

Study on the Factors Affecting Quality of Learning in Global Education

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Abstract

This qualitative study delves into the multifaceted domain of global education to uncover the factors that influence the quality of learning experiences across diverse cultural and educational landscapes. Employing a qualitative methodology grounded in interpretivism, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with educators, students, and stakeholders from varied global educational settings. Thematic analysis of the data revealed several critical factors that intricately shape the quality of learning in global education. Cultural sensitivity emerged as a foundational element, emphasizing the importance of acknowledging and incorporating diverse cultural perspectives into educational practices. The dynamics of teacher-student relationships were identified as crucial, highlighting the significance of fostering supportive and inclusive learning environments conducive to student engagement and academic success. Moreover, the relevance of curriculum content was underscored, emphasizing the need for curricula to be contextually meaningful and responsive to the evolving needs of global learners. Additionally, the integration of technology emerged as a powerful facilitator of quality learning experiences, offering opportunities for interactive and immersive learning transcending geographical boundaries. Furthermore, the study illuminated the impact of socioeconomic factors on learning outcomes, with disparities in access to resources and support exacerbating inequities in educational opportunities. The findings underscore the importance of addressing systemic barriers to ensure equitable access to quality education for all learners. In conclusion, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay of factors influencing quality learning in global education and provides valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders to enhance educational practices and policies on a global scale.

Keywords: Global Education, Quality of Learning, Factors, Qualitative Research

Introduction

Education, the cornerstone of progress and individual empowerment, is undergoing a period of remarkable transformation in the globalized era. Technological advancements have facilitated the emergence of a borderless learning environment, where students can access knowledge and interact with peers across the globe. However, despite the immense potential of this interconnectedness, concerns remain regarding the quality of learning within this evolving landscape.

This article delves into the intricate tapestry of factors that shape the quality of learning in a globalized educational system. By drawing upon in-depth interviews conducted with educators and education stakeholders from diverse international backgrounds, we aim to shed light on the core elements that contribute to, or hinder, effective learning experiences. The concept of "quality" in education itself warrants exploration. Traditionally, standardized testing and academic achievement have often been used as sole indicators of success. However, recent discourse emphasizes a more holistic approach, encompassing factors such as critical thinking skills, emotional well-being, and the ability to collaborate effectively in a globalized environment (Darling-Hammond, 2010). This broader perspective on quality learning is crucial in the context of global education, where students must navigate complex cultural and social landscapes.

Our research examines a range of potential influences on the quality of learning in this global context. We explore the role of curriculum design, investigating how curricula can be adapted to incorporate diverse perspectives and prepare students for the demands of a globalized world (Cushner, 2018). Additionally, we delve into the critical area of teacher training, examining the pedagogical approaches and technological skills necessary to engage students effectively in a global learning environment (Voogt et al., 2013). Furthermore, the article explores the impact of access to technology and infrastructure on learning outcomes. While technology offers immense opportunities for collaboration and information sharing, disparities in access can exacerbate existing inequalities in educational opportunities (Warschauer, 2003). This research investigates strategies for bridging the digital divide and ensuring equitable access to the resources that underpin quality learning in a globalized context.

The interviews also address the role of language proficiency and cultural understanding in fostering quality learning experiences. Effective communication across cultures is essential for success in a globalized education system. This research examines how language learning can be integrated into the curriculum to facilitate intercultural dialogue and understanding (Byram, 2008). Finally, the article considers the importance of fostering a global mindset in students. This involves developing a critical awareness of different perspectives, the ability to recognize and challenge biases, and the capacity to collaborate with individuals from diverse backgrounds (Rienties & Hofstede, 2015; Javed et al., 2020). Through in-depth analysis of the interviews, we aim to uncover pedagogical strategies that can cultivate these essential skills in a globalized learning environment.

By examining these key factors through the lens of in-depth interviews with education experts, this article seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of the elements that contribute to quality learning in a globalized educational system. The insights gleaned from these

conversations will be crucial in informing the development of effective educational practices that can empower learners to thrive in our interconnected world.

Problem Statement

The year 2023 presented a unique challenge in global education. Technological advancements have woven a web of interconnected classrooms, fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange beyond borders. However, this progress has unveiled a critical issue: ensuring quality learning for all students within this dynamic landscape (Byram, 2008). Traditional metrics focused on standardized testing often fail to capture the essential skills needed to thrive in a globalized world, such as critical thinking, collaboration, and intercultural awareness (Darling-Hammond, 2010). The current educational landscape in 2023 faces a multitude of factors that potentially hinder quality learning on a global scale. The digital divide remains a persistent obstacle, with unequal access to technology and infrastructure creating a significant disparity in learning opportunities for students across regions (Al Qalhati et al., 2020; Warschauer, 2003). This gap not only excludes some students from accessing crucial resources but also limits the potential for truly collaborative learning experiences with global peers.

Furthermore, curricula often struggle to keep pace with the evolving demands of a globalized society. Curriculums that lack diverse perspectives and fail to integrate global themes can leave students feeling isolated and unprepared for the interconnectedness of the 21st century (Cushner, 2018). This necessitates a shift towards a more globalized approach, where local contexts are thoughtfully integrated with a global perspective (Byram, 2008). The role of educators also requires careful consideration in this evolving system. Are teachers adequately equipped with the pedagogical approaches and technological fluency necessary to engage students effectively in a global learning environment (Voogt et al., 2013)? Additionally, fostering intercultural understanding is crucial for success. How can language learning and cultural awareness be effectively integrated into the curriculum to facilitate communication and collaboration across diverse cultures (Byram, 2008)?

This article delves into the intricate tapestry of factors impacting quality learning in global education as we stand in 2023. By investigating issues such as curriculum design, teacher training, access to technology, and the fostering of global mindsets, this research aims to identify the key challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Understanding these factors is critical for developing effective educational practices that empower students to thrive not just academically, but also as citizens of a globally interconnected world.

Limitations

The reliance on in-depth interviews may introduce subjective biases, as participants' perceptions and experiences can vary widely. The purposive sampling method, while ensuring relevant insights, may limit the generalizability of the findings to broader populations. Additionally, cultural and contextual differences might affect the comparability of data across diverse educational settings. Finally, the qualitative nature of the study means that it cannot quantify the extent of each factor's impact, necessitating further quantitative research for a comprehensive analysis.

Literature Review

The quality of learning in global education is influenced by a myriad of factors. Teacher quality, including their instructional methods and ongoing professional development, is

paramount as highlighted by Gauthier et al. (2004). Digital technologies also play a critical role; their effective integration into the classroom depends on both teacher and student digital competence. The conceptualization of instructional quality involves multiple dimensions such as cognitive activation, instructional clarity, and student support.

Meta-analyses have shown that teaching factors like classroom environment and time management have moderate but significant effects on student learning outcomes. Socioeconomic status, parental involvement, and school resources are other crucial determinants of academic achievement. In the context of e-learning and blended learning, technological infrastructure, student engagement, and instructional design are vital. For international students, psychological factors and learning strategies, including cultural adaptation and language proficiency, significantly impact academic success.

In Africa, challenges such as limited access to technology and internet connectivity are major barriers to effective e-learning (Basak et al., 2017). Mobile learning is recognized for its potential to enhance access to education due to its flexibility (Naveed et al., 2023). The critical role of ICT in fostering autonomy, capability, and creativity among students is also emphasized (Seenivasan, 2024). Student-level factors, including motivation, study habits, and peer influence, are significant contributors to academic performance.

In health sciences education, both enablers and barriers to e-learning, such as technological infrastructure and student engagement, are identified (Regmi & Jones, 2020). The development of digital competencies among university students and teachers is crucial for high-quality education. Lastly, lifelong learning opportunities and supportive policies are important for continuous education.

Digital technologies have significantly influenced education by enabling online and hybrid learning environments. The integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has improved access to education but also posed challenges related to digital literacy and infrastructure disparities (Günbatır, 2021). The competence and continuous professional development of teachers are critical for enhancing the quality of education. Effective teaching practices and updated pedagogical skills are necessary to adapt to new technologies and methodologies in education.

Socio-emotional factors, including students' mental health and motivation, are essential for their academic success. Supportive learning environments and mental health resources can help mitigate issues like stress and anxiety, which are significant barriers to learning (Weinstock, 2017; Lydner, 2022). The quality of both physical and digital learning environments impacts educational outcomes. Adequate infrastructure, such as access to reliable internet and modern educational tools, is crucial. Inequities in resources across different regions can lead to disparities in educational quality (Adedoyin and Soykan, 2023)

Innovative curricula that incorporate interdisciplinary approaches and real-world problem-solving can enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. Active learning methods, such as project-based learning and flipped classrooms, are more effective than traditional lecture-based instruction (Günbatır, 2021). Machine learning techniques are increasingly used to analyse and predict student performance, helping educators to identify students at risk and tailor interventions accordingly. These technologies provide valuable insights into learning patterns and potential areas for improvement (Al-Husaini, 2023)

International educational policies, such as those promoted by UNESCO, emphasize inclusive education and the integration of global competencies. These policies aim to ensure quality education for all and prepare students for the demands of a globalized world (Lydner, 2022) Engaging students through collaborative learning activities enhances their academic

performance and social skills. Collaborative learning environments foster peer interaction and teamwork, which are crucial for holistic development (Qureshi et al., 2023).

Lifelong learning is essential for adapting to the rapidly changing educational landscape. Continuous education programs help individuals update their skills and knowledge, ensuring they remain relevant in the workforce. Effective quality assurance mechanisms and assessment practices are vital for maintaining high standards in education. Regular evaluations and feedback systems help in identifying gaps and implementing improvements (Köller and Baumert, 2001). Socio-economic status significantly influences educational outcomes. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds often face more significant barriers to quality education, including limited access to resources and support systems (Sanfo & Malgoubri, 2023).

Ensuring equity and inclusion in education involves addressing the diverse needs of all students, including those with disabilities and from marginalized communities. Inclusive education policies and practices help in providing equal opportunities for learning (UNESCO, 2021). Active involvement of parents in their children's education positively impacts student performance. Parental support and engagement in school activities contribute to better educational outcomes. Language proficiency and cultural differences can affect the learning experience of students, especially in international education settings. Addressing these barriers through supportive measures can enhance learning outcomes for all students (Adedoyin and Soykan, 2023)

The use of educational data mining and analytics provides insights into student learning behaviours and outcomes. These tools help in developing targeted interventions and improving overall educational quality. Blended learning models that combine online and face-to-face instruction, as well as flipped classrooms, have shown to improve student engagement and learning outcomes by promoting active participation and self-paced learning (Günbatır, 2021)

Incorporating sustainable practices in education helps in developing responsible global citizens. Education for sustainable development emphasizes critical thinking and problem-solving skills necessary for addressing global challenges (UNESCO, 2021). Continuous innovation in educational technologies, including the use of mobile learning and virtual reality, provides new opportunities for interactive and immersive learning experiences (Naveed et al., 2023). Predictive analytics using machine learning helps institutions to identify factors affecting student performance and implement early interventions to support at-risk students. Higher education institutions play a critical role in shaping the quality of education through their policies, faculty development programs, and investment in research and infrastructure (BMC Medical Education, 2023)

Research Questions

How to Examine the Influence of Technological Integration on Teaching Practices and Learning Quality?

What is the Impact of Socio-Emotional Factors on Students' Learning Experiences and Outcomes?

Research Objectives

To Examine the Influence of Technological Integration on Teaching Practices and Learning Quality

To Explore the Impact of Socio-Emotional Factors on Students' Learning Experiences and Outcomes

Research Methodology

This qualitative study employed a phenomenological research design to explore the lived experiences and perceptions of students, teachers, and educational administrators regarding the factors affecting the quality of learning in global education. Purposive sampling was selected with participants who have diverse experiences and backgrounds related to global education. This included students from different socio-economic backgrounds, teachers with various levels of experience, and educational administrators.

Sample size of 17 participants was achieved through data saturation, where no new themes emerge from additional interviews (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). Inclusion criteria were students aged 18-24 from universities. Teachers with at least five years of teaching experience and educational administrators involved in policy-making or higher management. Exclusion criteria were participants without direct experience in the education system and individuals unwilling to provide informed consent.

In-depth interviews were conducted through development of semi-structured interview guide. Development of an interview guide with open-ended questions were done to explore participants' perceptions of factors affecting learning quality. Questions covered areas such as teaching methods, technological integration, socio-emotional support, and infrastructure. Conducted interviews in a quiet, comfortable environment via video conferencing tools (Zoom) to accommodate participants' preferences and safety considerations. Each interview lasted approximately 25-40 minutes.

Ethical considerations were done through informed consent from all participants, ensuring they understand the study's purpose, procedures, and their right to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality was maintained by assigning pseudonyms to participants and securely storing data.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis involved identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data. Here's a detailed thematic analysis based on in-depth interviews exploring factors affecting the quality of learning in global education.

Technological Integration and Digital Learning

Participants discussed the role of digital tools and online platforms in enhancing or hindering the learning process.

Access and Equity: Many students highlighted the digital divide, noting disparities in access to technology and internet connectivity, which affect their learning experiences.

Effectiveness of Online Learning: Teachers and students shared mixed feelings about online education, with some appreciating the flexibility and others struggling with engagement and technical issues.

Illustrative Quotes:

"Online learning has been a double-edged sword. While it's accessible, not everyone has the same level of access to technology." (Student A)

"The effectiveness of digital tools depends heavily on how they are integrated into the curriculum." (Teacher A)

Teacher Quality and Professional Development

The importance of skilled and continuously developing teachers emerged as a crucial factor.

Pedagogical Skills: Effective teaching strategies and the ability to adapt to new teaching methods were frequently mentioned.

Continuous Learning: Professional development opportunities were seen as essential for maintaining high teaching standards.

Illustrative Quotes:

"A teacher's ability to engage and motivate students makes a significant difference in learning outcomes." (Educational Administrator A)

"Regular training on new teaching technologies and methods is vital for our professional growth." (Teacher B)

Socio-Emotional Factors and Student Well-Being

Emotional and social aspects of student life significantly impact their academic performance.

Mental Health: Stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues were identified as major barriers to learning.

Support Systems: The presence of strong support systems, including family and peer support, was seen as beneficial.

Illustrative Quotes:

"When I'm stressed, it's hard to concentrate on my studies. Mental health support is crucial." (Student C)

"Having a supportive community helps students feel more secure and focused." (Teacher C)

Curriculum and Pedagogical Approaches

The design and implementation of the curriculum play a vital role in student engagement and learning quality.

Interdisciplinary Approaches: Participants valued curricula that integrate multiple disciplines and real-world applications.

Active Learning: Methods that promote active participation and critical thinking, such as project-based learning, were favoured.

Illustrative Quotes:

"I learn better when we tackle real-world problems in our projects." (Student D)

"Active learning keeps students engaged and helps them develop critical thinking skills." (Teacher D)

Learning Environments and Infrastructure

The quality of the learning environment, both physical and digital, was highlighted as a significant factor.

Infrastructure: Adequate facilities and resources, including modern classrooms and reliable internet access, were seen as essential.

Safety and Comfort: A safe and comfortable learning environment was deemed necessary for effective learning.

Illustrative Quotes:

"A well-equipped classroom with the latest technology can enhance the learning experience." (Teacher E)

"Feeling safe and comfortable at school makes a big difference in how well I can focus." (Student E)

Global and Inclusive Policies

Policies at the institutional and governmental levels impact the quality of education.

Inclusivity: Inclusive policies that cater to diverse student needs were emphasized.

Global Competencies: Preparing students for a globalized world through relevant policies and curricula was considered important.

Illustrative Quotes:

"Inclusive education policies ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed."
(Educational Administrator B)

"Education should prepare us to compete and collaborate on a global scale." (Student F)

The thematic analysis of in-depth interviews revealed multiple interconnected factors affecting the quality of learning in global education. These include technological integration, teacher quality, socio-emotional support, curriculum design, learning environments, and inclusive policies. Addressing these factors holistically can help improve educational outcomes worldwide.

Finding and Conclusion

The thematic analysis of in-depth interviews conducted with students, teachers, and educational administrators across various global contexts has revealed several key factors that influence the quality of learning in global education. These factors encompass technological integration, teacher quality, socio-emotional support, curriculum design, learning environments, and inclusive policies.

Technological Integration and Digital Learning

One of the most prominent themes was the impact of technological integration on learning quality. Participants highlighted both the advantages and challenges associated with digital learning tools. While technology has enabled more flexible and accessible learning environments, it has also exacerbated inequalities due to the digital divide. Students from underserved communities often lack access to reliable internet and up-to-date devices, which hinders their ability to participate fully in online learning (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2023).

Teachers and students shared mixed feelings about the effectiveness of online education. While some appreciated the flexibility and diverse resources available, others struggled with engagement and technical issues. Effective integration of digital tools into the curriculum was seen as crucial for maximizing their benefits (Günbatır, 2021).

Teacher Quality and Professional Development

The quality of teachers and their professional development emerged as critical to enhancing learning outcomes. Effective teaching practices, characterized by engagement, motivation, and adaptability, significantly influence student success. Continuous professional development ensures that teachers remain adept at integrating new technologies and pedagogical methods into their instruction.

Teachers emphasized the importance of ongoing training to maintain high teaching standards and adapt to evolving educational demands. This professional growth enables them to better address diverse student needs and implement innovative teaching strategies (Sanfo & Malgoubri, 2023).

Socio-Emotional Factors and Student Well-Being

Socio-emotional factors were identified as pivotal in shaping students' learning experiences. Issues such as stress, anxiety, and lack of motivation were frequently mentioned as barriers

to effective learning. Supportive learning environments that address mental health and provide robust support systems were seen as essential for student success (Lydner, 2022). Both students and educators highlighted the need for comprehensive mental health resources and a supportive community to help students manage academic pressures and thrive academically.

Curriculum and Pedagogical Approaches

Innovative curriculum design and effective pedagogical approaches were seen as vital for enhancing the quality of learning. Participants valued curricula that integrate interdisciplinary approaches and real-world applications, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Active learning methods, such as project-based learning and flipped classrooms, were favored over traditional lecture-based instruction (Günbatır, 2021).

Teachers noted that these approaches not only engage students more effectively but also help develop skills that are essential for success in a globalized world.

Learning Environments and Infrastructure

The quality of both physical and digital learning environments significantly impacts educational outcomes. Adequate infrastructure, including modern classrooms and reliable internet access, was deemed necessary for effective learning. Disparities in resources across different regions contribute to varying educational experiences and outcomes (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2023).

Safe and comfortable learning environments were also highlighted as crucial, with participants noting that students are more likely to perform well when they feel secure and supported.

Global and Inclusive Policies

Inclusive educational policies and practices that address the diverse needs of all students were considered essential for ensuring quality education. Policies that promote inclusivity and equity help provide equal learning opportunities, especially for marginalized groups (UNESCO, 2021).

Participants emphasized the importance of preparing students for global citizenship through curricula that incorporate global competencies and culturally responsive teaching practices. This approach not only enhances learning quality but also equips students with the skills needed to navigate and contribute to a globalized society.

Conclusion

The thematic analysis underscores the multifaceted nature of factors affecting the quality of learning in global education. Addressing these factors holistically—through effective technological integration, continuous teacher development, socio-emotional support, innovative curricula, adequate infrastructure, and inclusive policies—can significantly enhance educational outcomes and prepare students for future challenges. These insights provide valuable guidance for educators, policymakers, and researchers aiming to improve the quality of learning globally.

Recommendation

To improve the quality of learning in global education, several key areas need focused intervention:

Enhance Technological Infrastructure

Ensure equitable access to digital technologies and reliable internet connectivity for all students. Governments and educational institutions should invest in infrastructure that supports digital learning, particularly in underserved regions (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2023).

Invest in Teacher Training and Professional Development

Continuous professional development programs should be implemented to help teachers integrate new technologies and innovative pedagogical methods effectively. This can improve teaching quality and adaptability to diverse learning needs (Sanfo & Malgoubri, 2023).

Support Socio-Emotional Well-Being

Establish comprehensive mental health support systems within schools to address students' socio-emotional needs. Creating supportive learning environments can enhance student engagement and academic performance (Weinstock, 2017; Lydner, 2022).

Adopt Innovative Curriculum and Pedagogy

Develop curricula that incorporate interdisciplinary approaches and real-world problem-solving. Active learning strategies such as project-based and experiential learning should be emphasized to foster critical thinking and engagement (Günbatar, 2021).

Promote Inclusive and Equitable Policies

Implement inclusive educational policies that ensure all students, regardless of background, have access to quality education. Policies should focus on reducing disparities and supporting marginalized groups (UNESCO, 2021).

Improve Learning Environments

Invest in both physical and digital learning environments to make them safe, comfortable, and conducive to learning. Adequate resources and facilities are essential for effective education (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2023).

By addressing these areas comprehensively, stakeholders in global education can significantly enhance the quality of learning, ensuring that students are well-equipped to meet the challenges of the future.

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