-rural schools. Despite the dearth of infrastructure, telecommunication and Internet coverage and basic facilities such as electricity and clean water supply, teachers are still able to provide the most effective education to students so that they remain on an even playing field with their acquaintances in the city. It is undeniable that these facilities and infrastructure have influenced the evolution of the students' PdPc.

Future Study

Extending the PdPc study to areas beyond interior region could provide a comparison of teacher scores. This investigation can be seen from the students' perspective to discern the amount of their teacher's PdPc practice in aiding to advance their comprehension of a subject. In addition, the study of PdPc can also be extended to secondary schools to explore the perspectives of secondary school teachers. Researchers can further explore the research by

conducting interviews, observations and analysis to determine the teacher's actions during the teaching period. This is to contemplate the benefits of learning and facilitation from diverse perspectives.

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