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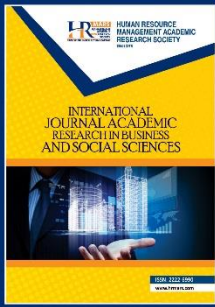
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Teacher's View On The Role-Play Of The Authorities In The Implementation Of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) In Preschool

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Abstract

This study aims to identify teachers' view on the role played by the authorities involved in the implementation of higher order thinking skills (HOTS) in preschool. The data were obtained through interview questions from respondents which consisted of 10 teachers from 10 schools from Taiping district. The data was analyzed using the Hermeneutic method which is the interpretation of text to metatext. Results showed that, the authorities involved in the implementation of higher order thinking skills (HOTS) in preschool has taken the necessary steps in introducing HOTS but it is still in its early stages following its implementation in the preschool level has not been well-structured yet. As conclusions, teachers still need specific guidance through courses and workshops to improve the HOTS skills implementation in preschool. As the implication of this study, the Ministry of Education Malaysia, State Education Department, District Education Office and Headmasters should improve the implementation of HOTS through specialized courses and workshops to ensure that teachers could successfully implement HOTS in preschool teaching and learning.

Keywords: Preschool, Higher Order Thinking Skills, Hermeneutics Method, National Preschool Standard Curriculum, Teacher's View.

Introduction

A transformation had been carried out on the Malaysian Education system via Malaysia Education Blueprint (MEB) 2013-2025. This transformation was carried out in a holistic manner involving preschool education up to higher education studies, prioritizing Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) as one of the main aspect in teaching.

This necessity is on par with the requirement of both economic and technology growth as well according to the marketability rate in the global economic market. A human capital quality is the identity if a strong education system of a country. With that in mind, in the year 2015, all schools commenced 21st century learning skill in order to increase and enhance cognitive skill to produce innovative student based on the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (MOE 2013).

Therefore, preschool education has also undergone a change through the Curriculum and Assessment Standard Document by incorporating HOTS as one of the main focus areas in teaching (MOE, 2016). Among the criteria emphasized in the formulation of National Preschool Standard Curriculum is the Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) which are explicitly stated in the Writing Standard. Teachers need to translate Learning Standards with an emphasis on HOTS in teaching and learning process in the classroom.

In learning sessions, teachers often face different pupils in terms of their abilities. Teachers' expertise plays an important role in determining teaching and learning strategy. This means that teachers can define approaches, choose methods and set specific techniques that suits the student's development and ability. The chosen strategies and techniques, besides serving as a potential to stimulate students to actively learn and it also help to analyze concepts or ideas and strive to attract students and to produce meaningful learning. Thus, this study will be seen as a form of resolution to facilitate the implementation of the Higher Order Thinking Skills at preschool level effectively.

Problem Statement

A.Rahman, Jamaludin and Zamri (2015) stated that most teachers did not emphasize the thinking skills of the students in their teaching. Teachers are more about trying to achieve their teaching objectives and to complete their syllabus. According to Sharifah Nor (2012), there are a few reasons why thinking skills are not emphasized. Some teachers think that pupils are to first master the facts and concepts of a subject before to be encouraged to think.

The study conducted by Nooriza and Effandi (2015) in analyzing the need for teachers to integrate HOTS finds that the module is an important requirement raised by the teacher. Teachers believe that the modules can be used as reference, giving clearer understanding of HOTS and improve teachers' confidence to implement HOTS in teaching. Lack of materials that contain specialized learning units integrating HOTS is one of the reasons teachers need to modulate the module to materialize the agenda. Next requirement is stated sources of resources such as materials for hand-exploration activities. Teachers also need resource materials that have specific aspects such as resource materials that emphasize on Questions and Answer materials that contain suggestions for hands-on activities.

Many recent studies have focused on the implementation of HOTS at primary level (Nooriza & Effandi, 2015; & A. Rahman, Jamaludin & Zamri, 2015), at secondary school level (Suhaimi, Baharuddin, Hasnah, Norasykin & Zaleha, 2014), and at the institutions of higher learning (Yee, Jailani, Widad, Razali, Tee & Mimi, 2015).

Therefore, this study is aimed at analyzing the role of the parties involved in implementing HOTS at preschool level.

Literature Review

In the study of the Higher Order Thinking Skills Integration in Mathematical Teaching and Learning: Teacher Needs Analysis (Nooriza & Effandi, 2015) also shows that in order to integrate HOTS, teaching modules are an important requirement for teachers. The lack of specific teaching materials in integrating HOTS is one of the reasons that led to the need of module to succeed the agenda.

According to Dinc (2011), the problem of lack of teaching materials is a common thing for educational institutions. However, in the aspect of module effectiveness at preschool level, Zakiah, Azlina and Yeo (2013) study found that there was a significant difference in the understanding of child prenumbering experiences between experimental groups and control groups. The findings show that the use of the learning approach modules through play has improved the level of understanding of preschool children prenatal experiences.

In the context of preschool education, there is no further study in the country that leads to the adoption of HOTS among preschoolers. Early childhood education provides unlimited opportunities in developing children's thinking skills (Birbili, 2013). The results of Birbili (2013) study found that the effort in enriching the experience and stimulating the children's thinking skills was gradually reduced. This is because preschoolers find it difficult to ask open-ended questions and attract children to higher thinking.

Research Objective

- i. Analyze the teacher's view in the role of the parties involved in the implementation of HOTS in preschool

Research Methodology

This study is a descriptive study using the Hermeneutic analysis. Hermeneutic analysis is a qualitative method that emphasizes aspects of uniqueness and abnormality in an investigative study. The Hermeneutic analysis sees each individual as a unique and distinctive character, having its own emotions, thoughts and behaviors. Following Rickman (1967), the form that gave birth to the expression of human feelings and thoughts may be considered as texts that may be analyzed and interpreted in the context of Hermeneutics.

This method emphasizes the interpretation of the text in socio-cultural and historical context by exposing the implied meaning of a text or work investigated (Suppiah 2013; 2014). The initial document explains that a philosopher, Martin Heidegger, used the Hermeneutical method in 1889-1976. However, Hermeneutics has been spearheaded by Schleimarcher and Dilthey since the 17th century and continued by Habermas, Gadamer, Heidegger, Ricoeur and others in the 20th century.

Hermeneutic's approach can be interpreted as an analysis of human behavior, especially to achieve a deep understanding of human interaction process (Loganathan, 1992; 1996). Due to aspects of human behavior are psychological, Hermeneutics analysis approach is a psychological approach. Qualitative methods are best suited to this study as this study is closely related to human behavioral psychology.

According to Mueller (1997), Hermeneutics is an art of understanding and not as a material that has already been understood. Hermeneutics is also part of the art of thought and philosophy. Therefore, in order to interpret the knowledge of language, it is important to understand the individual's knowledge.

One should remember the meaningful experience that has ever been passed about an event or event that affects itself directly or indirectly. The method used in the Hermeneutical approach begins with text. Furthermore, the information or information contained in the text was subsequently used to generate themes or categories from a set of texts (Suppiah, 2003). The design of this study uses Hermeneutik analysis as a methodology used to interpret transcript of interview questions to analyze the views of preschool teachers on the parties involved in implementing HOTS.

Results

Questions 1, 2 & 3: The role of MOE / State Education Department / District Education Office / Headmaster in implementing HOTS at preschool level

MOE provided courses and assistance in implementing HOTS as well as providing more guidance on appropriate teaching methods for preschool. MOE also entrusted the officers responsible in organizing HOTS implementation workshops. State Education Department and District Education Office are conducting HOTS related courses as well as providing assistance to preschool teachers to enhance knowledge on HOTS. State Education Department and District Education Office also provided facilitators to assist schools and teachers in implementing HOTS in preschool through workshops and courses. In addition, State Education Department and District Education Office also provided feedback in the form of evaluation of the students' achievement in the terms of the teaching skills, which is the ability of the students to make decisions based on reasoning and logic. State Education Department and District Education Office also conducted skills monitoring on teachers teaching approaches. Headmasters also provided assistance to teachers through email sharing, interviews, brochures and many more. Headmasters also carried out periodic observations on teaching and learning process preschool teachers through review of teacher's daily lesson plans and encourage teachers to place at least one HOTS element in daily Teaching and Learning process. In addition to providing periodic assistance and observation, the headmaster also provides the appropriate environmental and infrastructure facilities for the Teaching and Learning process process to be more effective.

Question 4: Does MOE / State Education Department / District Education Office / Headmaster clarify the role of teachers in the implementation of HOTS in the classroom?

The MOE has provided explanations on HOTS through courses given to the headmaster and key trainer. Headmasters play a big role in identifying teachers who implement HOTS teaching in the classroom through courses, obtaining information from time to time and classroom observations.

Question 5: Does MOE / State Education Department / District Education Office / Headmaster disclose skills related to HOTS to teachers in the workshop or training given?

MOE / State Education Department / District Education Office / Headmaster reveals the skills associated with the implementation of HOTS such as skills to ask students questions and instructional measures for students. Headmasters also revealed activities such as training, workshops and weekly meetings by sharing expertise information from outside parties.

Question 6: Does MOE / State Education Department / District Education Office / Headmaster demonstrate the effective use of HOTS in teaching in the classroom?

Headmasters have demonstrated some HOTS usage activities that are appropriate to preschool. Headmasters also formed a group of teachers to demonstrate effective demonstration of HOTS to other teachers. Participants also provided exposure on HOTS skills through workshops and courses held in implementing HOTS teaching in the classroom. District Education Offices also presented demonstrations and explain in detail the implementation of HOTS.

Question 7: Does MOE / State Education Department / District Education Office / Headmaster provide assistance to teachers in solving problems faced by teachers to implement HOTS in the classroom?

The MOE / State Education Department / District Education Office / Headmaster has provided the assistance needed by teachers in solving the problems faced in implementing HOTS in the classroom. They also provided HOTS services from experienced teachers and provided funding for HOTS teaching aids. Occasionally, the parties involved also provided assistance in terms of suggestions, views and opinions on the implementation of HOTS.

Question 8: Does MOE / State Education Department / District Education Office / Headmaster monitor the implementation of HOTS teaching neatly through observation in the classroom?

MOE / State Education Department / District Education Office / Headmaster has monitored the implementation of HOTS in preschools such as recording the implementation of HOTS, making observations and guiding teachers in the implementation of HOTS through discussion.

Discussion

To create a creative and critical generation and to be competitive globally, PPPM 2013-2025 has placed Higher Order Thinking Skills as a branch of thinking skills in transforming the education curriculum from preschool to national and secondary schools. However, in order to implement HOTS at preschool level, besides teachers and students, the parties involved, such as MOE / State Education Department / District Education Office and Headmaster, play an important role in the implementation of HOTS. There are several factors that cause HOTS implementation at preschool level to remain poor. This is because, there are still many teachers who do not understand the

concept of HOTS. Teachers also assume that HOTS are the same as KBKK. In addition, the role of the MOE / State Education Department / District Education Office is still in its early stages. Therefore, there are some suggestions that the implementation of HOTS at preschool level can be enhanced together. Among the suggestions are:

Teachers need to be provided with more comprehensive disclosures about HOTS through courses and workshops. To reinforce the readiness of teachers towards HOTS, continuous training is needed. Therefore, teachers can apply HOTS techniques and methods more well-planned during Teaching and Learning process. The duration of each course and workshop should also be carefully crafted so that teachers obtain enough knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Next, teachers need to be exposed to the concept of innovation in education. Through this concept of educational innovation, teachers can make a big difference in controlling Teaching and Learning process in the classroom. Therefore, in the innovation it is recommended that teachers use strategy variations and techniques that can actively involve students.

Lastly, the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) has introduced Information and Communication Technology in education in line with the development of today's technology which includes infrastructure, filling and teacher training. Teachers can use technology tools during the teaching and learning process to reinforce creativity and critical thinking skills of preschool students. If teachers are able to use these technologies and apply them correctly, the teaching and learning process will have a meaningful impact on students.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the transformation of the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025 strongly emphasizes the concept of HOTS in education curriculum to produce a generation that can think critically and holistically. Teachers also play a role in determining their teaching and learning to have the HOTS elements as required in the Revised National Preschool Standard Curriculum 2017. Through the emphasis of the HOTS element in everyday teaching and learning, it can train higher level thinking such as applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating. Teachers are also seen to require special guidance in implementing HOTS. Therefore, MOE / State Education Department / District Education Office and Headmaster need to improve in providing appropriate courses, workshops and training for preschool teachers so that teachers can prepare themselves for HOTS at preschool level.

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