

European Scientific Journal, *ESJ*

April 2021

European Scientific Institute, ESI

The content is peer reviewed

ESJ Social Sciences

April 2021 edition vol. 17, No. 12

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ISSN: 1857-7431 (Online)

ISSN: 1857-7881 (Print)

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ESJ Social Sciences

WhatsApp: Communication between Parents and Kindergarten Teachers in the Digital Era

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p1](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p1)

Submitted: 05 February 2021

Accepted: 26 March 2021

Published: 30 April 2021

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Cite As:

Aviva, D. and Simon, E. (2021). WhatsApp: Communication between Parents and Kindergarten Teachers in the Digital Era. *European Scientific Journal*, ESJ, 17(12), 1. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p1>

Abstract

The technological revolution has filtered into the field of education and among other things, affects communication between parents and teachers in schools and in kindergartens. A digital method for interpersonal communications enables the immediate transfer of messages to a large number of recipients, which is efficient and ensures transparency of actions and policies. The WhatsApp application is now widely used in correspondence between parents and schools, including in kindergartens. The research investigated how kindergarten teachers in Israel use the social media "WhatsApp" in communication with their parents. Using a quantitative research approach, a specially designed questionnaire was distributed online as a Google.docs document to 161 kindergarten teachers in the North of Israel. The kindergarten teachers reported that they were open to change and willing to adopt new technologies that can help them in their work. However, it appears that the main adoption and use of the WhatsApp tool is for the transmission of information or kindergarten experiences to the parents. The kindergarten teachers felt that the WhatsApp application was advantageous due to its easy accessibility and speed of communication and testified to more sharing and involvement of the parents in the kindergarten activities and work. Nevertheless, several questions led to concerns about the

mutual availability of the information that is transmitted, the type of information, and the extent of need for the use of this tool in the present era.

Keywords: Kindergarten teachers, digital era, digital communication, kindergarten teachers-parents' communication

Introduction

Modern societies are undergoing a dynamic ongoing revolution due to the dramatic development of technology all over the world, opening innumerable sources of information to everyone, and facilitating interpersonal communication through digital means and the social networks. This technological revolution has filtered into the field of education and among other things, affects communication between parents and teachers in schools and in kindergartens. Today, communication between these educators (parents and teachers) is conducted through various means including traditional methods, teacher-parents conferences, telephone calls, letters, and through digital mail and online social networks. The use of digital methods for interpersonal communication enables the immediate transfer of messages to a large number of recipients, and it is efficient and ensures transparency of actions and policies (Sword, 2014). There are also disadvantages to this form of communication, whereby negative messages are immediately transferred between a large number of people and also affect personal opinions. In the field of education, this may include parents expressing negative opinions about teachers and consequently influencing other parents' opinions.

The ability of teacher-parents communication to advance children's wellbeing has been investigated by a number of research studies (Kuusimäki et al., 2019; Baker et al., 2016). Bronfenbrenner (1979) suggested that a child develops within different circles of influence (their immediate family, schools or kindergartens' communities) and the child's environmental culture and the child's development is affected by the quality of the mutual relationships between these different circles of influence. In Israel, family-school relations are perceived as being strained and complex (Tal & Bar, 2010). The literature in this field relates to two models describing the style of communication between parents and teachers in Israel, which includes; the separation model and the collaboration model (Tal & Bar, 2010).

The history of parent-teacher relationships in Israel shows that between the years 1930-1950, the two systems, families and schools, were completely different. More recently, the model of collaboration has been adopted more frequently. Until today, there is no conceptual model used by all schools for teacher-parent communication or collaboration (Tal & Bar, 2010).

Models of Parent- Teacher Communication

The Separation Model

The separation model describes the total separation of areas of responsibility and action between the parents and the educational system. In the schools, the teachers have total responsibility and authority, whereas in the children's homes, the parents are considered to have total responsibility and authority (Tal & Bar, 2010). The relationship between parents and teachers is conducted through the child, and it mainly involves passing important information (New et al., 2000).

The Collaboration Model

In this model of communication, the limits and areas of responsibility of each system are not clearly defined, nor are the expectations of each party from each other. There is a lack of consensus in the research literature regarding the definition of this model. Therefore, the Israeli Ministry of Education has identified 14 different definitions for this model relating to the manner of collaboration and communication between parents and teachers (Israel Ministry of Education, 2003). The areas of parents' involvement in the school and the willingness of the educational staff to make room for the parents' involvement in schools are often in dispute (Gur & Zalmanson-Levi, 2005; Epstein & Sheldon, 2002).

Kindergarten Teacher-Parents Communication

Through their Internet site and protocols, the Israeli Ministry of Education tries to advance the values of cooperation between parents and kindergarten teachers. Therefore, this indicates that a strong level of cooperation between these two authorities is important for the child's success.

According to Epstein (2001), parents often wish to be involved in the activities that take place in their children's kindergarten but lack the knowledge and skills needed to convey this expectation to the kindergarten teachers. Some parents expect the kindergarten teachers to take the initiative in nurturing the relationship and maintaining communication, while others are caught up in their daily schedules and work obligations that they are not available to develop the relationship (Christenson, 2004).

The levels of interaction in kindergartens between parents and staff differ to those in schools. The parents accompany their children in the morning to the kindergarten and collect them at the end of the day, meeting the staff at two critical points in the day's schedule. These two points of time are accompanied by stress on both sides. In the morning, the parents are in a hurry to get to work and the staffs are anxious to receive all the children and their parents in an appropriate manner. This helps the children and parents to

experience a positive separation. At the end of the day, both the parents and the kindergarten staffs are in a hurry to get home after their working day and are not emotionally available to undertake any meaningful encounters concerning the child's progress or development. It is therefore essential to find a time when both parties are focused and available to engage in meaningful communication.

Kindergarten Teacher-Parent Communication in the Digital Era

In today's digital era, a great deal of interpersonal communication occurs through social networks such as SMS (Short Message Service), Email, Twitter, and more recently WhatsApp (Calvo, Iglesias, 2014). The use of social networks and other digital means of communication allow parents to become more involved in the kindergarten and its activities, and to communicate through different channels. Research has shown that the use of digital communication has enabled an increase in communication between parents and educational staff (Thompson, 2008). However, using technology in communications between parents and kindergarten teachers also has disadvantages. This is because the boundaries between the home and professional life and social life can become blurred (Agger, 2011). Research conducted by Palts and Kalmus (2015) indicated that it is essential to use a variety of channels for communication between educational staff and parents such as face-to-face meetings, electronic mail, and social networks. Each family should be able to choose what is the best channel for them.

Communication using WhatsApp

Maternal employment rates in OECD countries average 60% (OECD Family database 2020). The need to be employed or the desire to work for self-fulfillment can cause parents feelings of guilt or pressure that they are not sufficiently involved in their child's life in the kindergarten. The use of social media such as WhatsApp can provide a sense of greater involvement. WhatsApp is an application that allows immediate communication through a number of platforms, messages, films, and photos. Thus, it has become highly popular in almost every walk of modern life. The use of WhatsApp for teacher-pupil communication has received significant research attention but not for communication between parents and kindergarten teachers.

This research will investigate how kindergarten teachers in Israel use the social media "WhatsApp" in their communication with parents.

Consequently, this research aimed to investigate the following questions:

- How often do kindergarten teachers communicate with parents using the WhatsApp application?
- For what purpose do the kindergarten teachers use this application in their communication with parents?
- What are the kindergarten teachers' attitudes towards the use of the WhatsApp application in their communication with parents?
- Do more experienced kindergarten teachers reach out to parents using the WhatsApp application more frequently than less experienced kindergarten teachers?

Method

The research employed a quantitative research approach, using a questionnaire specially designed for this research. The questionnaire was distributed online as a Google.docs document to 161 kindergarten teachers in the North of Israel. The questionnaire consisted of questions that related to the kindergarten teachers' background and items that addressed the kindergarten teachers' use of the "Whatsapp" application in their communications with the parents of the children in their kindergarten. The questionnaire was checked for reliability through peer appraisal by five members of the academic staff of the authors' college, who are considered experts in early childhood studies.

Participants

Participants in this study were 161 kindergarten teachers. Most of them were working in the secular sector (87.0%) and others in the religious (7.6%) or private (3.1%) sectors. As shown in Table 1, about 40% of the teachers were in their forties, another quarter in their thirties, and another quarter in their fifties. Approximately 60% had a B.A. degree, and most of the others had an M.A. degree. Over a half of the teachers have been kindergarten teachers for over ten years, 23% have been kindergarten teachers for up to five years, and 20% for between six to ten years. Over a half of the kindergartens had 31-35 children, and about another third had 21-30 children. All the teachers were women.

Table 1. Background characteristics of the kindergarten teachers ($N = 161$)

	Range	<i>N</i>	%
Age	20-30	14	8.7
	31-40	40	24.8
	41-50	64	39.8
	51-60	41	25.5
	61-65	2	1.2
Education level	B.A.	96	59.6
	M.A.	64	39.8
	Ph.D.	1	0.6
Seniority, years of experience	1-5 years	32	23.4
	6-10 years	28	20.4
	10-20 years	77	56.2
Number of children in the kindergarten	10-15	13	8.1
	16-20	10	6.2
	21-30	54	33.5
	31-35	84	52.2

Research Instruments

Communication with Parents

A 13-item questionnaire was composed to assess the frequency of the kindergarten teachers' communication with the parents regarding various issues. Items included consideration of the following issues: updating parents about general and private events in and outside the kindergarten, answering parents' questions, sending photos of daily activities, and sending messages from the council or municipality. Items were rated on a four-point scale from 'seldom' (1) to 'daily' (4).

A principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation was performed for the different items. One major factor emerged, explaining 34.5% of the variance, and including 8 of the 13 items (62%). Other factors included two items each, which loaded positively on the main factor as well (even though these were low loadings). Thus, a total score was composed of the mean for the different items representing the frequency of the kindergarten teachers' communication with the parents. The items were found to have a good internal consistency: $\alpha = .81$.

Teachers' Attitudes toward the Use of WhatsApp and its Features

The teachers' attitudes were measured according to their responses to several closed and open questions:

1. The extent to which the kindergarten teacher considers herself open to change (yes/no/partly)
2. Would rather not use WhatsApp (agrees/disagrees/unsure)
3. Main goals for the use of WhatsApp ... (open question)
4. The use of WhatsApp may assist with... (open question)
5. Has defined the limits of WhatsApp use for the parents (yes/no)
6. Parents have a WhatsApp group that excludes the teacher (yes/no/doesn't know)
7. Sends activities for the parents to do with their children at home (yes/no)

Demographic and Background Data

There are collected data regarding the kindergarten teachers, which include type of kindergarten, age and years of experience, level of education, and the number of children in their kindergarten.

Results

Table 2 presents the findings concerning the kindergarten teachers' attitudes toward the use of WhatsApp and its features. Most teachers of about 90% considered they are open to change. Similarly, most (62.5%) supported the use of WhatsApp, yet to a lesser extent and about a quarter were unsure if they supported or opposed its use.

Regarding the main goals of WhatsApp use, most teachers (85%) noted that they use it to transfer information to the parents: messages about upcoming activities or events, important updates, and general information. In addition, teachers use WhatsApp to share the daily kindergarten experiences with the parents: sharing everyday contents and experiences with the parents, or sharing photos with the parents. A few teachers use it to share specific information about a child with his or her parents: personal messages, transferring information about the condition of a child, or sharing a photo of a child's activities that may encourage parent-child conversation.

The teachers were also asked about the advantages of the use of WhatsApp. Many commented that it is quick and readily available: "I can reach everyone very quickly", "send messages at the last minute", "receive a quick answer", and "available and accessible". Other teachers noted that it is an organized and effective form of communication: "effective communication - I know who read the message", "an effective way to communicate with all parents at once", "correspondence is documented", "convenient and direct communication", "continuous communication on a daily basis", "not all parents read emails or like to talk on the phone", and "[it] expedites procedures and saves paper". In addition, teachers noted that it allows them to share their daily contents and experiences with the

children’s parents: “sharing photos”, or “increasing parents’ involvement in the learning processes”. Also, it assists in transferring information to the parents: “updates”, “reminders”, and “information”.

Most teachers (81%) have defined the limits of WhatsApp use to the parents, and most (79%) reported knowing that the parents have a WhatsApp group that excludes them (the teacher). About two thirds of the teachers (68%) send activities for the parents to do with the children at home.

Table 2. Teachers’ attitudes toward the use of WhatsApp and its features (*N* = 161)

Question	Response	N	%
Open to change	Yes	142	89.9
	Partly	11	7.0
	No	5	3.2
Would rather not use WhatsApp	Disagrees	100	62.5
	Unsure	41	25.6
	Agrees	19	11.9
Main goals for the use of WhatsApp	General information	137	85.1
	Sharing	71	44.1
	Information about a child	6	3.7
The use of WhatsApp may assist with...	Accessible, quick communication	69	42.9
	Organized, effective communication	43	26.7
	Sharing	57	35.4
	General information	40	24.8
Has defined the limits of WhatsApp use for the parents	Yes	131	81.4
	No	30	18.6
Parents have a WhatsApp group that excludes the teacher	Yes	126	78.7
	No	20	12.5
	Doesn’t know	14	8.8
Sends activities for the parents to do with their children at home	Yes	110	68.3
	No	51	31.7

NOTE: Teachers were allowed to select several options in response to the open questions, and thus percentages exceed 100%.

However, the teachers noted the frequency with which they used various ways of communication with the parents. The average score was 2.93 (*SD* = 0.49), ranging from 1 (seldom) to 4 (daily). This means that, on

an average, communication with the children’s parents was once a week. In Table 3, the distribution of the various types of communication is presented in descending order. Most common communications centered on answering the parents’ general and individual questions, and it occurred daily for about 90% of the teachers. Next is sending messages to individual parents, or group messages. Thus, about 40% of the cases occurred once a week, and another 40% of the cases occurred daily. Updating the parents about activities and events in the kindergarten, and sending photos, usually occurred once a week (50% to 60%). The frequency of using a “launch group” or sending information about activities outside the kindergarten varies and occurs on average between several times a month and once a week. Finally, the frequency of transferring information from the council or municipality about private events, or sending negative messages, varies as well with an average that is low.

Table 3. Extent of communication with the parents (N = 161)

	Seldom N (%)	Several times a month N (%)	Once a week N (%)	Daily N (%)
Answers to parents’ general questions	2 (1.2)	2 (1.2)	14 (8.7)	143 (88.8)
Answers to individual parents' questions	3 (1.9)	3 (1.9)	11 (6.8)	144 (89.4)
Messages to the parents	--	9 (5.6)	79 (49.1)	73 (45.3)
Positive feedback	11 (6.8)	21 (13.0)	61 (37.9)	68 (42.2)
Sending a group message	16 (9.9)	16 (9.9)	72 (44.7)	57 (35.4)
Update about activities in the kindergarten	--	28 (17.4)	96 (59.6)	37 (23.0)
Update about events in the kindergarten	4 (2.5)	34 (21.1)	89 (55.3)	34 (21.1)
Sharing photos of activities	11 (6.8)	33 (20.5)	82 (50.9)	35 (21.7)
Using a launch group*	42 (26.1)	18 (11.2)	57 (35.4)	44 (27.3)
Information about activities outside the kindergarten	24 (14.9)	48 (29.8)	68 (42.2)	21 (13.0)
Information from the council/ municipality	47 (29.2)	37 (23.0)	47 (29.2)	30 (18.6)

Information about private events ⁺	61 (37.9)	27 (16.8)	49 (30.4)	24 (14.9)
Negative feedback	76 (47.2)	23 (14.3)	35 (21.7)	27 (16.8)

*A launch group is a WhatsApp group in which only the group manager can issue messages to the members, but the members cannot react or send messages.

⁺ Private events take place outside the kindergarten, sometimes in the child's house or other venue.

Subsequently, several correlations were found between the study variables. First, seniority correlated positively with the frequency of communication with the parents ($r_s = .18, p = .039$). Thus, teachers who had more years of experience in the job were more likely to communicate with parents more frequently.

Second, teachers who have defined the limits of WhatsApp use for the parents were more likely to communicate with the parents more frequently than teachers who have not defined the limits of WhatsApp use for the parents ($M = 2.97, SD = 0.48$ vs. $M = 2.74 SD = 0.49, t(159) = 2.29, p = .024$).

Third, teachers who send activities for the parents to do with their children at home were more likely to communicate with the parents more frequently than teachers who do not send activities to do at home ($M = 3.05, SD = 0.43$ vs. $M = 2.65 SD = 0.49, t(159) = 5.29, p < .001$). These teachers were using WhatsApp more frequently for all other purposes as well, such as answering questions, sending messages, updating about events and activities, and sending photos ($p = .047$ to $p < .001$).

Discussion

This paper aims to investigate the use of WhatsApp as a channel of communication between kindergarten teachers and the kindergarten children's parents. The research questions were as follows:

1. What are the kindergartens' teachers' attitudes to the use of the WhatsApp application in their communication with parents?
2. How often do kindergarten teachers communicate with parents using the WhatsApp application?
3. For what purposes do the kindergarten teachers use this application?
4. Do more experienced kindergarten teachers reach out to parents using the WhatsApp application, more frequently, than less experienced kindergarten teachers?

In answering the first research question, the results indicated that a large percentage of the kindergarten teachers (89.9%) use the application to communicate with parents, but within that large percentage there is a group of 25.6% that are unsure about the use of the application and another 11.9% that would prefer not to use the application. The literature indicates that there is ambivalence concerning the use of social networks for communication between educators and parents, stemming from the fear of blurred boundaries between professional and private life (Agger, 2011). This is also apparent in the results of the present study, which indicate that not all (18.6%) the kindergarten teachers managed to define the limits for the use of the application. In addition, this ambivalence may be due to the fact that 78.8% of the teachers know that there is a separate group for parents, excluding the kindergarten teacher, while another 8.8% of the teachers do not know if such an independent group exists. The existence of such an independent group could cause stress and disagreement between the kindergarten teacher and parents, while the teacher remains unaware of the nature of the conversations that are being held by the parents in a group from which they are excluded.

In answering the second research question, it can be seen that 90% percent of the teachers reported that they conducted communication on a daily basis with the parents and this included messages that contained answers to parents' questions, either individually or as a group, and updates about activities in the kindergarten, including photographs. Less frequently, they sent messages from the local council and messages with a negative content. The use of the application for less personal messages is conducive for efficient interpersonal communication. Written messages are less easy to interpret than face-to-face interpersonal communication. Thus, it is impossible to see the non-verbal clues that play a major role in passing on messages in an efficient manner and help the recipient to interpret the message as intended.

In answering the third research question, the results show that the WhatsApp application is used by 85.0% of the teachers, who see the advantages of the use of the application in being able to transfer messages to a large group immediately and receive immediate replies. It is thought to be a quick and efficient means of communication with the parents, allowing the parents to become more involved, as expressed in previous literature in this field (Thompson, 2008).

In answering the fourth research question, it can be seen that the results of the present study show that the kindergarten teachers who were more experienced communicated more frequently with the parents, as did kindergarten teachers who defined the limits of the use of Whatsapp and

kindergarten teachers who sent activities to do at home. These behaviors indicate that kindergarten teachers with experience and professional self-confidence feel more at ease to reach out to parents. These kindergarten teachers were also using the WhatsApp application more frequently for other purposes, such as answering questions, sending messages, updating the parents concerning events and activities, and sending photos. This is contrary to what was found in extant literature (Gur & Zalmson-Levi, 2005; Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). The kindergarten teachers in the present study reported that they reached out to the parents to get their involvement and cooperation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the kindergarten teachers reported that they are open to change and willing to adopt new technologies that can help them in their work. However, it appears that the main adoption and use of the WhatsApp tool is for the transmission of information or kindergarten experiences to the parents. Using this application empowers the communication between the teacher and the parents and constitutes a substitute for daily conversation that is usually performed at the end of the kindergarten day and very briefly. It is important to note and organize the issue of transfer of personal information or pictures on social media given the limitations of privacy on these networks. The kindergarten teachers felt that the WhatsApp application was especially advantageous because of its easy accessibility and speed of communication, and testify to more sharing and involvement of the parents in the life of their children in the kindergarten for so many hours each day. Despite all the advantages, several questions arise concerning mutual availability for the information that is transmitted, the type of information (pictures, experiences, information, assignments, etc.), and the extent of need for the use of this tool in the present era. During the last year, the Early Childhood Sector has been faced with tremendous challenges due to the worldwide pandemic following the COVID-19 virus. This has made it essential for kindergarten teachers to be able to communicate despite the various challenges. Now is also an opportunity to support new forms of integrated services that management responses show to be worthwhile (Mitchell et al., 2020). Here, the use of WhatsApp could certainly be beneficial as a form of online communication between parents and kindergarten teachers.

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Why Are Arabic Adult Learners in Kuwait Afraid of Making Mistakes in Their English Classroom?

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p15](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p15)

Submitted: 17 March

Accepted: 21 April 2021

Published: 30 April 2021

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Cite As:

Dashti, F., Al Mutawa, A., and Al Bader, A. (2021). Why Are Arabic Adult Learners in Kuwait Afraid of Making Mistakes in Their English Classroom? *European Scientific Journal*, ESJ, 17(12), 15. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p15>

Abstract

The English language is a second language in Kuwait, and English has been added to the school curriculum with the aim that when students graduate, they will be bilingual in Arabic and English. However, although Arabic adult learners graduate to be fluent in their first language, they struggle in English. This paradox led us to consider specific factors that may inhibit Arabic adult learners from becoming proficient in English when they graduate from high school. One such factor is an unwillingness to speak English in the classroom. The focus of this study, therefore, is to investigate fear of making mistakes as one of factors underlying this unwillingness. Since the study was created during the pandemic, classes in Kuwait, at the time, were taught online only. A questionnaire was given to 210 female Arabic native speakers taking the English foundation course at the College of Basic Education at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training. The questionnaire focused on factors that might induce a fear of making mistakes when speaking English in the classroom. The results of the study indicated that the most significant factor in this regard was students' previous experience with English teachers who ridiculed them when they made mistakes in their classes. The findings suggest that when teachers do

not take the appropriate approach to motivate students when they make mistakes, this can negatively affect the student's language learning process.

Keywords: Adult Learners, English classroom

1. Introduction

It is generally accepted that learning a second language at a young age is easier than learning when you are an adult. Children can pick up the mechanisms of a language without someone teaching them directly. Because they have not yet developed the concept of inhibition, children continuously attempt to speak a language without worrying about other factors that may impede them from practicing (Brown, 2007). They do not build up a set of defence mechanisms to protect their ego because they have not yet developed the idea of self. With adults, on the other hand, their ego has built up strategies to protect them from several variables and factors.

According to Tuan and Mai (2015), the factors that impede adult language learning include lack of confidence and pressure to perform well. Furthermore, if adults lack vocabulary, they find it "difficult to get meaning or understand the conversations, and keep the interaction going" (Wahidah, 2016). Children, in contrast, are fearless when it comes to making verbal mistakes due to their lack of self-awareness.

A further significant issue is age. According to Stephen Krashen (1973), the critical period for a child to learn a second language is from early childhood up to the age of five. This critical period for language acquisition is measured by the development of brain lateralization, which is "established well before puberty" (Krashen, 1973). Therefore, if a child is exposed to a second language before the age of five, they will be more likely to achieve native speaker competence.

When adults are learning English as a second language, they face difficulties with the idea of making verbal mistakes in front of their classmates and teacher, even though they know that "making mistakes is the first step of learning" (Ajmi, 2021). They face an intricate web of factors, both internal and external, that hinder them from sharing their answers or opinions in a classroom.

The internal factors that students learning a second language must deal with and that interfere with a student's learning process might be "one of the most important influences on language learning success or failures" (Oxford, 1990). These factors can range from language anxiety, emotions and self-doubt, to lack of motivation (Brown, 2007). In Kuwait, Arabic

speakers learning English face the same challenges; however, they may face additional obstacles engendered by instructors' behaviour and classroom environment (Halimi, Daniel, & Alshammari, 2020). Furthermore, teachers focus on grammar skills and create a sense of discouragement, a feeling that English is a complicated language, and thus, there is a lack of motivation (Rashed, 2017).

Further factors that have an influence on Arabic native speakers' lack of success in speaking English proficiently are incorrect pronunciation, lack of practice outside the classroom, lack of English vocabulary knowledge, mother tongue interference, age, attitudes arising from earlier instructional experiences, attitude towards the English language, and motivation (Benraghda, Radzuan, & Benraghda, 2017).

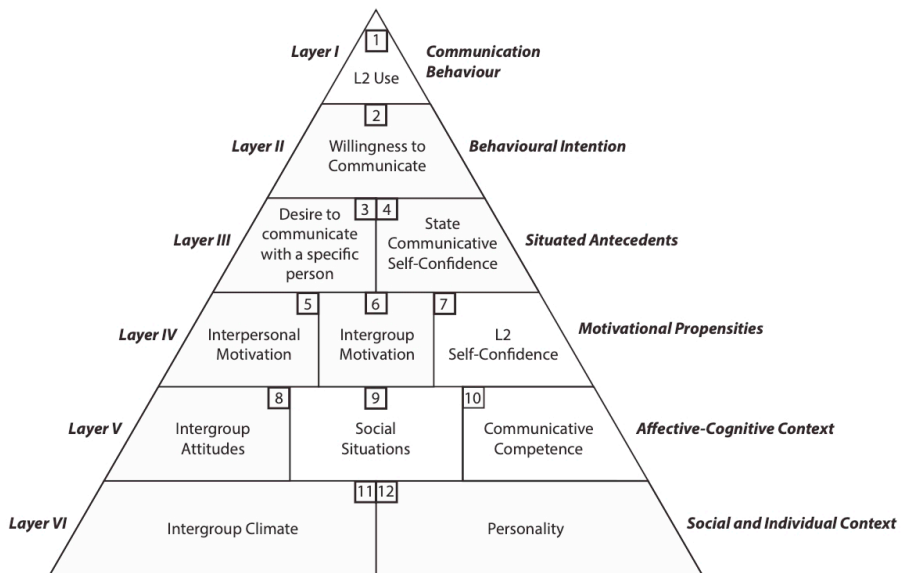
When it comes to teaching and learning English, all four skills are essential: reading, speaking, listening, and writing. According to Dashti (2018), the English skills of students at the College of Basic Education at PAAET are below average, and are "absolutely unsatisfying, and hence, do not meet the real needs of the prospective EFL teachers." Students at the College of Basic Education do not practice speaking or listening to English outside of the classroom (Al Darwish & Sadeqi, 2016). These two skills usually represent the introductory steps in learning any new language. A person that wants to learn a second language often begins by listening to someone speak it, then they attempt to practice speaking it themselves. Listening therefore plays a very important role in developing one's speaking ability (Shumin, 2012). Development of these two skills would then lead to reading and writing in the foreign language. All four learning skills are intertwined with one another.

Against this background the important question is, why are students not motivated to learn English, and what might be the reasons for their lack of willingness to communicate (WTC)?

Willingness to communicate is the intention to initiate communication. WTC is based on the notion, first introduced by Burgoon (1976), of unwillingness to communicate in the first language. McCroskey and Baer (1985) adapted this to willingness to communicate in the first language. They "conceptualized WTC as the probability of engaging in communication when free to choose to do so" (MacIntyre, Clement, Dornyei, & Noels, 1998). They posited "communication competence, communication apprehension, self-esteem and cultural diversity as antecedents of WTC" (Bukhari, Cheng, & Khan, 2015). In 1998, WTC was applied to second language learners by MacIntyre and Charos, who proposed a pyramid with six layers. The bottom three layers (IV, V AND VI) focused on 'situational influences' such as motivational propensities, affective-cognitive context, and social and individual context (MacIntyre,

Clement, Dornyei, & Noels, 1998). The top three layers (I, II and III) include ‘enduring influences’, which are communication behaviour, behavioural intention, and situated antecedents, as seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1
MacIntyre et al.'s Model of Willingness to Communicate



Little research has been done on WTC in the Gulf Arab region (Bukhari, Cheng, & Khan, 2015), and we are of the opinion that this presents a gap in literature that needs to be filled. This led us to investigate how fear of making mistakes might inhibit CBE pre-service teachers from practicing spoken English in their ESL classes.

2. Background

2.1 The Importance of the English Language in Kuwait

Kuwait is a small country that is centrally located on a commercial trade route. As a result, “Kuwait was compelled to use English to facilitate merchants’ operations” (Al-Nouri, 2019). In addition, the oil production industry led to job opportunities for foreigners to work in Kuwait. Since English was the common language that all of the employees spoke, it became an essential language for Kuwaitis that worked in the oil industry. English thus gained importance in Kuwait’s financial and economic growth.

Kuwait is divided into five governates: Asma, Hawalli, Mubarak Alkabeer, Ahmedi, and Fahaheel, each of which adheres to rules of the Ministry of Educations (MoE). Arabic is the native language, and English is

considered to be a second language. As of 1993, English has been added to the public school's curriculum as a mandatory course, and when learners graduate from school, they will have taken English classes for 12 years.

Influences of Region and Religion on Adult Learning The English Language

Arabic is the native and primary language spoken in Kuwait due to the region and culture revolving around Islam and its beliefs, as well as being heavily intertwined with the Qur'an. Being that the constitution of Kuwait deemed Islam as the basis of legislation, most schools and universities in Kuwait are segregated due to Islamic traditions, as well as governing how a woman acts in a society. "The women's situation often is evaluated, mainly if not exclusively, in light of the religious injunctions and traditional norms that govern the female condition" (Longva A, 1993).

The English language, which has been taught in Kuwait since 1993, was and is not accepted by some to be spoken publicly especially since it has no connection to Kuwait's culture or religion. Those that spoke English more than Arabic were labelled as 'westernized' or as 'chicken nuggets,' and were criticised and seen as Kuwaiti citizens that are losing their 'Kuwaitiness' "which describes as 'our language', 'our culture' and 'our religion'" (Al-Nakib, 2012). The English language is seen as "powerful and prestigious but is also seen as the diffuser of foreign cultures, values, and interests" (Malallah, 2000). Whereas one study in Saudi Arabia showed that English was not seen as a negative tool nor a threat to their culture (Alam, Hussain, and Khan, 1988).

2.2 The Effects of COVID-19 on Education in Kuwait

The spread of the COVID-19 pandemic led to changes in the educational system in Kuwait. On March 12, 2020, the Ministry of Education suspended all government sectors, including public schools, and students' education was put on hold until further notice (Alhouti, 2020). Students subsequently did not attend classes till August 9th, 2020. Furthermore, public schools and universities switched to teaching via online platforms such as Microsoft Teams.

Teachers were required to take online training courses to learn how to teach their students online for the upcoming semesters. As of the date of this article, all school classes are taught online, and students are not allowed to be on university or school premises for any purpose.

Teaching Students Online

The idea of teaching online was a stressful issue for several teachers that had never done it before, since teaching students in a classroom is completely different from teaching online. One obvious factor is the setting. Another factor is observing students' facial expressions when one is teaching. In class, a teacher can read a student's face to determine whether the student is understanding the lesson or is not paying attention. Small factors such as these affect the way a teacher must adapt to teaching online; teachers have to figure out other ways to see if their students are paying attention or whether they are understanding the lesson.

Another factor is that students can now hide behind a screen knowing that participation is not mandatory even when called upon.

This issue of decreased participation made the authors question how students will learn if they do not share their answers and learn from their errors or mistakes. This led us to ask ourselves whether one of the factors that is stopping them from participating might be that they are afraid of making errors or mistakes. We therefore created a questionnaire to investigate why they avoid situations where they might make errors or mistakes.

The Difference Between Errors and Mistakes

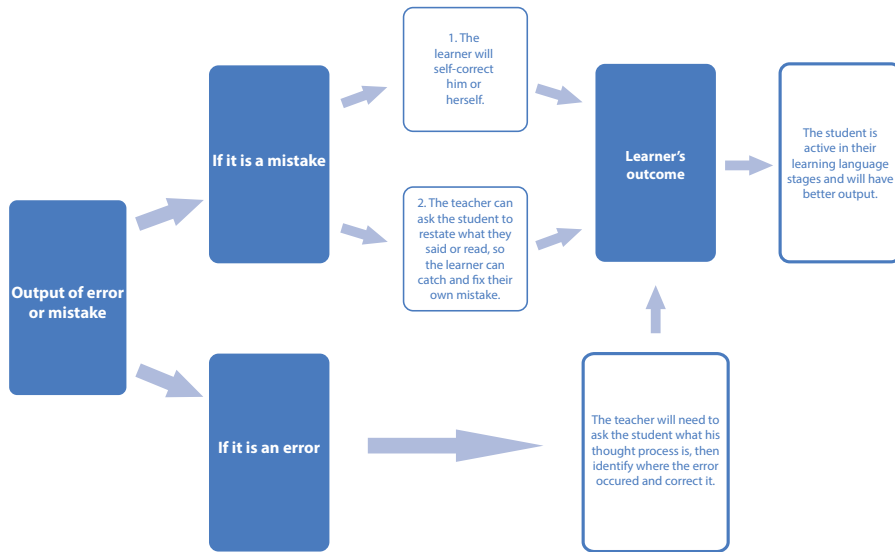
The two terms, error and mistake, are often seen as synonymous. However, some linguists have distinguished differences between the two. Pit Corder, who is well known for his contribution to the study of error analysis, argued that errors are deviances that cannot be self-corrected and need more information or feedback in order to fix them, whereas when the learner knows how "to correct a fault in his or her output, it is assumed that the form he or she selected was not the one he [or she] intended, and we shall say that the fault is a mistake" and can be self-corrected (as cited in James, 1998).

The Importance of Making Mistakes in Learning a New Language

As infants learn a language, they practice using words to express themselves. Parents help the infant by giving them feedback if something is said incorrectly. The infant then corrects his or her output. It is a simple and crucial process of learning a language, and parents often do not realize the impact of these small steps in the baby's language learning process. "As infants interact with objects and people, they generate rich perceptual and social feedback that paves the way for learning language" (Tamis-LeMonda, Catherine & Kuchirko, Yana & Suh, Daniel, 2018). Figure 2 shows the stages in this process, as well as the natural way of correcting an error or mistake.

Figure 2

The Natural Language Learning Stages in Making a Mistake or an Error



In this study, we will focus on the process of making mistakes, as opposed to errors, and the steps that need to be taken to foster students' learning process. We decided to focus on the issue of students making mistakes because that is where we think the problem lies. The transition between their making a mistake and correcting themselves is crucial and fragile. This particular stage is perhaps where the reason for students' unwilling to communicate in English may be found. Something may have happened in their previous English classes that led them to avoid communicating in English.

A further reason why we decided to focus on mistakes rather than errors was because we saw students repeat the same mistakes without learning from them, and this is an area where the students' should be actively participating in their learning process. Students need to learn from their mistakes in order to avoid making the same mistake in the future. A teacher should help students recognize their mistakes by guiding them to do so.

Research Questions

1. What role does dealing with mistakes play in Kuwaiti students' unwillingness to communicate in English?
2. Why are students afraid of making mistakes in their English classroom?

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

Two hundred and twenty-one female Kuwaiti undergraduate students from the College of Basic Education (CBE) at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) participated in completing a questionnaire. PAAET is a segregated university that does not allow male and female students to be taught in the same class. Hence, the questionnaire was given to female students only.

The participants were studying to become teachers, but none of them were studying to be English teachers. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 45. Approximately 57% of the participants fell under the age of 20–25, 30% were 17–19, 5% were 26–30, 5% were 31–36, and only 2.7% were 37–45. All of the participants were Arab Muslims.

All of the participants were taking the English foundation class, which contributes no credits to their GPA. To pass this class, students must earn 60% or above. Also, this class is taken when students have failed to pass the English proficiency test at PAAET, or did not take the exam.

Students were informed that they were going to receive a questionnaire that required their input, and that this was not a graded assignment.

3.2 Instrument and Data Collection

The questionnaire was given to students through the Microsoft Teams platform using Google Forms. The questionnaire contained two sections, 18 questions with only one answer to be chosen, and it was written in both English and Arabic to ensure that students understood each question. The questionnaire was given to two classes that were taught by one of the authors. One class had 115 students and the other had 106 students. Classes during the pandemic were taught online only, and the questionnaire was given to the students during online class hours during the first week of the semester.

After everyone had submitted their questionnaires, some students expressed a wish to share their personal experiences with teachers who had made them feel embarrassed while they were in elementary, middle, or high

school. Once one student shared her experience, it led to several more students wanting to share their personal experiences.

3.3 Data Analysis

Data were cleaned and coded in MS Excel before being transferred to IBM SPSS v25.0 for analysis. We started with descriptive statistics and then ran a series of chi-square tests to answer the research questions.

4. Study Results

4.1 Participant demographics

Table 1 shows the characteristics of participants to determine the factors that create fear of making verbal mistakes, we examined the role of factors such as demographics (age and area of residence (governate)), norms (cultural, religious, and family traditions), mode of learning (online vs in a physical classroom) and previous experience of teachers' negative feedback.

12% of respondents lived in Asmaa, 5% in Hawallii, 25% in Mubarak Al Kabeer, 26% in Jahra, 22% in Farwaniya, and 10% in Ahmedi. Most of the respondents (93%) had attended a public school, and only 6% had attended a private school. Among the respondents, about 61% expressed a preference for the online mode of learning, whereas 39% preferred to learn in a classroom environment. Moreover, when asked about their general attitude toward the English language, the majority of the respondents (67%) said that they liked English classes.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Factor	Distribution (N=219)	
	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
17-19	65	29,7
20-25	126	57,5
26-30	11	5,0
31-36	11	5,0
37-45	6	2,7
Governate		
Asmaa	27	12,4
Hawallii	12	5,5
Mubarak Al Kabeer	55	25,2

Jahra	56	25,7
Farwaniya	47	21,6
Ahmedi	21	9,6
Type of School		
Attended	205	93,6
Public	14	6,4
Private		
Missing		
Prefer Mode of Learning		
	133	60,7
Online	86	39,3
In a classroom		
Attitude toward English Classes		
	146	66,7
Liked	73	33,3
Did not like		

4.2 Intrinsic factors

Respondents were asked a series of questions to determine their attitude towards making mistakes. Firstly, they were asked whether they thought that they learned from their mistakes. Almost all the respondents (99%) felt that they did indeed learn from their mistakes. However, when asked if they were afraid of making verbal mistakes in front of their peers and teachers, a little over 50% of the respondents responded that they were. Figure 3 shows the respondents' opinions in percentages. Further, an application of the chi-square test showed that those who were afraid of making mistakes in front of classmates were also afraid of doing so in front of their teachers [$\chi^2(1, 219) = 49.476, p < 0.05, v = 0.475$].

Figure 3

Attitude Towards Making Mistakes Per Context (in percentages)

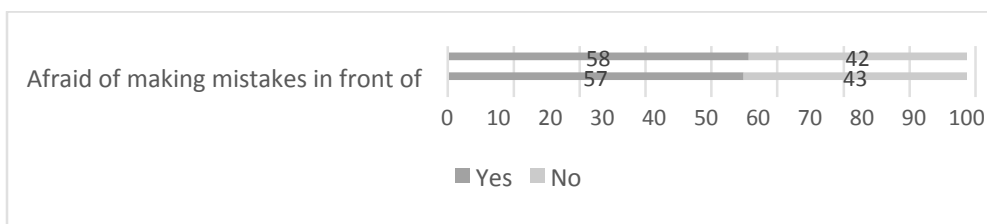
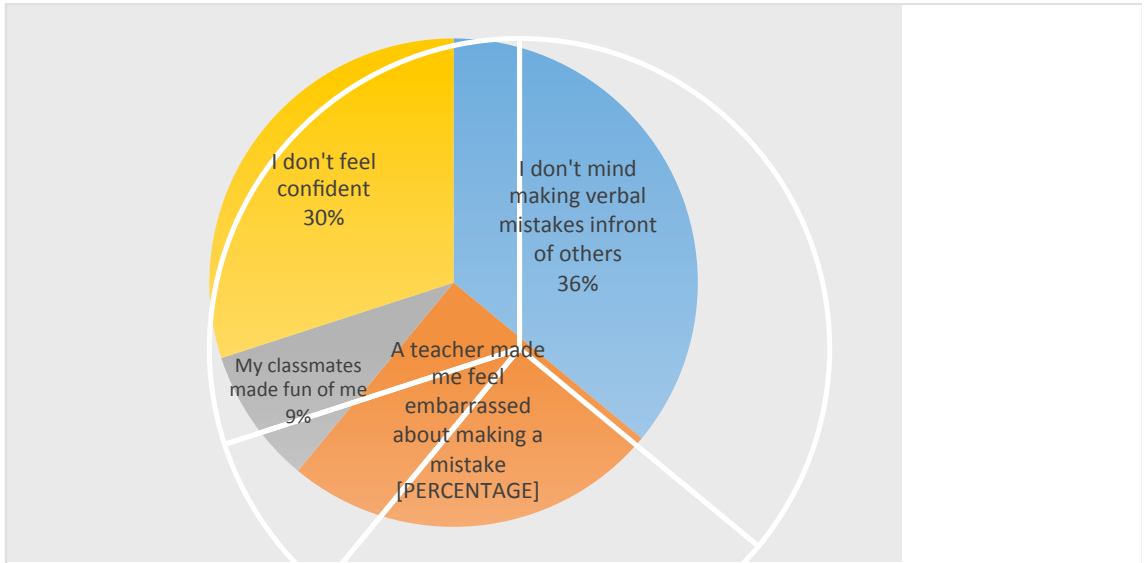


Figure 4 extends this data by showing reasons given by participants for being reluctant to make mistakes in front of their peers and teachers.

Figure 4

Reasons for Being Afraid of Making Mistakes



30% of the respondents mentioned that they felt uncomfortable making verbal mistakes because they did not feel confident; 25% mentioned that they had had an experience where their teachers made them feel embarrassed about making a mistake; and only 9% attributed their fear to peers having previously made fun of them for their mistakes.

4.2.2 Age

Figure 5 shows the distribution of age with regard to whether respondents were afraid of making mistakes in front of classmates. As shown in the figure, although the majority of respondents in each group were afraid of making mistakes in front of classmates, the groups did not differ significantly [$\chi^2(4, N=219)=3.718, p=0.44$]

Figure 5

Age Distribution of Respondents Afraid of Making Mistakes in Front of Classmates

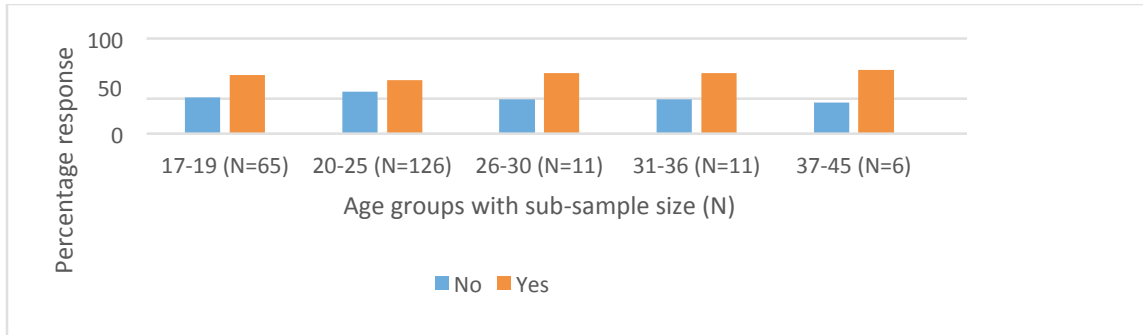
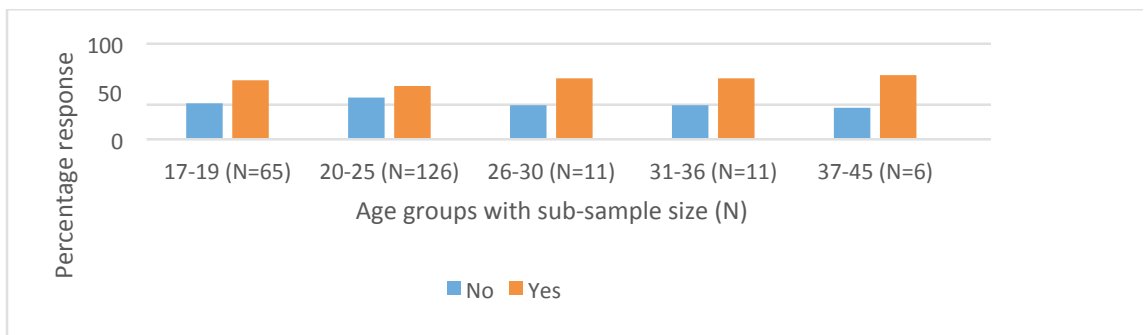


Figure 6 shows the distribution of age with regard to whether respondents were afraid of making mistakes in front of teachers. As shown in the figure, the majority in each group were afraid of making mistakes in front of teachers, but the groups did not differ significantly [$\chi^2(4, N=219)=1.10, p=0.89$]

Figure 6

Age Frequency Distribution of Respondents Afraid of Making Mistakes in Front of Teachers



Therefore, we can conclude that age does not predict whether a student will be afraid to make a mistake in front of his/her classmates and/or teachers.

4.2.3 Governate/Area of Residence

Figure 7 shows the percentage distribution per governate with regard to whether respondents were afraid of making mistakes in front of classmates. As shown in the figure, the majority of respondents in each area were afraid of making mistakes in front of classmates. However, the groups did not differ significantly [$\chi^2(5, N=218)=1.627, p=0.89$]

Figure 7

Distribution per Governate of Respondents Afraid of Making Mistakes in Front of Classmates

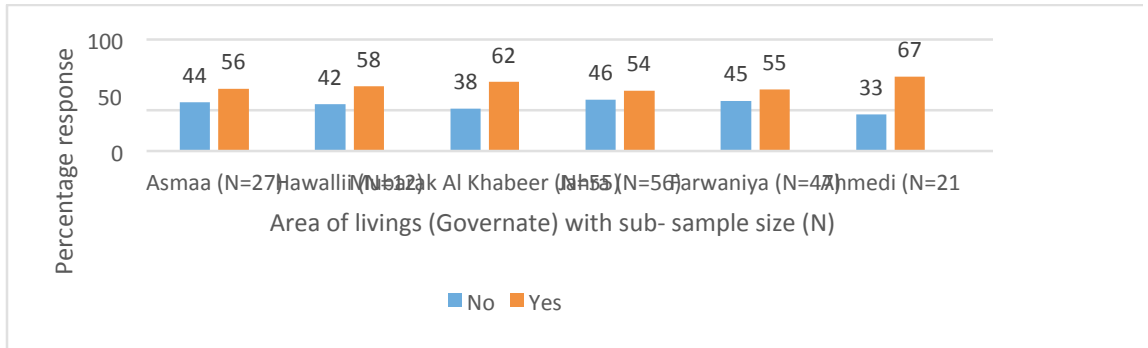
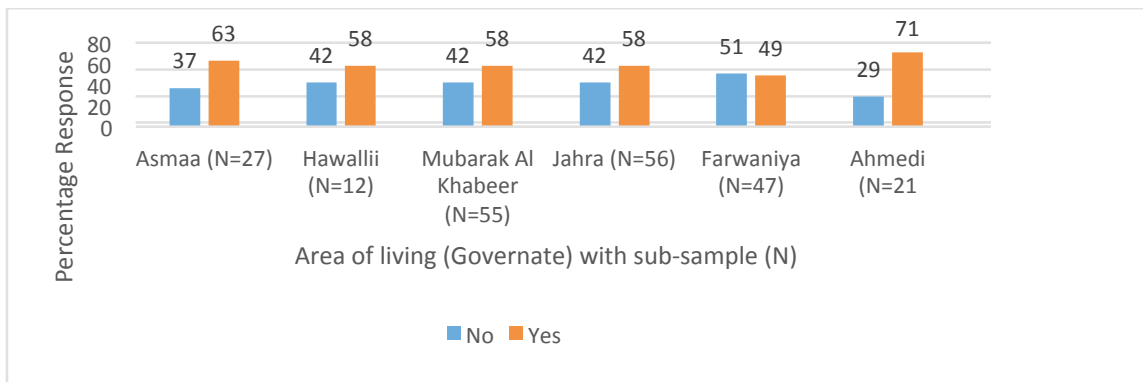


Figure 8 shows the percentage distribution per governate with regard to whether respondents were afraid of making a mistake in front of teachers. As shown in the figure, the majority of respondents in each area were afraid of making mistakes in front of teachers. However, the groups did not differ significantly [$\chi^2 (5, N=218)=3.43, p=0.63$]

Figure 8

Distribution per Governate of Respondents Afraid of Making Mistakes in Front of Teachers



Therefore, we can conclude that area of residence does not predict whether a person will be afraid to make a mistake in front of his/her classmates and teachers.

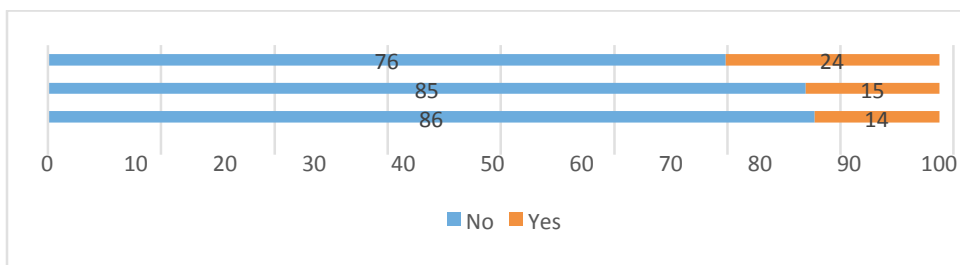
4.2.4 Impact of Norms

Respondents were asked a series of questions to investigate how elements of their environment (social, cultural, and religious norms) might influence their attitude towards making mistakes.

Firstly, the extent to which gender played a role was explored.

Figure 9

Views on Norms Regarding Making Mistakes



As shown in Figure 9, a large proportion of respondents (85% and 86% respectively) believed that in their culture and religion, making mistakes as a girl is not unacceptable. Further, two-thirds (76%) of respondents also believed that it is not unacceptable in their family traditions for a girl to make mistakes. Figure 9 also indicates that in the view of most of the respondents, in their culture, religion and family tradition, there was no rejection of the notion of females making mistakes.

Table 2 shows the cross-tabulation of respondents' opinions regarding the role of gender in generating fear of making mistakes in front of classmates. No significant difference was found between the respondents who felt it was not unacceptable in their culture/religion/family tradition for girls to make mistakes in front of classmates, and those who felt that it was.

Table 2

The Role of Gender in Generating Fear of Making Mistakes in Front of Classmates

	Fear of making mistakes in front of classmates		χ^2	df	p
	No	Yes			
Is making mistakes unacceptable in your culture because you are a girl?	No 44	56	1.540	1	0.21
	Yes 32	67			
Is making mistakes unacceptable in your religion because you are a girl?	No 43	57	0.295	1	0.58
	Yes 38	62			
Is making mistakes unacceptable in your family tradition because you are a girl?	No 45	55	2.67	1	0.10
	Yes 33	67			

Table 3 shows the cross-tabulation of respondents' opinions regarding the role of cultural norms in generating fear of making mistakes in front of teachers. No significant difference was found between the respondents who felt it was not unacceptable in their culture/religion/family tradition to make mistakes in front of teachers, and those who felt that it was.

Table 3

The Role of Cultural Norms in Generating Fear of Making Mistakes in Front of a Teacher

	Fear of making mistakes in front of teachers		χ^2	df	p
	No	Yes			
Is making mistakes unacceptable in your culture because you are a girl?	No 43	57	0.548	1	0.46
	Yes 36	64			
Is making mistakes unacceptable in your religion because you are a girl?	No 43	57	0.649	1	0.42
	Yes 35	65			
Is making mistakes unacceptable in your family tradition because you are a girl?	No 44	56	2.204	1	0.13
	Yes 33	67			

4.2.5 Mode of Learning

We further inquired about participants' level of comfort in making mistakes in an online class compared to in a physical classroom.

Table 1 (above) showed that about 61% of respondents preferred online learning. To investigate whether the mode of learning affected their attitude towards making mistakes, we compared those who preferred online learning with those who preferred learning in a physical classroom. The results are shown in Table 4 and Table 5.

Table 4

The Role of Mode of Learning in Generating Fear of Making Mistakes in Front of Classmates

Mode of Learning	Fear of making mistakes in front of classmates		χ^2	df	p
	No	Yes			
Online	41	59	0.482	1	0.49
In Classroom		55			

Table 5

The Role of Mode of Learning in Generating Fear of Making Mistakes in Front of Teachers

Mode of Learning	Fear of making mistakes in front of teachers		χ^2	df	p
	No	Yes			
Online	44	56	1.100	1	0.29
In Classroom	37	63			

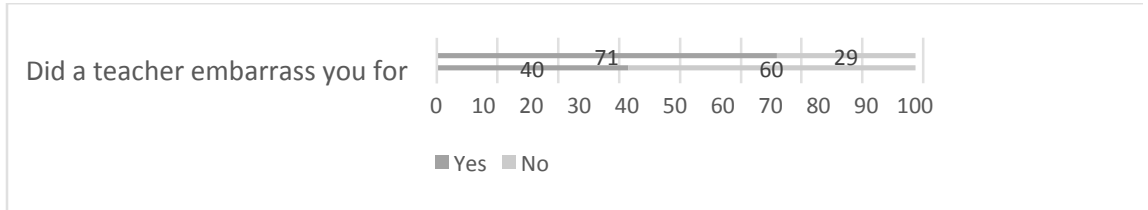
From Tables 4 and 5, it is evident that the mode of learning does not affect the fear of making a mistake.

4.2.6 Previous experience with teachers

A further series of questions explored the teacher’s role in shaping students’ attitude towards making mistakes. Firstly, we asked if teachers had ridiculed them for making mistakes in the past. 40% of the study participants responded that they had had such an experience. Secondly, we asked whether they would be less afraid of making mistakes if the teacher gave encouragement when this occurred. 71% of the respondents replied positively. Figure 10 shows participants’ responses in percentages.

Figure 10

Views Regarding Teacher’s Attitude



Furthermore, 57% of students were not scared of correcting their teachers’ verbal mistakes.

As shown in Figure 10, 40% of the respondents had been previously ridiculed by a teacher. To examine whether a negative prior experience with a teacher impacted fear of making mistakes, we ran a chi-square test. The results are shown in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6

The Role of Previous Experience in Generating Fear of Making Mistakes in Front of Classmates

Previous negative experience with teacher	Fear of making mistakes in front of classmates		X ²	df	p
	No	Yes			
No	51	49	10.052	1	0.002
Yes	29	71			

Table 7

The Role of Previous Experience in Generating Fear of Making Mistakes in Front of Teachers

Previous negative experience with teacher	Fear of making mistakes in front of teachers		X ²	df	p
	No	Yes			
No	50	50	10.464	1	0.001
Yes	28	72			

Results in both Table 6 and 7 show a significant association between previous negative experiences of teachers’ feedback and fear of making mistakes. The analysis shows that the students who had been ridiculed by a teacher for making a mistake in the past were afraid of making a mistake both in front of their classmates (p<0.002) and in front of teachers (p<0.001).

5. Discussion

The English language has been taught in Kuwait as a second language since 1993. It has been added to the school curriculum as a mandatory subject, with the aim that Kuwaiti students should be bilingual once they graduate from school. However, Kuwaiti students' English proficiency level is ranked as low by the EF English Proficiency Index for Schools (EF English Proficiency Index for Schools, n.d.). The Arab Times Newspaper stated, "Kuwait ranked seventh in the Middle East out of 10 participating countries in the index compiled by First Education Foundation, and ... took 78th place out of 88 countries in 2018, and ranked 84 out of 100 countries in 2019 (Kuwait ranks 84 out of 100 countries in English proficiency index for 2019, 2019).

Furthermore, "there is a continuous complaint from the Ministry of Education in Kuwait that English major graduates from the English department at the CBE are generally below the standard" (Dashti, 2019).

The demand for learning English is more prominent than ever after the pandemic in Kuwait. As of August 2019, teachers are using Microsoft Teams and other learning platforms to teach English. However, CBE Kuwaiti pre-service teachers have low English proficiency.

With regard to Arab students' low proficiency, Alshaar (1994) argued that it is not related to linguistic factors, but rather, perhaps, to socio-political, educational, or socio-psychological factors. Therefore, it is important to look closely at the internal and external factors that might foster students' WTC.

After exploring the layers of WTC, we decided to look further into students' learning processes to identify the factors that hampered their progress. This includes motivation, which Othman and Shuqair (2013) argue is one of the "key factors that contribute to students successfully learning English".

Analysis of the data in this study indicated that external factors such as age, governate, mode of learning and religion did not have any noticeable influence. However, there was significant impact when it came to certain internal factors.

If we look at the results in this study, and specifically at Figure 4, 25% of the students who completed the questionnaire had been ridiculed by an English teacher in the past, and were thus not motivated to learn or try to share their answers during class. Figure 4 showed that 30% of students did not feel confident, 9% of students had been made fun of by their peers during class, and only 36% felt they were comfortable sharing their answers in the

classroom. As a result, 36% percent of the students would be active, while the other 64% would be passive learners.

This study found that one of the most significant factors impeding WTC was fear of ridicule by a teacher. Figure 10 shows what happens when a student is ridiculed by a teacher if their output is either a mistake or an error; the student may develop a negative attitude towards the English language, and become a passive learner.

Another factor identified in the study is that 57% of students do not mind correcting their teacher when he or she pronounces words incorrectly. However, the remaining students that do not realize that the teacher pronounces words incorrectly will mimic the teacher's mistakes. This is a common situation in Kuwait, and we hear our students pronounce words incorrectly due to their teacher's first language interference. This is an issue that needs more investigation.

Another important factor to consider is the age at which learners in Kuwait start learning English. Ideally, according to Krashen's proposed Critical Period (Krashen, 1973), children should start learning English at the earliest possible age. However, although there are preschools in Kuwait, it is not mandatory that children enrol, and the decision is left to the parents. Enrolment in school becomes mandatory only when children enter the 1st grade, which would be at the age of 4 or 5 years old. By this time, children have almost passed the critical period that Stephen Krashen discussed.

These are only some of the suggested possibilities, but there might be more negative outcomes, and further investigation is needed. Ellis (2008) argues that "learners attitudes have an impact on the level of L2 proficiency achieved by individual learners and are themselves influenced by this success."

6. Conclusion

Teachers have a significant effect on their students' learning process, which they need to foster. They need to be aware of their teaching methods and the role they play. It would be beneficial if teachers were to learn more about the internal and external factors influencing WTC and be aware that students are afraid to practice speaking English due to past experiences. As a result, teachers would be more sympathetic to their students, and avoid the negative practice of ridiculing them. Ridicule can affect students' attitude, which leads to loss of motivation to learn, and reluctance to practice their speaking skills in the classroom.

It would also be beneficial for teachers to understand the differences between errors and mistakes. This would allow them to adopt the appropriate approach depending on whether a student utters a mistake or an error. It is

possible that many teachers do not distinguish between the two, and that therefore, students are often not active in their learning, or are not learning from their mistakes.

With regard to the issue of English education policy, the Ministry of Education may need to consider starting education before the age of 5 and making preschool mandatory. As Stephan Krashen elaborated in his study, the critical period for learning is from early childhood. Not going to school until they are 4 or 5 can delay children's language development and lose the chance to develop the language like a native speaker.

There are several other variables that may contribute to students' outcomes that were not investigated or discussed in this research. Further research is needed to determine why Kuwaiti students' English proficiency is low.

Appendix

1. Are you afraid of making mistakes in front of your classmates?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

2. Are you afraid of making verbal mistakes in front of your teacher?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

3. Do you feel comfortable making verbal mistakes online?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

4. Do you feel comfortable making verbal mistakes in a classroom?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

5. Do you feel uncomfortable making mistakes because:
 - a. A teacher made me feel embarrassed about making mistake (in the past)
 - b. My classmates made fun of me.
 - c. I don't feel confident.
 - d. I don't mind making verbal mistakes in front of others.

6. Do you think if the teacher encouraged making mistakes then you would not mind making mistakes as well?
 - a. Yes

b. No

7. Do you think you learn from your mistakes?

a. Yes

b. No

8. Is making mistakes unacceptable in your culture because you are a girl?

a. Yes

b. No

9. Is making mistakes unacceptable in your religion because you are a girl?

a. Yes

b. No

10. Is making mistakes unacceptable in your family tradition because you are a girl?

a. Yes

b. No

11. How old are you?

~~e.~~a. Between 17-19

~~d.~~b. Between 20-25

~~e.~~c. Between 26-30

~~f.~~d. Between 31-36

~~g.~~e. Between 37-45

f. Above 46

12. Which governate do you live in?

~~h.~~a. Asma

~~i.~~b. Hawallii

~~j.~~c. Mubarak Al Kabeer

~~k.~~d. Jahra

~~l.~~e. Farwaniya

f. Ahmedi

~~11.~~13. Which type of school did you attend?

a. Private school

b. Public school

- | ~~12~~.14. ____ Do you like your English classes?
a. Yes
b. No
- | ~~13~~.15. ____ If your teacher made a mistake are you scared to correct her/him?
a. Yes
b. No
- | ~~14~~.16. ____ Did your teacher embarrass you when you made a mistake in the past?
a. Yes
b. No
- | ~~15~~.17. ____ If your teacher said it is ok to make verbal mistakes and you learn from your mistakes, would you:
a. Not want to make mistakes in front of your classmates.
b. Not want to makes mistakes front of your teacher.
c. Feel comfortable and do not mind about making mistakes.
d. Not answer because I am shy person in general.
- | ~~16~~.18. ____ Do you prefer learning:
a. Online
b. In a classroom

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ESJ Social Sciences

Social Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Development: The Case of Social Enterprises in Azerbaijan

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p39](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p39)

Submitted: 31 August 2020

Accepted: 13 April 2021

Published: 30 April 2021

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Cite As:

Aliyeva, N. (2021). Social Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Development: The Case of Social Enterprises in Azerbaijan. *European Scientific Journal, ESJ*, 17(12), 39. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p39>

Abstract

The social entrepreneurship theory is still in the conceptualization phase, as each country has individual specifics and approaches to define social entrepreneurship initiatives. The main objective of this paper is to explore the characteristics and backgrounds of social entrepreneurship from Azerbaijan's perspective, especially its importance in achieving Sustainable Development Goals. To fulfill the objective, there are a few main research questions defined: How do local social entrepreneurs use both business acumen and philanthropic principles to address social, cultural, and environmental challenges? How can Social Entrepreneurship contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals in Azerbaijan? A qualitative research method was used to gather data through a semi-structured questionnaire. It was found that local social enterprises change the structures and systems that create the conditions for poverty, and the development processes need to consider the link between social entrepreneurship and sustainable development. This paper has significant implications, especially for the stakeholders and policymakers. It indicates the current position of local social ventures about sustainable development and offers some global practices and experiences to improve and facilitate the process and attracts the attention of policymakers on the performance of social enterprises.

Keywords: Social entrepreneurship; sustainable development, sustainable business; Azerbaijan.

Introduction

The increasing popularity of Social Entrepreneurship in recent years was not a coincidence. All began after capitalism and the industrial revolution formed today's modern and developed world, which also caused several economic and environmental problems. Over two centuries, the world's most developed countries have experienced an unprecedented generation of wealth. Nevertheless, such success is not enjoyed in all countries. The apparent gap between the class of have and have not, is rising frequently affecting severely the global economy and power. Every year, ten million people die of starvation, or hunger-related diseases, more lives taken by AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis combined, seventy-five million children do not have access to education, women earn one-third less than male colleagues for doing the same work and compose only eighteen percent of parliament seats around the world, two and a half billion people live without access to adequate sanitation. On the horizon, it is predicted that the world population will increase up to 9 billion people in the next decades, which is triple the amount of seventy years ago. On the other side, climate change is the biggest threat with extreme weather patterns, rise in the sea level, and its impacts on existing species.

Numerous attempts have been taken to address the immense social and environmental problem. Some of those efforts have been successful, but unfortunately, most of them have failed to generate substantial progress. Finally, entrepreneurship was seen as a good solution method, because in this capitalist world, entrepreneurs are the main actors of society who can create a change and influence the economy and the whole world. Over the last four decades, "social entrepreneurship" or attempts to use entrepreneurial, private sector approaches to address social and environmental needs have emerged. Many experts believe that social entrepreneurship represents a new structure, and ideology can cover multiple challenges.

When the topic is about Social Entrepreneurship, Sustainability and Sustainable development terms will appear as a central part of it. Graham Hubbard states that the emergence of 'sustainability and 'sustainable development is the reflection of fundamental changes in global minds, which will also force organizations to evolve their approaches to measuring organizational performance.

Sustainable development will be one of the big themes of this research paper. To invest in Sustainable Development, UN member countries developed Sustainable Development Goals within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 18th Sustainable Development Goals were designed to contribute to the main challenges of our world and expressed in seventeen specified goals meeting conditions in terms of innovation,

scalability, and sustainability (Hummels, 2018). Achieving these goals will demand collaborative efforts of governments, businesses, and third sector actors. However, the study mainly concentrates on understanding Social Entrepreneurship's crucial role to play in the achievement of these global goals. More specifically, a conceptual framework was designed to define how social enterprises can contribute to the. Azerbaijan participates closely in the worldwide development initiatives of the international community, including the United Nations (UN). This involvement has a great significance for learning and sharing the best practices and innovative ideas, and it has been a major factor for the successful implementation of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Azerbaijan in the last 15 years. As the main actors of Sustainable Development in Azerbaijan, neither the Social Economy nor Social Entrepreneurship is clearly defined by the state. In this research, the data is explored related to the current situation and performance of socially oriented enterprises in Azerbaijan to create literature on this issue for further development of the conception and to be a push factor to increase the number of social enterprises.

Literature Review

Fully understanding social entrepreneurship is a challenge. This part attempts an extensive literature review related to Social Entrepreneurship, Social Entrepreneurs, Sustainable Development in business, strategy, and related areas.

The term 'Social Entrepreneurship' itself is seen as too broad and vague and hence many people tried to give various definitions to it (Austin et al., 2006; Bac & Janssen, 2011; Mair & Martí, 2006a Stevenson and Wei Skillern 2006). Overall, the definition of social entrepreneurship can be summarized as a movement for addressing social problems by catalyzing the transformation of existing ideologies. It could also be expressed that social entrepreneurship "emphasizes problem-solving and social innovation developing radical new approaches to solving old problems" (Johnson, 2000). One of the earliest statements defining social entrepreneur belongs to Gregory Dees (1998) defined one of the earliest definitions of a social entrepreneur. He proposed that:

"Social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector, by adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value); recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission; engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning; acting boldly without being limited by resources currently at hand, and exhibiting heightened accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created."

Generally, the definitions of social entrepreneurship can be divided into two parts: 1) nonprofit organizations with business practices, and 2) for-profit organizations working for social good. When SE is described, some researchers focused on the non-profit aspect of it (Weerawardena & Mort, 2006; Young, 1982), while others emphasized the self-sustainability and profit generation aspects (Peredo & McLean, 2006; Seelos & Mair, 2005; Yunus, 2007). In the existing literature, social enterprises are characterized as organizations with the mission to address social problems in an innovative and financially sustainable way (Seelos & Mair, 2005; Yunus, 2007). There is still a vacuum in the literature, research, and awareness about the factors that lead to success in the field of Social Entrepreneurship (Alvord et al. 2004; Cramer 2003; Desa and Kotha 2006; Mulgan 2006). Leadbeater (1997) and Thompson (2002) stress in their publications the urgent need to foster social entrepreneurs. Mair, Robinson, and Hockerts (2006) expect more research to be done in understanding how values, systems, and processes can affect the sustainability of social enterprises.

At the second level, research defines the Sustainable Development case through social enterprises. The concepts of 'sustainability and 'sustainable development' have gained global attention after Brundtland Report was published in 1987. However, sustainability can mean different things to different people and organizations. Some consider sustainability as a real commitment to green practices and aligning it to the core of the business model (Smith and Sharicz 2011). Others acknowledge sustainability as being survival. According to the study, 40% of senior managers who introduced themselves as novices on sustainability issues defined sustainability as maintaining business viability. Understanding the relationship between social entrepreneurship and sustainable development, the social impact assessment process is highly essential where the organization measures, analyzes, monitors, and publicizes the changes created by the planned activities of the social enterprise. This continuous process aims to manage and control the impact created to increase or optimize it (Urmanaviciene, 2020).

As would be expected SDGs adopted lately, research literature examining broadly its relationship with social entrepreneurship is still limited. However, there are some examples for indicating this relation. For instance, we can observe in the studies of Buzinde (2016) and Sheldon, Dredge & Daniele (2017) how social entrepreneurship in tourism can have a highly positive impact on SDGs. Wanyama (2015) examines in his further studies that social entrepreneurship plays an important role to contribute to the SDGs, particularly the goal concerning decent work. Meanwhile, Ramani, SadreGhazi & Gupta (2017) considers the role of SE in the achievement of SDG 6 (Sustainable Management of Water and Sanitation),

particularly in India. In the end, Rhadari, Sepasi & Moradi (2016), drawing attract on Schumpeterian theory, depict a canvas for the realization of the SDGs with social enterprises and social entrepreneurship which is identified as critical agents in this process.

The preliminary information – legal formation, financial tools of social enterprises in Azerbaijan within global context was overlooked through the country report by Andreja Rosandic and Mahammad Guluzade in the framework of “Social Economy in Eastern Neighborhood and the Western Balkans” research. In Azerbaijan, social entrepreneurship hasn’t been legally defined, so initiatives can be implemented under these legal forms: 1) Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs); 2) SME; 3) Public legal entities; 4) Family farm associations; 5) Cooperatives; 6) Informal solidarity initiatives and young entrepreneurs.

According to Mahammad Guluzade, social entrepreneurs establish their businesses with financial support from their family, friend, or own budget, bank loan, and public funding. They also can use grant funds for the primary step to establish the enterprise. In Azerbaijan financial institutions have not internal and external incentives to fund social enterprises, therefore it makes it hard to get access to the funds from them. However, there are several key stakeholders in the Social Enterprise Ecosystem such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Economy, State Employment Agency, Council on State Support to NGOs under the President, Youth Fund under the President, National Fund for Support to Entrepreneurs, EU Funding (Civil Society Facility, etc), ABAD and so on.

Several potential benefits and opportunities of social enterprises for Azerbaijan were discussed by Urxan Alekperov, Rajab Rahimli, Ziyafat Habibova, Murteza Hasanov in the research on “Human potential of social enterprises as a factor of sustainable innovative development in Azerbaijan”. According to them, as the primary mission of social entrepreneurship is to solve real social problems, it will contribute directly to the sustainable development of the national economy. Its sustainable commercial effect will ensure the self-sufficiency and competitiveness of the business.

Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative methodological approach based on a triangulation of data sources, where the research approach implemented has been that of interpretivism, which is to gain data on the theoretical concepts, sustainability aspects, and social, environmental, and economic contributions of social entrepreneurship. The first phase of the study focused on understanding the context of the study and included interviews with social venture managers or representatives and the collection of demographics and local policies. Phase II involved observation of social enterprises’ daily work

to demonstrate their sustainable practices. The last phase included participating in seminars and workshops devoted to current developments of social entrepreneurship to discuss and provide feedback to findings.

Qualitative research was used to tackle research questions and problems from different angles to investigate perceptions (Ivankova & Greer, 2015:65). Primary data was gathered in April 2020, from social entrepreneurs and social organizations through the semi-structured questionnaire so that the research question or problem can be answered to produce original research results. The qualitative approach was used in this study to examine respondents' views, with interviews being the method of data collection. Afterward, the data were quantified to investigate and measure attributes.

The main research questions of this study:

- How do local social entrepreneurs use both business acumen and philanthropic principles to address social, cultural, and environmental challenges?
- How can Social Entrepreneurship contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Azerbaijan?

For the data collection, a semi-structured questionnaire was used, which is an instrument that combines both quantitative and qualitative items. This approach enabled to keep the interview process more like a normal discussion of the topic and explore more relevant data than a structured interview. Interviewees can explain their thoughts without interruptions, which ensures get a better outcome from the interview. Open questions asked in the questionnaire were empirically derived from the literature based on the needs of the research, and most of the closed-ended questions were generated through the help of a pre-tested survey. Participating pretest was conducted, in which six respondents (social entrepreneurs) volunteered to express their reactions to the clarity of the question form, wording, and order before the actual survey. Mainly, the questions were used to guide the discussions around the desired themes, which was the contribution of the social enterprises to Sustainable Development. The languages used in the questionnaire were English and Azerbaijani as interviewees wish.

It is difficult to identify social enterprise where the field is in the emerging stage and wasn't legally defined. The sampling technique was using non-probability. From this point, and because there is no official list of social enterprises for the defined country, sample selection was based on the use of snowball sampling, by asking participants to propose names of other organizations. Sample members were selected based on their knowledge, relationships, and expertise regarding a research subject. Twenty-five expert

social entrepreneurs were selected as samples. Although the sample size is small, it represents the population, because this field is in its emergence phase (but developing so fast), only a few entrepreneurs could introduce themselves as social entrepreneurs. Interviews and questionnaires were conducted via e-mail, telephone, or face to face.

Analyzing qualitative raw information is an active and interactive process. As data analysis methods, narrative analysis, and content analysis were used. Narrative analysis as one of the qualitative data analysis methods was used to analyze the data which is gathered from personal interviews. Information was sorted-out and reflected up, enhanced, and presented in a revised shape to the reader. The other method was content analysis for interpreting documents, the text of different formats, pictures, audio, and videos. Later, the gathered data was read extremely carefully to derive codes. The process involves highlighting some of the words that are important for exploring the concept and primary impressions and opinions about the data were expressed. This process continues systematically, and labels for codes reflecting multiple critical thoughts start to emerge. Finally, the codes are categorized based on the relationships and linkages of the codes (Hsieh & Shannon 2005). Data analysis started soon after conducting the first interview.

Findings and Research

Social Entrepreneurship is a new phenomenon in Azerbaijan with growing interests from academics, civil society members, policymakers, and practitioners. This is also a reflection of global trends as social impact and sustainability are gaining worldwide popularity. As well as, the consequences of the global financial crisis, the decline in oil prices and, national currency devaluations demanded new economic reformations. The government's attention increased more on the non-oil sector and SME development, reducing unemployment and increasing the welfare of the population at large. In this matter, as we experience the success stories of Social Entrepreneurship in the world, especially in third-world countries, we begin to wonder about its current implication in Azerbaijan. Focus on the non-oil sector and SME development encourages further growth of the welfare of the people in the next years. This process seems less operational on a community and regional level, and therefore Social Entrepreneurship has more potential to perform in this niche. Today several modern challenges (economic, social, demographic, human, ecological, etc.) actualizing the creation of social enterprises trigger more rapid implementation of the "Transformation of black gold into human capital" conception stated by the President of Azerbaijan Republic. In this case, establishing organizations (Community Based Organizations: Human Development and Sustainable

Income Generation Public Unions) based on local human potential and their sustainable incomes can be very supportive in addressing social-economic problems, like as ending poverty, establishing new workplaces, gender equality, preventing labor migration, protecting family integrity, increasing awareness and abilities of people, mobilization of local renewable resources and providing sustainable development.

As social entrepreneurship field is completely new and not legally defined yet, the total number of social enterprises has not been defined. To collect information, 25 enterprises were selected based on these features which helped me to identify them as “social enterprises”:

- Having an economic, social, cultural, or environmental mission that provides a social or environmental benefit
- Selling goods or services to fund their mission
- Deriving a substantial portion of the income from trade
- Using the majority of profit/surplus in the fulfillment of their mission.

From the data collected through questionnaires conducting in Azerbaijan, it was found that the majority of the founders involved in the study were individuals (52%) (male and female at the same rate) and fewer corporates (48%). The status of respondents were primary social enterprises with several numbers of employees, and individual social entrepreneurs with little difference compared to it.

So far, any legislation or targeted public policies are not adopted for defining social entrepreneurship. Most of the interviewed respondents had difficulty in identifying their company as a social enterprise. The tables below represent the result regarding the legal structure of the respondents. Of the respondents, regarding the structure, the majority of n=15 (62%) were SMEs, n=7 were Informal solidarity initiatives and young entrepreneurs and n=2 were NGOs. The reason these NGOs selected was their social business servicing to their mission. Finally, there was n=1 Public Legal entity.



Figure 1: Form of the legal structure

NGOs and SMEs, more than other mechanisms of entrepreneurial activity, can be effectively used because of their limited scope and mobility of activities towards the development of human potential. But still, these legal forms do not completely reflect the mission of social enterprises. Traditional NGOs seek grants and donations to conduct their missions and need to take care not to compromise their values or those they are trying to do in favor of economic prosperity. Youth, a lack of professionalism, and inexperience in operating alongside other businesses are common problems that prevent NGOs from functioning effectively. Small businesses have the opposite flaw- they often start with social purposes in mind but then abandon them in favor of becoming a profitable business.

In this research, we observe a clear increase in the number of social enterprises. Within the time frame in providing the country with social activities, it was found that social enterprises began to increase in Azerbaijan after 2011, social entrepreneurship began to get popularity and attract more interest especially in 2017. The main reason for this increase is seen as failures of NGOs and philanthropies, and success stories of global social enterprises.

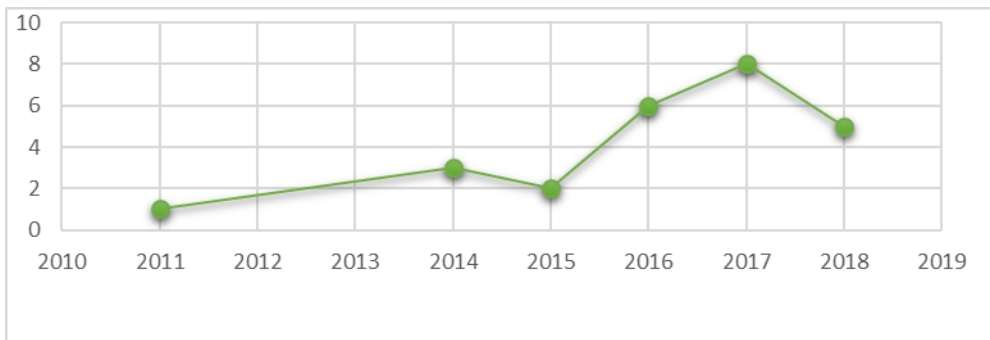


Figure 2. Years of Establishment

Respondents were also asked about the forms of finance and investment receive besides their income. Most of them mentioned that for their internal social activities, they do not get any grants or donations, mainly they organize the activities through bootstrapping, however certain projects and additional programs are fully financed.

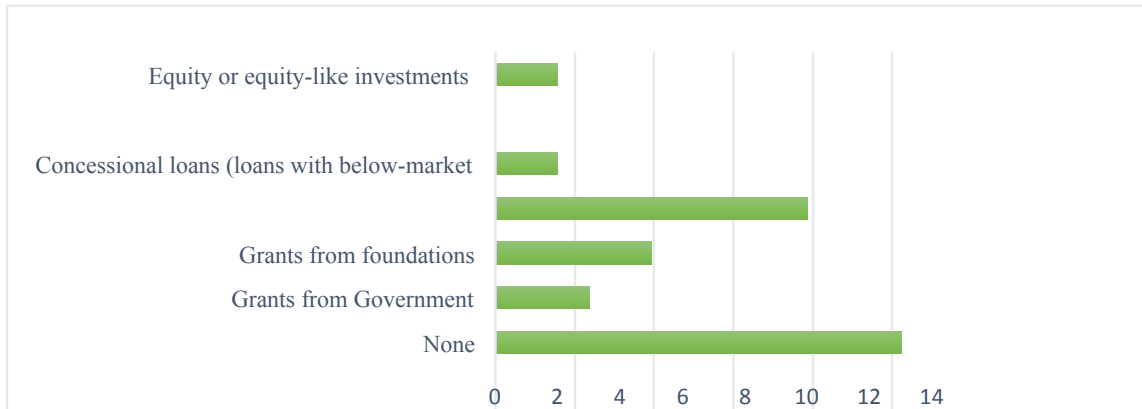


Figure 3. Finance and Investment

Profit distribution is also compatible with international standards, mainly it is reinvested into the organization and its development activities as described in the graph.

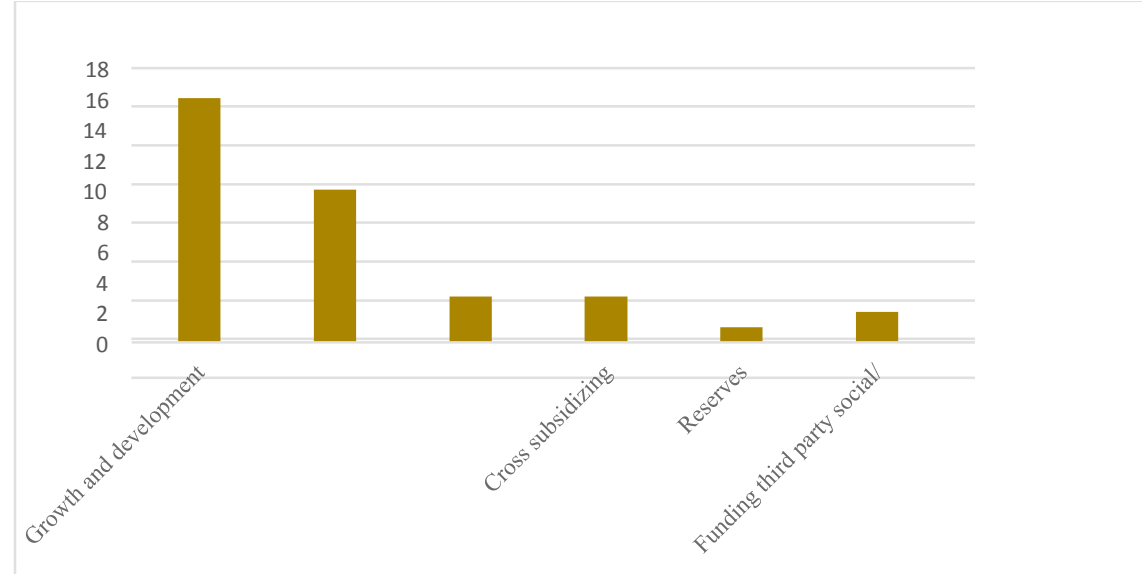


Figure 4. Profit Distribution

To understand the concept well, it is also important to understand the motivations of entrepreneurs to start a social business. According to the answers of the majority of respondents, the main reason why they choose to become social entrepreneurs is mainly related to their values: dignity, access to opportunity, transparency, accountability, equity, and empowerment. The interviewees expressed their passion for building social value and solving people's problems who are less fortunate and keep their social mission in front of their activities. They showed the willingness of having a business as morally and ethically as possible and which will represent their principles and values. Interviewees wanted to combine the job that they enjoy with altruistic motives. One of the other main reasons was the "feeling proud of what they are doing" and "feeling like a useful person for their society." This study also allowed to define the sectors that participants undertake social activities in the country, and the results show that the majority of n=10 (22%) respondents focus their activities on "Training and Development". The results also show that another key sector of activities undertaken by respondents was "Social Services" with n=9 (20%), n=3 (6%) focused "Health", and "Religion" accounts for n=0, "Education and Research" n=4 (9%), "Law, Advocacy and Politics" n=0, "Business and Union" n=5 (11%), "Environment and Housing" n=7 (15%), and "Cultural n=3 (6%), "Voluntarism" n=5 (11%). Social enterprises have to refocus their attention in supporting local people to handle their issues by educating them concerning the issues faced such as health, nutrition, access to medical care, maternal and child health services and establishing a variety of economic projects such as cooperative micro-enterprises, savings associations, adult literacy classes, job training, and job transfer programs to, directly and indirectly, support the economy (Lombard & Strydom, 2011:330).

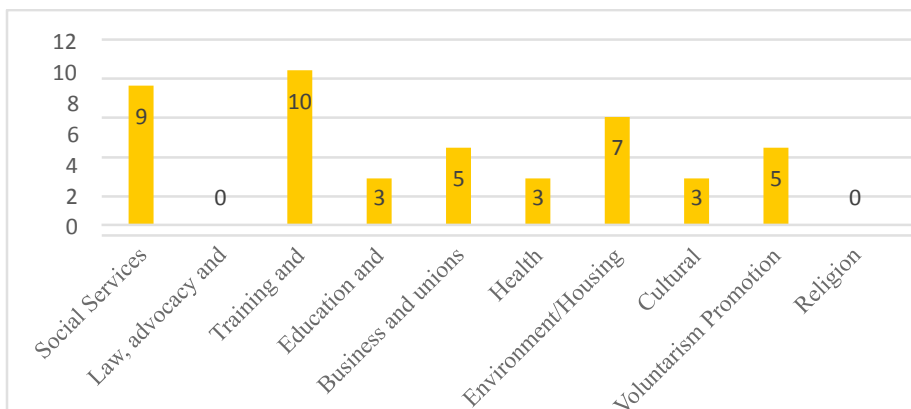


Figure 5. Sectors of undertaking activities

The result shows that, of the respondents, a wide range of their services was received by “People in the community” and “People with low income” which respectively representing n=10 (22%), and n=8 (19%); “Family” n=8 (19%); “People with employment barriers n=5 (12%); “Disabled people” and n=6 (14%); “Student” n=6 (14%).

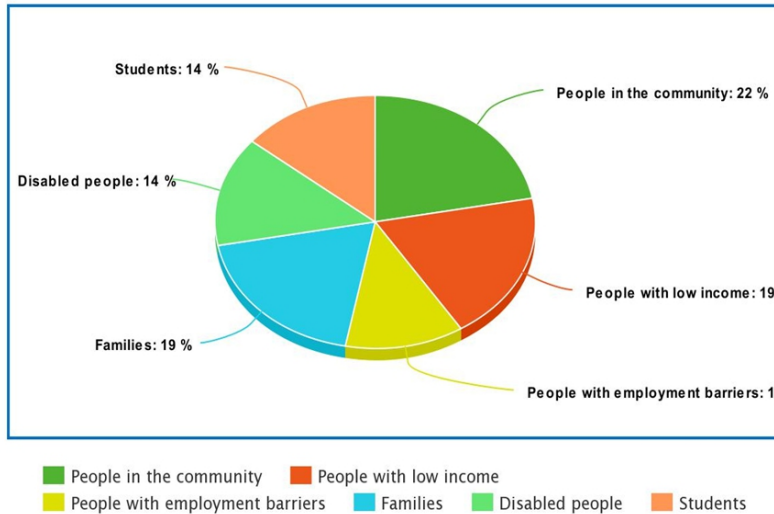


Figure 6. Beneficiaries

A significant issue facing enterprises is scaling the impact. In the social entrepreneurship context, scaling is described as ‘increasing the impact a social-purpose organization produces to match better the magnitude of the social need or problem it seeks to address’ (Dees, 2008). To achieve sustainable impact, there should be a more exact measurement, and calculate impact over investment. Advanced tools should be used to describe the company and the ecosystem that surrounds it because the economic evaluation of the social impact is necessary for social enterprise decision-makers, so they can improve the effects of their actions internally and externally, even when reflection on good practice is not perceived as urgent (Iannaci, 2020).

The result from the study shows that the majority of respondents n=21 (84%) measured the outcomes of their activities, and the minority of n=4 (16%) do not measure their outcomes. From the result, it was shown that the respondents, in general, measured their outcomes throughout the continuous assessment, social media metrics, google analytics, monitoring, interviews, and the use of evaluation forms, follow-up forms, and feedback forms. According to those methods, participants provided numbers to illustrate how many people they have trained, have placed in employment, or received their services. The result from the respondents shows that in 8 years, more than 16264 people in the country have been trained by the

respondents. The result also shows that 31415 people have received respondents' services in the average time of 8 years and 892 people were placed in employment. Respondents n=25 (100%) also answered that they regularly improve existing programs in terms of quality and quantity. The result indicated that generally, the respondents improved existing program quality by supervision, acquiring international experience, increasing diversity of activities, service training, research, seeking support to the community, and employment of new social workers.

To understand their comprehensive contribution to society, the impact of the social activities on the beneficiaries was investigated. Based on the measurement systems, respondents indicated that their activities had brought a direct positive change in children's development who had initial physical and mental disabilities. From the respondents, the difference made through their social activities was reducing poverty by applying intensive training and attaining employment. Many people were provided with the job in the cultural and agricultural sector in remote regions and they already didn't need to leave their villages to cities to make money. The research revealed that in the country there are many initiatives on children and people with disabilities. They are involved in many cultural, educational activities, which accelerated their integration into society and make a friendly environment, and earns monthly income.

The result also shows that specific impacts such as an increase in the center, development of skills, transformation, family relationships, and parenting skills could be notified in the country from respondents' activities.

Research also demonstrated how their activities trigger sustainable development in the country. Of the respondents, n=10 (30%) said their activities trigger development in the country they operate by bringing awareness and change through acting on the information provided on different social, environmental issues, stimulating motivation and determination, promoting social entrepreneurial activities, supporting and empowering humans in their efforts to build an equitable and sustainable society for all to exchange knowledge, skills, and abilities (A). n=11 (33%) said their activities trigger development by increasing employment opportunities in regions and rural areas, to raise their social and public welfare, moreover, bringing organizations and employee candidates together creating work opportunities driving economic development (B). To improve development in the community, the research shows a common result as the majority of the respondents n=5 (15%) stated that they can improve development sustainably in the country they reduce the unemployment problem of people with special needs and to ensure and accelerate social integration of the persons with disabilities (C). Respondents n=7 (22%) also pointed that, their activities driving responsible consumption, promotion of

recycling, saving the trees, cleaning up streets of Azerbaijan from paper waste, etc., contribute to the ecological aspects of SDGs (D). Preparing innovative and effective solutions to environmental problems in urban planning is also mentioned as one of the major activities.

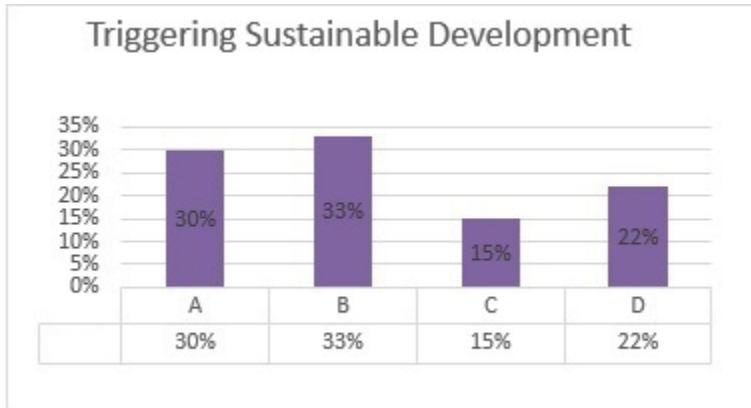


Figure 7. Activities triggering SD

After considering sectors that social activities have been taken, impacts on beneficiaries, and the activities that trigger Sustainable Development, this graph is designed to see which SDGs were mainly aimed to achieve by social enterprises in Azerbaijan:

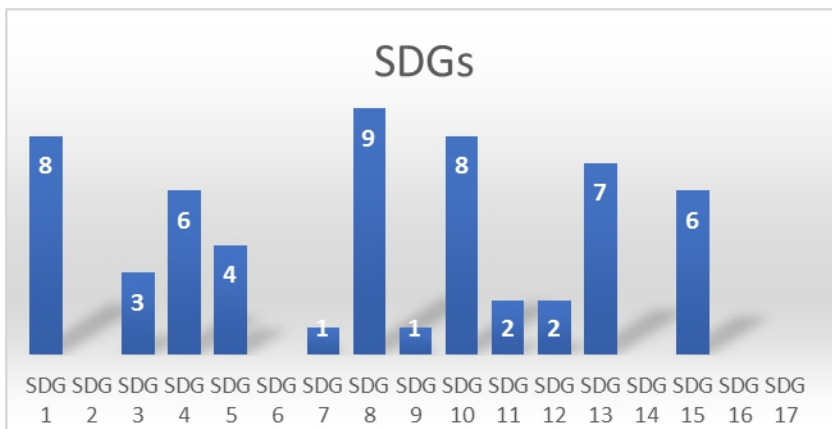


Figure 8. SDGs that contributed by Social Enterprises



Figure 9. Sustainable Development Goals;
Source: United Nations 2030 Agenda (2016)

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to understand the relation of Social Entrepreneurship to Sustainable Development and research its implication for Azerbaijan. There was a lack of current research papers on the situation and contribution of social enterprises in Azerbaijan.

The article focused on the sustainability features of social ventures. Research showed that the idea of business sustainability moves beyond economic, social, and environmental efficiency and shifts toward effectiveness (Dyllick and Hockerts 2002; Young and Tilley 2006). McDonough and Braungart (2002) argued that sustainable businesses should be designed to enhance the well-being of society while generating economic value. To build a sustainable social venture, there should be a minimum dependency on donors, financing based on multiple funding; the scalability of the business model, and a strategy for diffusing social innovation and deepening impact over time.

This study aimed at answering the main research question: How can Social Entrepreneurship contribute to Sustainable Development? From the data collection, it became evident that the most active social enterprises were located mainly in the capital city -Baku, however activities of some covered multiple regions of the country. They range from big companies having a big group of employees to individual initiators. As currently, it is hard to get registered as NGO, social enterprises were mainly registered as SMEs. In this way, they make a profit and compete with other commercial organizations in the market, but their main difference is having

social/environmental missions as their core of activities. The purpose of the activities of involved SEs in this country was laid in general to develop the quality of life by providing comprehensive care and support to the most vulnerable, and strive to improve the quality of health, education, unemployment, provide training, educating and facilitating communities in different activities such as creating workplaces, organizing training and developing children in creating space for them to develop talent and realizing their dreams through those activities. According to respondents' responses, primarily SDG-8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG-1 (No Poverty), and SDG-10 (Reduced Inequality) are mainly contributed by Azerbaijani social enterprises. Social enterprises can manage risks better, differentiate themselves from competitors, secure access to needed resources, strengthen supply chains and predict market demand better, if they align themselves with the SDG and get a better understanding to apply them. Finally, Social enterprises deliver social and environmental value, while operating financially sustainably. They solve social/environmental problems through products or services they offer, or they sell traditional products or services in a way that does not harm people or the planet. Social entrepreneurship is a new level with both philanthropic and commercial elements. Therefore, they fit totally in the perspective of sustainable development when they feature, sometimes as a priority, the social and environmental concerns in their economic objectives. However, social enterprises should align their strategies with SDGs to help their community, and eventually, the world to achieve Sustainable Development. The research shows that social enterprises have the potential to contribute to several SDGs at the same time. Each of these goals has indicators that help measure the result of company efforts of impact. So, direct alignment of the organizational objectives with these goals would help them to operate more determined and target-oriented.

This paper offers several significant contributions as:

- Facilitates more understanding on the performance of Social Enterprises and their importance for Sustainable Development, especially from Azerbaijan's standpoint;
- Contributes to the body of literature and fills the knowledge gap about the contribution of SE to SDGs;
- Encourages the entrepreneurs to align their business strategies with Sustainable Development Goals to build financially and socially sustainable company, keep up with global priorities and demonstrate the commitment to global goals;
- Attracts the attention of policymakers on the performance of social enterprises;

Nevertheless, the outcome was satisfactory, the paper also has several limitations. Since the number of social enterprises is relatively small, the sample size was insufficient for the comprehensive statistical measurement. On the other hand, it was one of the first articles dedicated to social entrepreneurship and SDGs from Azerbaijan's perspective, therefore the local literature was limited to cover the topic.

Future research should also cover sustainable aspects of entrepreneurship in general in Azerbaijan. There is a gap in knowledge if companies understand the sustainability concept in their practices, and explore the ways how to improve sustainability from inside and outside of the organizational activities. This increasingly complex environment requires a new blueprint for entrepreneurship, with resilient strategies, effective governance models, and new management approaches to create a global economy that delivers on the promise of prosperity for all in a world with finite resources. We need a business model that will have zero impact on the environment and should not be at the cost of posterity. The future lies with firms that internalize stakeholder inclusivity, resource efficiency, and environmental conservation as key elements in their core business strategy and process. Therefore, not only social enterprises should struggle for sustainable development, but also all business models should take more sustainable steps. Next research should focus on the awareness of entrepreneurs with the conception of sustainable development.

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ESJ Social Sciences

The Effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Kuwaiti Kindergarten Staff to Adopt E-Learning System

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p59](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p59)

Submitted: 17 March 2021

Accepted: 21 April 2021

Published: 30 April 2021

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Cite As:

Ashkanani, A. and Tamtam, A. (2021). The Effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Kuwaiti Kindergarten Staff to Adopt E-Learning System. *European Scientific Journal*, ESJ, 17(12), 1. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p59>

Abstract

E-learning has been implemented on a mass scale during the COVID-19 crisis although many schools faced huge problems during the system implementation and roll-out.

This paper has used the technology acceptance model (TAM) to investigate the teachers and administrative staff's prospective on the use of e-learning in the education process. The study has implemented a quantitative method to collect data through a questionnaire. The study had 204 participants which included teachers and administrative staff in kindergartens under the Kuwaiti Ministry of Education (MOE).

The study showed that the majority of the participants were not in favor of e-learning as the system was neither clear nor it was understandable or flexible, which hindered teachers work. The Ministry of education's strategy to bring e-learning to the mass users was undermined due to unclear strategic objective and lack of proper training and support that stood as a barrier to users' acceptance of e-learning.

Keywords: Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), E-learning, Technical Support, Training, Computer Self-efficacy, Organization Strategy Focus

Introduction

In 2020 the Ministry of Education (MOE) in the State of Kuwait has introduced e-learning at all levels of schooling in order to provide the necessary education during the Covid-19 crisis. E-learning in Kindergartens has never seen possible until this time of crisis. This is due to the fact that learning at kindergarten level has always been driven by physical movement of the teachers and the children, which makes learning attractive and less stressful to little children. On the other hand, e-learning would be considered a challenge since it would have to overcome the effect of physical separation between teachers and students while maintaining the attractiveness of learning. In 2020 the Ministry of Education (MOE) in the State of Kuwait has introduced e-learning at all levels of schooling in order to provide the necessary education during the Covid-19 crisis. E-learning in Kindergartens has never seen possible until this time of crisis. This is due to the fact that learning at kindergarten level has always been driven by physical movement of the teachers and the children, which makes learning attractive and less stressful to little children. On the other hand, e-learning would be considered a challenge since it would have to overcome the effect of physical separation between teachers and students while maintaining the attractiveness of learning.

Many studies have focused on the impact of today's technology on children. Technology is accused of shattering the foundation of family's social life and causing the breakup of human core values (Rowan, 2017). A 2010 Kaiser Foundation study showed that elementary aged children use on average 7.5 hours of entertainment technology per day, which among other technology related habits, are argued they may lead to children entering school with a tendency to struggle with self-regulation and attention skills required for learning.

On the other hand, others argue that children interaction with technology is important because it prepare them for the foreseen work environment and future modern life. Therefore, this study draws on the importance of subjecting kindergartens to e-learning based on the following points:

- E-learning is considered the formal technology utilization in education. Therefore, it is important to explore the application of e-learning and the extension of how such technology would meet the educational targets.

- Children exposure to technology in various setting such as education, a part of the others such as entertainment and social media, should always be under scholars focus.
- The application of e-learning at kindergartens level is considered crucial due to children age when exposed to technology, which is considered important to study.

1.1 Study Questions:

This paper investigates the impact of the factors Computer Self-Efficacy, System Quality, Technical Support, and Professional Development, on the two core beliefs that formulate a school staff's attitude toward e-learning and their behavioral intention to use the system, Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) of the e-learning system. In order to find out the answers to these questions the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1986) has been applied for this study.

2. Related Works:

The success of e-learning application depends on the behaviour and attitude of the people involved in the education process and their acceptance of such technology. Hence, TAM has always been considered a robust model to be applied in such studies.

It is important to focus on the external parameters that effect how people would handle technological implementation and the extension of its success.

- One of the most important aspects when it comes to implementing technology-based projects, the organization management approach is considered crucial in succeeding on meeting the aimed objectives. Therefore, this study has focused on the following parameters:

2.1 Computer Self-Efficacy:

According to Bandura & Wood (1989), Self-efficacy (SE) is one's belief in his/her capability to mobilize the motivation and cognitive resources necessary to meet given situational demands. The concept of self-efficacy has received attention from the organizational behaviour literature. Thus, recognition of self-efficacy reflects an important aspect in implementing computer-based systems effectively. Hence, it is essential to have a reliable measurement of SE (Compeau & Higgins, 1995).

On the other hand, Computer Self-Efficacy (CSE) is the ability of the individual's self-assessment to apply computer skill to achieve their tasks (Compeau & Higgins, 1995). CSE has three effects on individuals, namely, the product of their computer use, their emotional reaction toward

computers, and the degree of actual utilization of computers in their work. Several empirical studies found significant effects of CSE on the Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) of an e-learning system (Ferdousi, 2009; Waheed & Farooq Hussain, 2010; Gong, et al., 2004). CSE's main effect is found on PEOU, because it is recognized that, the higher the core competence in the use of computers, the easier the system will appear to the system user. Therefore, it is an important construct that affects teachers' perspective towards their use of e-learning systems. Kuwait's Ministry of education invested in ICT, prior to implementing an e-learning system, so there was a spread of computer utilization among the people involved in the education process beforehand.

2.2 Professional Development:

There are several studies that explored Professional Development (PD) within the framework that focused on producing theory-based concepts for better programme design and content dissemination (Dede & Ketelhut, 2009). However, there are limited theoretical and empirical studies on PD as a factor that influences the teacher's perspectives toward using a new e-learning system. One study by Kopcha (2012) views PD as being an important supporting factor to integrate teachers within the environment created by the new technology. Moreover, other studies emphasize that developing teachers, by training and upgrading their technological knowledge and skills, is essential to their acceptance of e-learning systems in teaching practices (Al-Senaidi, et al., 2009). Teachers need to attend training sessions or other forms of development to meet the demands of teaching with e-learning systems. Therefore, there is a need to make institutional administrations aware that teachers need to develop their skills to use e-learning systems (Greer, 2002), otherwise, the absence of clear training and learning policies with intention to develop staff knowledge and skills will become a barrier to e-learning implementation (Alkharang & Ghinea, 2013).

2.3 Technical Support:

Technical Support (TS) is one of the most important factors that have a direct effect on PU and PEOU, which affects the users' attitudes towards the e-learning system (Ngai, et al., 2007). According to Ralph (1991), TS is represented by organization staffs that have adequate knowledge to assist system users with computer hardware and software problems. Such support can include online support help desks, hotlines, services, machine-readable support knowledge base, faxes, automated telephone voice response systems, remote control software, and other facilities. Although the MOE in the State of Kuwait has incorporated technical support from its own resources and

from Kuwait University in order to ensure smooth implementation of e-learning in Kuwait schools, the support provided has never been studied from the perspective of their contribution in shaping teachers' beliefs on e-learning at respective schools. Therefore, TS is considered one of the external factors in the study's theoretical model.

2.4 Organization Strategic Focus:

Based on Kuwait society public opinion, the successful implementation of e-learning technology in Kuwait schools appeared to become an important factor in measuring the MOE success in meeting their educational targets. To focus on the role of technology, Van Der Wende and Van De Ven (2003) argue that it is one of the main external drivers for change, beside demography, governmental policy, and economic factors. Therefore, the development of Organization Strategic Focus (OSF) is a vital ingredient in the implementation plan for any technology driven initiative in educational institutes.

When seeking to define the concept Mintzberg, (1987) argued that "it requires not one, but five particular definitions of strategy; a plan, a ploy, a pattern, a position and a perspective". On the organizational management level, he cited Glueck's (1980, p. 9) definition as "a unified, comprehensive and integrated plan . . . designed to ensure that the basic objectives of the enterprise are achieved". Strategy is often confused with the term 'Policy', which is defined as "the set of basic principles and associated guidelines, formulated and enforced by the governing body of an organization, to direct and limit its actions in pursuit of long-term goals" (Business_Dictionary, 2016). In the context of this study, organization strategy would be the higher plan used to reach the strategic goals, while the policy would take a subsidiary position; a set of guiding procedures that help the assigned entity within the organization in its decision-making process.

Educational institutes have to evolve their strategies in adding e-learning in their educational delivery and support processes. Education organizations have to strategically plan the 'learning implementation processes in order for it to be successful. Bates (2008) listed several steps to encourage the use of technology in teaching:

- Identify new target groups that could be reached using technology.
- Define priority target groups and appropriate programs for the use of technology-based delivery.
- Identify areas of already-existing technology support and encourage people in those areas to provide support for "novice" technology users.

- Identify areas of support outside the department, faculty, or institution. Meanwhile, determine the organizational support staffing for technology-based teaching, if still required in-house.
- Ensure that innovation and the skilled use of technology is properly recognized and rewarded.
- Identify the priorities for face-to-face teaching, in case technology-based learning is successful in meeting the targets.
- Decide on key areas of investment and resource allocation for technology-based teaching.

It is essential to investigate the impact of clear OSF on teachers' perspectives toward the use of an e-learning system at the organization level. In other words, the study seeks to examine the impact of OSF on the teachers' beliefs with respect to e-learning system, and their intention to use it, in terms of planning and in the setting of policies.

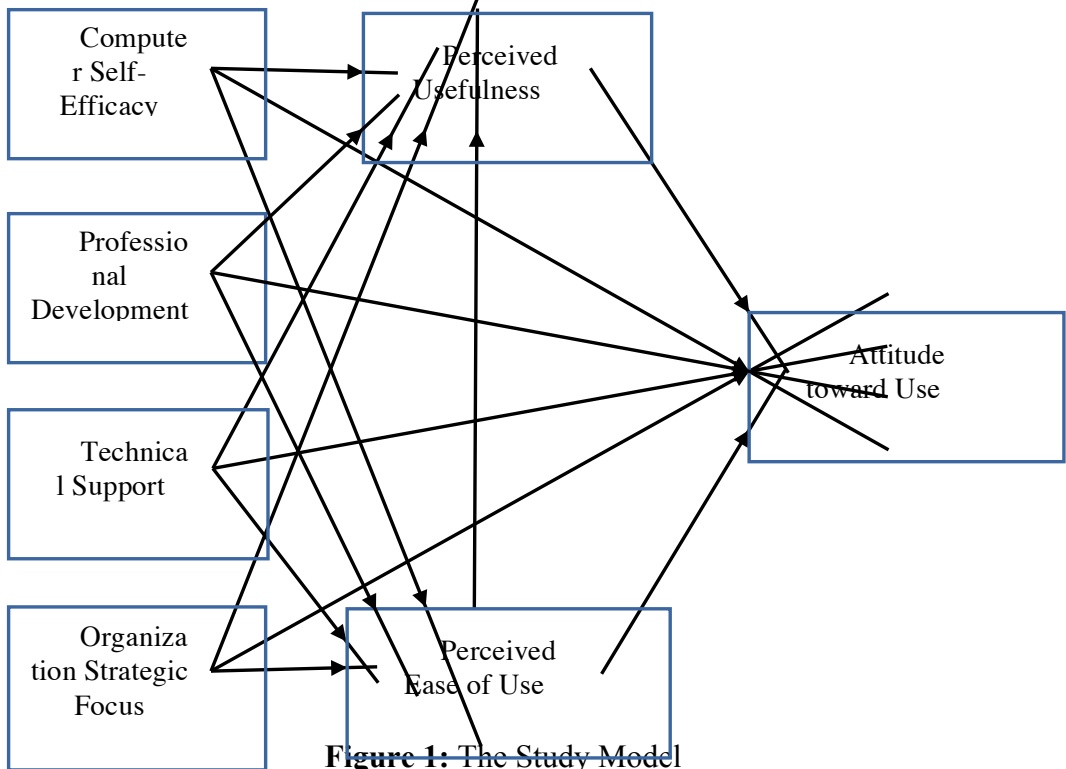


Figure 1: The Study Model

3. Methods:

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is incorporated in the study model (Figure 1). The study population was around 530 teachers and administrative staff from Kindergarten schools in Hawalli Province part of the State of Kuwait. A total number of 204 people participated in the survey for this study, the questionnaire was accessed using an electronic web-link

(https://qfreeaccountssje1.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_22YcjqWoeSkwHb), generated in the survey web-site www.Qualtrics.com and distributed using “What’s up” mobile application. The study implemented a quantitative method to collect data through a questionnaire. A total of 22 (10.8%) were administrative and support staff and 182 (89.2%) were teachers. Data was analyzed using SPSS software version 27. The survey used a five-point Likert scale with "SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree and SA = Strongly Agree".

4. Findings:

The main analysis will provide answers to the research questions that guide this study. The research questions were, “What is the impact of the factors Computer Self-Efficacy, Technical Support, and Professional Development and Organization Strategic Focus on the two core beliefs that formulate a school staff’s attitude toward e-learning and their behavioral intention to use the system.

4.1 Demographic information:

The table below shows the distribution of demographic information, job role, age group, years of experience and children level.

Table 1: Frequencies of demographic information

Demographic factor		Frequency	Percent
Job Role	Teachers	182	89.2%
	Administration and Support staff	22	10.8%
Age Group	36 and Below	133	65.5%
	37-42	45	22.2%
	43-49	17	8.4%
	50 and above	8	3.9%
Years of Experience	1 to 5 years	32	15.7%
	6 to 11 years	67	32.8%
	12 to 15 years	58	28.4%
	16 years and above	47	23.0%

4.2 Descriptive Analysis:

4.2.1 Computer Efficacy

The results of the descriptive statistics to each item of the Computer Efficacy are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Frequencies and Distributions of Respondents on Computer Efficacy

Item		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
01	n	35	38	45	51	35	204
	%	17.2%	18.6%	22.1%	25.0%	17.2%	100.0%
02	n	37	36	50	54	27	204
	%	18.1%	17.6%	24.5%	26.5%	13.2%	100.0%
03	n	44	33	45	57	25	204
	%	21.6%	16.2%	22.1%	27.9%	12.3%	100.0%

On item 01, which stated, “I can do my work on E-learning system if I see someone else do it” more than one-third (35.8%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while (42.2%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it and relatively small number (22.1%) indicating neutrality.

On item 02, which stated, “I could do my work on E-learning if I used similar system before” more than one-third (35.7%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while (39.7%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it and mostly one-fourth (24.5%) indicating neutrality.

On item 03, which stated, “I can do my work on E-learning if I have instruction manual” (37.8%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while an almost equal number (40.2%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it, while less than one-sixth (22.1%) indicating neutrality.

4.2.2 Professional Development

The results of descriptive statistics to each item of Job Training for professional development are presented in table 3.

Table 3: Frequencies and Distributions of Respondents on Job Training

Item		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
01	n	62	53	32	34	23	204
	%	30.4%	26.0%	15.7%	16.7%	11.3%	100.0%
02	n	91	43	22	26	22	204
	%	44.6%	21.1%	10.8%	12.7%	10.8%	100.0%
03	n	72	50	38	27	17	204
	%	35.3%	24.5%	18.6%	13.2%	8.3%	100.0%

On item 01, which stated, “I can use the training I received in all my classes” a majority (56.4%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while almost one-third (30.0%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it and one-sixth (15.7%) indicating neutrality.

On item 02, which stated, “I feel I got adequate training on E-learning system” a large majority (65.7%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while third number (33.5%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it and only (10.8%) indicating neutrality.

On item 03, which stated, “I had good chance to share technology with others” majority of the participants (59.8%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while a small number (21.5%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it, while less than one-fifth (18.6%) indicating neutrality.

4.2.3 Technical Support

The results of descriptive statistics to each item for Technical Support are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Frequencies and Distributions of Respondents on Technical Support Policy

Item		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
01	n	57	34	56	37	20	204
	%	27.9%	16.7%	27.5%	18.1%	9.8%	100.0%
02	n	56	36	63	30	19	204
	%	27.5%	17.6%	30.9%	14.7%	9.3%	100.0%
03	n	58	35	55	36	20	204
	%	28.4%	17.2%	27.0%	17.6%	9.8%	100.0%

On item 01, which stated, “Technical support provided by MOE improve my work” a majority (44.6%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while less than one-third (27.9%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it and less than one-third (27.5%) indicating neutrality.

On item 02, which stated, “Technical support improve my productivity” a majority (45.1%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while less than one-fourth (24.0%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it and less than one-third (30.9%) indicating neutrality.

On item 03, which stated, “Technical support makes E-learning system more effective” a majority (45.6%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while less than one-third (27.4%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it with mostly same number (27.0%) indicating neutrality.

4.2.4 Organization Strategic Focus

The results of the descriptive statistics to each item of the Ministry of Education (MOE) Organizational Strategic Focus (OSF) are presented in table 5.

Table 5: Frequencies and Distributions of Respondents on Ministry of Education (MOE) Strategic Planning

Item		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
01	n	70	29	36	44	25	204
	%	34.3%	14.2%	17.6%	21.6%	12.3%	100.0%
02	n	54	28	47	46	29	204
	%	26.5%	13.7%	23.0%	22.5%	14.2%	100.0%
03	n	65	31	48	41	19	204
	%	31.9%	15.2%	23.5%	20.1%	9.3%	100.0%

On item 01, which stated, “MOE may require to use E-learning after the health crisis” a majority (48.5%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while one-third (33.9%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it and (17.6%) indicating neutrality.

On item 02, which stated, “I believe MOE strategy to encourage E-learning” majority (40.2%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while third number (36.7%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it and only (23.0%) indicating neutrality.

On item 03, which stated, “The use of E-learning follows MOE strategy” more than one-third of the participants (37.1%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while (29.4%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it, while less than one-fourth (23.5%) indicating neutrality.

4.2.5 Perception of E-learning System

The results of the descriptive statistics to each item of the Perception of E-learning system are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Frequencies and Distributions of Respondents on Perception of E-learning system

Item		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
01	n	58	48	35	38	25	204
	%	28.4%	23.5%	17.2%	18.6%	12.3%	100.0%
02	n	47	39	39	53	26	204
	%	23.0%	19.1%	19.1%	26.0%	12.7%	100.0%
03	n	64	47	32	35	26	204
	%	31.4%	23.0%	15.7%	17.2%	12.7%	100.0%

On item 01, which stated, “E-learning makes my work enjoyable” more than half (51.9%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while less than one-third (30.9%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it and (17.2%) indicating neutrality.

On item 02, which stated, “E-learning is beneficial” a majority (42.1%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while more than one-third (38.7%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it and (19.1%) indicating neutrality.

On item 03, which stated, “E-learning makes work noticeable” more than half of the participants (54.4%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while less than one-third (29.9%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it and less than one-sixth (12.2%) indicating neutrality.

4.2.6 Perception of Usefulness

The results of descriptive statistics to each item of the Perception of Usefulness are presented in Table 7.

On item 01, which stated, “E- learning improves my work performance” a majority (45.1%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while a (34.3%) indicated that they either agreed or strongly agreed with it, while (20.6%) indicating neutrality. Since more participants strongly disagreed or disagreed. In general the statement was not favoured by the participants.

On item 02, which stated, “E-learning improve my work effectiveness” a majority (48.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while (33.3%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it, with less than one-fifth (18.6%) indicating neutrality, the statement was not generally in favour by the participants.

On item 03, which stated, “E-learning improve my work productivity” a majority (51.0%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while less than one-third (29.4%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it, while only (19.6%) indicating neutrality.

Table 7: Frequencies and Distributions of Respondents on Perception of Usefulness

Item		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
01	n	55	37	42	46	24	204
	%	27.0%	18.1%	20.6%	22.5%	11.8%	100.0%
02	n	61	37	38	39	29	204
	%	29.9%	18.1%	18.6%	19.1%	14.2%	100.0%
03	n	62	42	40	32	28	204
	%	30.4%	20.6%	19.6%	15.7%	13.7%	100.0%

4.2.7 Perception of Ease of Use

The results of descriptive statistics to each item of Perception of Ease of Use are presented in table 8.

On item 01, which stated, “E-learning system clear and understandable” a majority (44.1%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while a (37.8%) indicated that they either agreed or strongly agreed with it, while less than one-fifth (18.1%) indicating neutrality. Since more number strongly disagreed or disagreed, the statement was not generally in favour by the participants.

On item 02, which stated, “E-learning system and flexible” majority (43.1%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while (34.8%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it, with less than one-fourth (21.1%) indicating neutrality, the statement was not generally in favour by the participants.

On item 03, which stated, “E-learning system is easy” a majority (42.6%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while more than one-third (38.2%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it and (19.1%) indicating neutrality. internet.

Table 8: Frequencies and Distributions of Respondents on Perception of Ease of Use

Item		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
01	n	48	42	37	53	24	204
	%	23.5%	20.6%	18.1%	26.0%	11.8%	100.0%
02	n	51	39	43	51	20	204
	%	25.0%	19.1%	21.1%	25.0%	9.8%	100.0%
03	n	46	41	39	57	21	204
	%	22.5%	20.1%	19.1%	27.9%	10.3%	100.0%

5. Conclusion:

The goal of this research is to investigate the impact of e-learning on Kindergarten administrative staff and teachers; this study has found that the majority of participants on computer self-efficacy agreed that they would be able to use the E-learning system if they had some help beforehand, or If they had used a similar system before or if they had an instruction manual to aid them. Through the collected data, it can be asserted that there is no clear or direct correlation between the extent of job training and an improved learning environment. The participants were not in favor of the possible Ministry of Education strategic objective to keep implementing e-learning even after the COVID-19 crisis has ended. The members of staff stated that they were not happy with the technical support provided by the MOE; also

the lack of technical support played a negative effect on the staff's productivity.

The participants disagreed with the usefulness of e-learning as they stated that it did not improve their work performance and effectiveness. The participants also said that they found the system not easy to use. They said that the system was neither clear, nor understandable or flexible.

However, Kuwait's Ministry of Education should invest more in reflecting a clear strategic objective behind e-learning implementation and roll-out such intention among school staffs effectively in order to ensure full utilization of the system in serving their educational purpose. In addition, MOE requires focusing on providing the required level of training to ensure system users' full utilization of the opportunity e-learning can provide to improve education, as well as elevate users' positive prospective toward e-learning and their intention to use it.

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ESJ Social Sciences

Ansiedad en Estudiantes del Nivel Medio Superior Universitario y Estrategias de Afrontamiento

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p73](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p73)

Submitted: 1 February 2021

Accepted: 13 April 2021

Published: 30 April 2021

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Cite As:

Guajardo, EJM., Rivera, MMT., and Solis, SAV. (2021). Ansiedad en Estudiantes del Nivel Medio Superior Universitario y Estrategias de Afrontamiento. *European Scientific Journal, ESJ*, 17(12), 73. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p73>

Resumen

Actualmente ha aumentado el interés de las personas por lograr el bienestar mental, esto debido a que ha ido en aumento los trastornos por depresión y por ansiedad. En este estudio Ansiedad en estudiantes del nivel medio superior universitario y estrategias de afrontamiento, se describe el grado de ansiedad de los alumnos. Para lo cual se realizó un estudio de corte empírico con metodología mixta, lo que indica que se exploran los datos estructurados en escala Likert y no estructurados con respuesta abierta. La población para este estudio está conformada por 1814 estudiantes inscritos

en escuelas e institutos de la Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila del nivel medio superior. Los resultados del estudio muestran que dos de cada 10 estudiantes indican tener un problema en algún nivel de dificultad, el resto indica no tener retos que atender. Cerca de una quinta parte de los alumnos del nivel medio superior, presentan síntomas ansiedad. Entre las conclusiones se encuentra que de acuerdo con la evidencia, el diagnóstico de ansiedad depende del sexo del estudiante, presentando las mujeres mayor incidencia de ansiedad.

Palabras clave: Ansiedad, estudiantes, Estrategias de afrontamiento

Anxiety in Upper Secondary University Students and Coping Strategies

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Abstract

Presently, people's interest in achieving mental well-being has increased because depression and anxiety disorders have increased. This paper focuses on describing anxiety in high school students and coping

strategies, as well as the degree to which students experience anxiety. An empirical study was carried out with mixed methodology, which indicates that structured data on a Likert scale and unstructured data with open response are explored. The study population comprised of 1814 students enrolled in schools and institutes of the Autonomous University of Coahuila of the upper secondary level. The results of the study show that 2 out of 10 students indicated that they have a problem at some level of difficulty, while the rest indicate that they have no challenges to address. About a fifth of the students of the upper secondary level showed anxiety symptoms. Based on evidence, the study concludes that the diagnosis of anxiety depends on the sex of the student, with women showing a higher occurrence of anxiety.

Keywords: Anxiety, students, coping strategies

Introducción

Con el paso de los años ha incrementado la preocupación por lograr el bienestar emocional. Lo anterior a raíz de que ha ido en aumento los trastornos por depresión y por ansiedad, de tal forma que se han convertido en problemas habituales que afectan la productividad de las personas.

En este artículo se presenta un estudio realizado con estudiantes de las preparatorias de la Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila, en el cual participaron 1814 estudiantes. En primera instancia se presentan algunas definiciones de lo que es la ansiedad, y posteriormente se describen los resultados obtenidos de la aplicación de la escala de ansiedad de Zung a estudiantes de nivel medio superior y algunas estrategias para su afrontamiento.

Ansiedad

Al hablar de la salud mental de las personas, uno de los conceptos que sale a relucir es la ansiedad, sin embargo, no existe un consenso en lo que respecta a este concepto. Para Aldao et al. (2010) la ansiedad es un desorden producto del estrés que consiste en una regulación deficiente de las respuestas emocionales a los eventos cotidianos.

Mientras que para Cazalla-Luna et al. (2014) “es una emoción considerada como negativa y consiste en sentimientos de preocupación, nerviosismo, tensión y aprensión. Además, también se produce activación del sistema nervioso autónomo y expresiones conductuales y motoras”.

Se debe entender como una reacción que puede ser adaptativa o de defensa ante una situación nueva o inesperada y que se caracteriza por un estado de mayor alerta y activación biológica, psicológica y social (Zúñiga, 2014). Lo antes mencionado hace posible precisar que puede ser producto

del estrés ante una situación abrumadora, y al suceder así la sensación puede ser temporal, cuando las personas sufren trastornos de ansiedad el miedo no es temporal, sino que es persistente.

Por lo tanto los trastornos de ansiedad son definidos como un grupo de padecimientos que se caracterizan por la presencia de preocupación, tensión o temor excesivo que ocasionan malestar y un deterioro clínicamente significativo en la funcionalidad y adaptación de una persona (Moreno et al., 2018).

Respecto a la ansiedad la Organización Mundial de la Salud (2019) menciona que los trastornos emocionales surgen habitualmente durante la adolescencia, donde se puede llegar a experimentar reacciones excesivas de irritabilidad, frustración o enojo. Entre los adolescentes la ansiedad es la novena causa de enfermedades y discapacidades, además que puede afectar profundamente el rendimiento académico y la asistencia escolar.

Con el propósito de estudiar la ansiedad y depresión, han surgido numerosos estudios, que con el paso del tiempo han sido posibles replicar a poblaciones semejantes, como es el estudio de Zung (1965) la prueba original se aplicó a un total de 56 pacientes admitidos en una clínica psiquiátrica, con un diagnóstico primario de desorden depresivo. 31 de estos pacientes fueron tratados por este desorden, mientras que otros 25 recibieron otro tipo de diagnóstico. Dentro del grupo de depresivos, 22 completaron la prueba nuevamente después de recibir tratamiento. Finalmente se aplicó la prueba a un grupo control de 100 personas, empleados del hospital y pacientes sin diagnóstico de depresión.

En un estudio realizado por Zarza-Alzugaray et al. (2016) acerca de Variables de Afrontamiento y Psicológicas Explicativas de la Ansiedad Escénica, se aplicó un instrumento adaptado a 33 estudiantes de tercer curso del Grado en Magisterio en Educación Primaria de la Universidad de Zaragoza, entre los resultados destacan que la ansiedad escénica es un problema presente en los estudiantes participantes en el estudio, encontrando que las chicas reportan mayores niveles de ansiedad escénica que los chicos.

Para ayudar a manejar el estrés, ansiedad y depresión, se encuentran las estrategias de afrontamiento, Gantiva (2010, p.63-72) menciona que “constituyen un fenómeno ampliamente estudiado desde la psicología, identificándose como una importante variable mediadora de la adaptación del paciente a eventos altamente estresantes”.

De acuerdo con Londoño et al. (2006, p.327-350) las estrategias de afrontamiento pueden focalizarse en el problema cuando se manipulan las condiciones responsables de la amenaza. Al dirigirse a la respuesta emocional, se orientan a reducir la respuesta emocional generada por la situación. Si se dirige a modificar la evaluación inicial de la situación, el estilo de afrontamiento tiende a reevaluar el problema.

Objetivo general

- Describir el grado de ansiedad de los alumnos del nivel medio superior universitario.

Objetivo específico

- Contrastar los niveles de ansiedad entre los hombres y las mujeres del nivel medio superior universitario.

Metodología

El presente estudio es empírico con metodología mixta, lo que indica que se exploran los datos estructurados en escala Likert, de los cuales se obtienen tablas de frecuencia y tablas cruzadas, y los datos no estructurados con respuesta abierta, se analizan mediante minería de texto y con estrategias para localizar los campos léxicos de las formas en que las estudiantes confrontan sus problemas o dificultades.

Para dar cumplimiento a los objetivos, se lleva a cabo las estrategias procedimentales estadísticas como frecuencias, contrastación a través de una prueba t de Student y minería de texto. Aunado a la extracción de los componentes léxicos y dado los hallazgos, se realiza un análisis de clúster para conocer la organización taxonómica de esos componentes.

Para la observación empírica y la obtención de los datos, se utiliza un instrumento en línea que contiene la escala de ansiedad de Zung (1965), la cual cuenta con 7 reactivos y mide el nivel de ansiedad del respondiente. El resultado que arroja está en tres categorías, “con ansiedad”, “sin ansiedad” y “diagnóstico dudoso”.

La población para este estudio fueron 1814 estudiantes de la Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila del nivel medio superior.

Resultados

En este apartado se muestra la evidencia empírica de los análisis estadísticos utilizados. Frecuencias simples, frecuencias cruzadas y contrastación. La contrastación se realiza con la prueba t de Student a un nivel de significancia del 95% ($\alpha (p) \leq 0.05$).

Para contar y obtener las frecuencias absolutas y relativas, se utiliza el procesamiento de frecuencias simples y frecuencias cruzadas entre las categorías presentes en el estudio. En cuanto al contraste de las categorías se realizan las pruebas de dependencia estadística χ^2 Pearson y M-L, entre el diagnóstico de ansiedad y el sexo de los alumnos.

En el contraste entre mujeres y hombres respecto a la presencia del grado de ansiedad entre ellos, se utiliza la prueba t de Student a un nivel de significancia de 0.05 (p).

Para el análisis de las variables con escala no estructurada, se utiliza la estrategia de minería de texto para encontrar el campo léxico utilizado por las alumnas, cabe destacar que este análisis se llevo a cabo con las alumnas ya que fue donde se encontraron mas casos de ansiedad en comparación de los hombres.

Para la obtención de los componentes principales del campo léxico utilizado por las alumnas del bachillerato universitario, las cuales son diagnosticadas con ansiedad y presentan un problema o dificultad, se utiliza la estrategia de descomposición en valores singulares (componentes) y son tomadas en cuenta las tres distancias mayores en términos absolutos.

Para la jerarquización de los campos léxicos localizados y descritos, se utiliza la estrategia de aglomeración de enlace completo con la medida de las distancias de uno menos la correlación r Pearson ($1-r$ Pearson).

La población para este estudio está conformada por una cantidad de 1814 estudiantes inscritos en escuelas e institutos de la Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila del nivel medio superior, de ambos sexos en las ciudades de: Saltillo, Parras de la Fuente, Torreón, Agua Nueva, Allende y Nueva Rosita, en el estado de Coahuila en México. Los alumnos cuentan con un promedio de edad de un poco más de 15 años. Para el análisis de las mujeres con presencia de ansiedad y con un problema o dificultad se contabilizaron 112 mujeres y 36 hombres con problemas de ansiedad.

A continuación, se desglosan las características de las unidades de observación por: edad, sexo, semestre escolar y escuela.

Tabla 1. Frecuencias de la población por edad

Edad	F(x)	%
14	2	0.11
15	973	53.64
16	562	30.98
17	63	3.47
18	16	0.88
19	9	0.50
20	2	0.11
21	1	0.06
22	2	0.11
38	1	0.06
Vacios	183	10.09

F(x)= Frecuencia simple, %= por ciento o porcentaje

Fuente: Elaboración propia mediante un instrumento en línea.

2019.

De acuerdo con la **Error! Reference source not found.**, el 84.7% de los alumnos participantes cuentan con 15 y 16 años, de 17 años en adelante, la participación es mucho menor.

Tabla 2. Frecuencias de la población por sexo

Sexo	F(x)	%
Mujer	1172	64.61
Hombre	642	35.39

F(x)= Frecuencia simple, %= por ciento o porcentaje

Fuente: Elaboración propia mediante un instrumento en línea. 2019.

En la tabla anterior, se puede observar que la mayoría, poco más de dos tercios de los respondientes del instrumento, son mujeres; el 35.39% son hombres.

Tabla 3. Frecuencia de la población por semestre escolar

Semestre	F(x)	%
Primero	1165	64.22
Segundo	14	0.77
Tercero	605	33.35
Cuarto	16	0.88
Quinto	8	0.44
Sexto	6	0.33

F(x)= Frecuencia simple, %= por ciento o porcentaje

Fuente: Elaboración propia mediante un instrumento en línea. 2019.

En la **Error! Reference source not found.**, que refiere a la frecuencia de los respondientes por semestre escolar, se observa que más de dos tercios (64.22%) mencionan cursar el primer semestre, un poco más de un tercio, indica estar en el tercer semestre, los demás semestres presentan poca afluencia de respuesta, ya que son semestres con poca inscripción.

Tabla 4. Frecuencia de la población por escuela

Escuela	F(x)	%
Esc. de Bach. 'Agua Nueva'	61	3.36
Esc. de Bach. 'Ateneo Fuente'	727	40.08
Esc. de Bach. 'Dr. Mariano Narváez González' TM	28	1.54
Esc. de Bach. 'Dr. Mariano Narváez González' TV y TN	148	8.16
Esc. de Bach. 'Dr. y Gral. Jaime Lozano Benavides'	74	4.08
Esc. de Bach. 'Juan Agustín de Espinoza'	285	15.71
Esc. de Bach. 'Prof. Urbano Riojas Rendón'	119	6.56

Esc. de Bach. 'Venustiano Carranza'	329	18.14
Instituto de Enseñanza Abierta. Saltillo	43	2.37

F(x)= Frecuencia simple, %= por ciento o porcentaje

Fuente: Elaboración propia mediante un instrumento en línea. 2019.

Respecto a la afluencia de respuestas al instrumento por escuela, en la **Error! Reference source not found.**, se observa que la Escuela de Bachilleres “Ateneo Fuente” presenta la mayor cantidad de respuestas con un 40.08%, seguida de Esc. de Bach. “Venustiano Carranza” con un 18.14%, posteriormente la Esc. de Bach. “Juan Agustín de Espinoza” con el 15.71%; las demás escuelas presentan afluencia respecto al total de respuestas, menores al 10%.

Tabla 5. Frecuencia de la población que actualmente presenta un problema

Presenta actualmente un problema	F(x)	%
Sí	360	19.85
No	1454	80.15

F(x)= Frecuencia simple, %= por ciento o porcentaje

Fuente: Elaboración propia mediante un instrumento en línea. 2019.

En la **Error! Reference source not found.**, se puede ver que 19.85% de la población de estudiantes indica que, al momento de darle respuesta al instrumento, contaba con un problema que atender.

Tabla 6. Frecuencia de la población con problemas o dificultades exclusivamente

Problema o dificultad	F(x)	%
Conflicto muy leve	28	7.78
Conflicto leve	56	15.55
Problema pequeño	56	15.55
Problema regular	172	47.77
Problema grave	40	11.11
Problema muy grave	8	2.22

F(x)= Frecuencia simple, %= por ciento o porcentaje

Fuente: Elaboración propia mediante un instrumento en línea. 2019.

En la **Error! Reference source not found.**, se muestra que del total e los respondientes al instrumento (1814) el 80.15% no presenta problema psicológico que atender; del resto, 360 (16.32%) (un 3.53% dejaron vacío el dato), observado en la **Error! Reference source not found.**, indican tener n problema el momento de darle respuesta al instrumento. De estos, el

47.78%, indica tener un problema pequeño, los que indicaron tener problemas graves y regulares coinciden en un 15.56%, los que indican tener conflictos, sean estos leves o muy leves, son el 11.11% y 2.22% respectivamente y destaca el 7.78% (28) que indica mediante el instrumento, tener al momento de la observación, un problema muy grave.

Tabla 7. Frecuencia de la población con categorías de ansiedad

Categorías de ansiedad	F(x)	%
Con ansiedad	346	19.07
Diagnóstico dudoso de ansiedad	447	24.64
Sin ansiedad	1021	56.28

F(x)= Frecuencia simple, %= por ciento o porcentaje

Fuente: Elaboración propia mediante un instrumento en línea. 2019.

Como se observa en la **Error! Reference source not found.**, casi una quinta parte de los estudiantes presenta ansiedad (19.07%), así como casi una cuarta parte de ellos presenta un diagnóstico dudoso (24.64%) y más de la mitad (56.28%) no fue detectada la ansiedad en ellos. Así mismo, se observa una dependencia estadística entre el diagnóstico de ansiedad y el sexo de los alumnos (**Error! Reference source not found.**).

Tabla 8. Prueba de dependencia independencia para sexo y diagnóstico de ansiedad

Prueba	X²	df	P
X ² Pearson	33.67	df=2	p=.0
X ² M-L	34.45	df=2	p=.0

X² = prueba ji cuadrada, df= grados de libertad, p= nivel de error (cerca a cero), X² Pearson= ji cuadrada de Pearson, X² M-L= ji cuadrada de máxima verosimilitud.

Fuente: Elaboración propia mediante un instrumento en línea. 2019.

De acuerdo con los resultados en la **Error! Reference source not found.**, se observa que hay una dependencia estadística entre el diagnóstico de ansiedad y el sexo de los alumnos.

Tabla 9. Tabla cruzada de sexo, vivencia de un problema o conflicto, nivel de dificultad del problema o conflicto y el diagnóstico de ansiedad

Sexo x Actualmente estás viviendo un problema o conflicto x Grado de dificultad del conflicto o problema x Diagnóstico ansiedad		Sexo	Grado de dificultad del conflicto o problema	Con ansiedad	Diagnóstico dudoso de ansiedad	Sin ansiedad	Total de renglón
F(x)		Mujer	Problema regular	53	36	38	127
	<i>% de columna</i>			47.32%	48.65%	47.50%	47.74%
	<i>% de renglón</i>			41.73%	28.35%	29.92%	73.84%
F(x)		Mujer	Conflicto leve	16	12	13	41
	<i>% de columna</i>			14.29%	16.22%	16.25%	15.41%
	<i>% de renglón</i>			39.02%	29.27%	31.71%	73.21%
F(x)		Mujer	Problema grave	19	9	1	29
	<i>% de columna</i>			16.96%	12.16%	1.25%	10.90%
	<i>% de renglón</i>			65.52%	31.03%	3.45%	72.50%
F(x)		Mujer	Conflicto muy leve	6	4	12	22
	<i>% de columna</i>			5.36%	5.41%	15.00%	8.27%
	<i>% de renglón</i>			27.27%	18.18%	54.55%	78.57%
F(x)		Mujer	Problema muy grave	3	3	0	6
	<i>% de columna</i>			2.68%	4.05%	0.00%	2.26%
	<i>% de renglón</i>			50.00%	50.00%	0.00%	75.00%
F(x)		Mujer	Problema pequeño	15	10	16	41
	<i>% de columna</i>			13.39%	13.51%	20.00%	15.41%
	<i>% de renglón</i>			36.59%	24.39%	39.02%	73.21%
F(x)		Total mujer		112	74	80	266
	<i>% de columna</i>			75.68%	73.27%	72.07%	
	<i>% de renglón</i>			42.11%	27.82%	30.08%	
F(x)		Hombr e	Problema regular	14	17	14	45
	<i>% de columna</i>			38.89%	62.96%	45.16%	47.87%
	<i>% de renglón</i>			31.11%	37.78%	31.11%	26.16%
F(x)		Hombr e	Conflicto leve	5	2	8	15
	<i>% de columna</i>			13.89%	7.41%	25.81%	15.96%
	<i>% de renglón</i>			33.33%	13.33%	53.33%	26.79%
F(x)		Hombr e	Problema grave	9	1	1	11
	<i>% de columna</i>			25.00%	3.70%	3.23%	11.70%
	<i>% de renglón</i>			81.82%	9.09%	9.09%	27.50%
F(x)		Hombr e	Conflicto muy leve	3	0	3	6
	<i>% de columna</i>			8.33%	0.00%	9.68%	6.38%
	<i>% de renglón</i>			50.00%	0.00%	50.00%	21.43%
F(x)		Hombr e	Problema muy grave	1	0	1	2
	<i>% de columna</i>			2.78%	0.00%	3.23%	2.13%

Sexo x Actualmente estás viviendo un problema o conflicto x Grado de dificultad del conflicto o problema x Diagnóstico ansiedad	Sexo	Grado de dificultad del conflicto o problema	Con ansiedad	Diagnóstico dudoso de ansiedad	Sin ansiedad	Total de renglón
<i>% de renglón</i>			50.00%	0.00%	50.00%	25.00%
F(x)	Hombre	Problema pequeño	4	7	4	15
<i>% de columna</i>			11.11%	25.93%	12.90%	15.96%
<i>% de renglón</i>			26.67%	46.67%	26.67%	26.79%
F(x)	Total hombre		36	27	31	94
<i>% de columna</i>			24.32%	26.73%	27.93%	
<i>% de renglón</i>			38.30%	28.72%	32.98%	
F(x)= Frecuencia simple, %= por ciento o porcentaje						
Fuente: Elaboración propia mediante un instrumento en línea. 2019.						

De los 1814 alumnos observados, 360 (19.85%) de ellos presentaron un conflicto o problema, de éstos, 148 (41.1%) se diagnosticó con ansiedad, de ellos 112 (75.68%) son mujeres y 36 (24.32%) son hombres. De la misma manera, las mujeres con ansiedad (112) y Conflictos muy leves son 6 que representan el 5.36%, con Conflicto leve 16 y son el 14.29%, con Problema pequeño 15 son el 13.39%, con Problema regular 53 y representan el 47.32%, Problema grave 19 con 16.96% y Problema muy grave se cuentan 3 las cuales representan 2.68%.

Por su parte, los hombres con ansiedad (36) y Conflictos muy leves son 3 que representan el 8.33%, con Conflicto leve 5 y son el 13.89%, con Problema pequeño 4 son el 11.11%, con Problema regular 14 y representan el 38.89%, Problema grave 9 con 25% y Problema muy grave se cuentan 1 el cual representa 2.78%.

En esta información resalta la discrepancia que hay entre hombres y mujeres con ansiedad y problema calificado como regular, los cuales son 14 y 53 respectivamente; así como la cantidad de alumnos universitarios que no presentan ansiedad.

Tabla 10. Contraste entre sexos respecto a la vivencia de un problema o conflicto, grado de dificultad del problema o conflicto y del nivel de ansiedad

VARIABLES	Media mujeres	Media hombres	t	df	p
Actualmente estás viviendo un problema o conflicto	0.23	0.15	4.13	1812	0
Grado de dificultad del conflicto o problema	3.44	3.49	-0.32	358	0.7
Ansiedad	7.79	6.57	6.93	1812	0

t= valor de la prueba t de Student, df= grados de libertad, p= nivel de significancia (α)

Fuente: Elaboración propia mediante un instrumento en línea. 2019.

De acuerdo a la evidencia mostrada en la **Error! Reference source not found.**, que refiere el contraste entre sexos respecto a la vivencia de un problema o conflicto, grado de dificultad del problema o conflicto y el nivel de ansiedad, en alumnos del nivel medio superior universitario; se puede leer que las alumnas, al momento de responder el instrumento, presentan un problema o conflicto diferenciado significativamente de los estudiantes hombres. De la misma manera, ellas presentan un grado más alto de ansiedad que sus pares hombres.

En cuanto al nivel de dificultad del conflicto o problema, entre mujeres y hombres no hay evidencia empírica de diferencia.

Tabla 11. Importancia de las palabras que mencionan las mujeres al indicar cómo resuelven los problemas o conflictos

Palabra	Importancia
Pensar	100
Hablo	98.71
Solución	90.58
Dejo	69.8
Pase	67.93
Intento	62.01
Ayuda	59.91
Espero	53.11
Busco	50.63

Fuente: Elaboración propia mediante un instrumento en línea. 2019.

En la **Error! Reference source not found.**, se muestra la importancia de las palabras que mencionan las mujeres que tienen problemas

o dificultades, la relevancia de las palabras es: *pensar*, como la palabra de mayor relevancia (100%) y de acuerdo con la distancia respecto a esta, se encuentran *hablo* 98.71%, *solución* 90.58%, *dejo* 69.8%, *pase* 67.93%, *intento* 62.01%, *ayuda* 59.9% y *espero* con 53.11% respecto a *pensar* que es la palabra más mencionada.

Se puede observar la relevancia que le imponen las alumnas con ansiedad y problemas o dificultades, al hecho de dedicarle energía de pensamiento a la solución de sus problemas o conflictos, ellas hablan para solucionar sus problemas, dejan que pasen, intentan solucionarlos, piden ayuda, esperan su solución y buscan quién les proporcione soporte, como se observa en la **Error! Reference source not found.**

Tabla 12. Componentes principales del campo léxico de las alumnas con ansiedad al indicar cómo resuelven los problemas o conflictos

Palabras	Comp1	Comp2	Comp3	Comp4	Comp5	Comp6	Comp7	Comp8	Comp9
Pase	0.02	0.00	0.11	-0.06	-0.02	0.03	-0.06	-0.06	0.25
Busco	0.02	0.00	-0.02	-0.04	-0.05	-0.07	0.02	0.30	0.10
Intento	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.15	-0.21	-0.04	-0.04	0.01
Hablo	0.05	-0.15	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Pensar	0.11	0.07	0.02	0.10	-0.01	0.04	0.00	0.02	0.01
Solución	0.08	0.00	-0.09	-0.12	0.01	0.03	0.01	-0.07	-0.01
Ayuda	0.01	0.00	-0.01	0.01	-0.21	-0.13	-0.02	-0.10	-0.03
Espero	0.00	-0.01	0.01	-0.01	-0.01	0.03	-0.27	0.07	-0.12
Dejo	0.03	-0.01	0.11	-0.07	0.00	-0.01	0.09	0.04	-0.24

Fuente: Elaboración propia mediante un instrumento en línea. 2019.

Al practicarle el análisis de descomposición de valores singulares a las estrategias de afrontamiento que las mujeres alumnas del nivel medio superior de la universidad diagnosticadas con ansiedad, tienen para solucionar sus problemas o dificultades, se observa aquí nueve componentes léxicos principales, denominados “Cognitivo positivo” (1), “Cognitivo inexpressivo” (2), “Dejar pasar negativo” (3), “Pensar negativo” (4), “Intento sin ayuda” (5), “Sin afrontamiento” (6), “Retención” (7), “Búsqueda de pre afrontamiento” (8) y “No dejar pasar” (9).

Con los campos léxicos latentes se obtiene la jerarquización de las estrategias de afrontamiento siguiente.

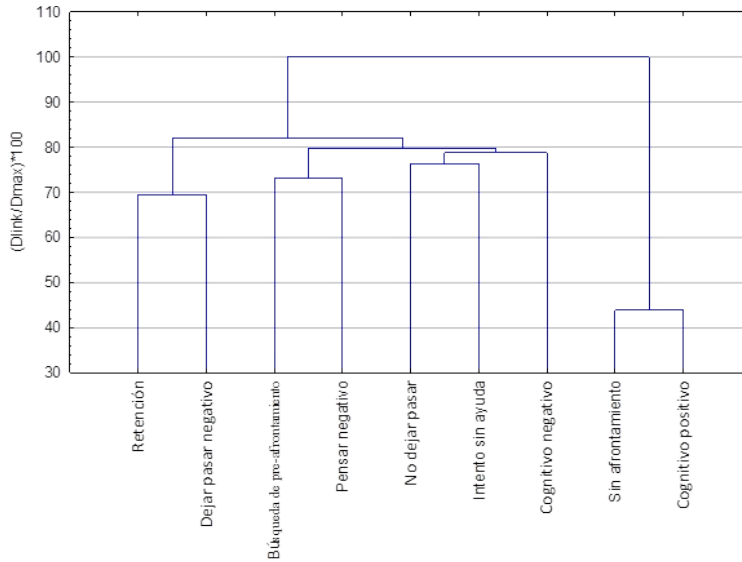


Figura 1. Diagrama de jerarquización para las nueve estrategias de afrontamiento

En la figura anterior se observa la composición de la taxonomía de las estrategias que tienen las alumnas del bachillerato universitario que son diagnosticadas con ansiedad y refieren tener un problema o conflicto al momento de responder al instrumento.

En esta figura, se pueden observar dos objetos mayores como rasgo de afrontamiento. Uno refiere al Afrontamiento prospectivo, el cual se conforma de estrategias denominadas “sin afrontamiento”, pues las alunas no buscan, no intentan y no solicitan ayuda; así mismo, se agrupa la estrategia de afrontamiento “cognitivo positivo”, pues ellas prefieren hablar, pensar y solucionar sus conflictos o problemas.

Un segundo componente presenta tres vertientes de rasgos, en el primero se agrupan las características de afrontamiento de “no dejar pasar”, “ideacional con tendencia negativa” y la característica de afrontamiento denominado “cognitivo evasivo”.

De la primera característica del segundo componente, se observa la estrategia “manejo y control de problemas” de la cual se desglosan dos rasgos de afrontamiento, la “retención”, cuya característica es no dejar pasar el problema ni esperar soluciones a los conflictos. La segunda estrategia de esta característica es la denominada “liberación”, la cual se destaca por dejar pasar los problemas o dificultades, no esperar su solución ni quedarse mucho tiempo con ellos.

La segunda cualidad de la vertiente “Afrontamiento reservado”, es la “ideacional con tendencia negativa”, la cual presenta dos afrontamientos, el primero es el denominado “búsqueda de pre-afrontamiento”, el cual se

distingue por buscar, pero no solucionar el problema o dificultad y sin pedir ayuda. Así mismo, se configura en esta cualidad, la estrategia de “pensar negativo”; el cual se distingue por que las alumnas piensan el afrontamiento a un problema o dificultad y dejan pasar la solución de éste.

La tercera característica de la vertiente de “Afrontamiento reservado”, se denomina “cognitivo evasivo” ya que presenta los rasgos de afrontamiento denominados “evasivo” y “cognitivo inexpresivo”; el “evasivo”, se caracteriza por poseer dos tipos de afrontamiento, el “no dejar pasar” y el de “intento sin ayuda”; el primero, la estrategia de “no dejar pasar”, las alumnas no esperan ni dejan pasar el problema o conflicto; en el segundo, “intento sin ayuda” o auto soportado, se describe como la estrategia de afrontamiento que no deja pasar el problema o dificultad pero no intenta solucionarlo ya que no busca ni pide ayuda, presenta ideación iterativa con el problema o conflicto.

Por último, se presenta la cualidad del “afrontamiento reservado”, la cualidad del rasgo de afrontamiento denominado, “cognitivo evasivo”, la estrategia “cognitiva inexpresiva”, describe a las alumnas con diagnóstico de ansiedad y con problemas o dificultades, como personas que piensan en el suceso, pero que no lo comunican.

Conclusión

Con base en los resultados expuestos anteriormente, se puede concluir sobre los estados emocionales de los estudiantes del nivel medio superior de la Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila que dos de cada 10 estudiantes indican tener un problema en algún nivel de dificultad, el resto indica no tener retos que atender. Cerca de la mitad de los alumnos, indica tener un problema pequeño a tener en cuenta. Cerca de una quinta parte de los alumnos del nivel medio superior, presentan síntomas ansiedad.

De acuerdo con la evidencia, el diagnóstico de ansiedad depende del sexo del estudiante, presentando las mujeres mayor incidencia de ansiedad.

Vinculando la vivencia de un problema con diferentes grados de dificultad y el sexo, se observa que casi una quinta parte de las mujeres con ansiedad indica tener un problema grave o muy grave; del mismo modo, los hombres con ansiedad y que indican tener un problema en algún nivel de dificultad, son casi un tercio de ellos.

Las mujeres estudiantes del nivel medio superior universitario superan a los hombres en lo referente a la vivencia de algún problema o dificultad, del mismo modo, obtienen puntajes más altos en las pruebas de ansiedad.

Las mujeres con ansiedad y con problemas expresados, suelen abordar su situación mayormente hablando y pensando en ellos para

solucionarlos. Entre el pensar y el hablar, para solucionar un problema, el buscar soluciones se encuentra a media distancia; así mismo, las mujeres prefieren pensar y hablar antes de buscar una solución. También, las mujeres del nivel medio superior universitario que presentan ansiedad y un problema declarado para resolver utilizan nueve estrategias de afrontamiento con dos rasgos predominantes, denominados “Afrontamiento prospectivo” y “Afrontamiento reservado” con la siguiente estructura de características y sus respectivas estrategias.

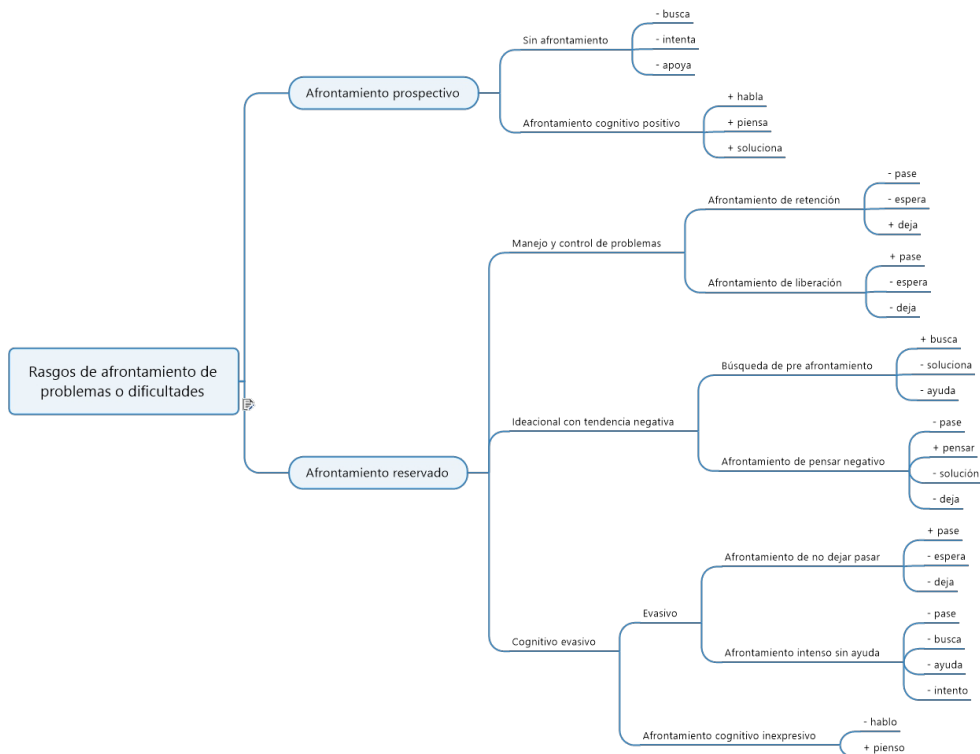


Figura 2. Rasgos de afrontamiento de problemas o dificultades de alumnas universitarias con ansiedad y con problema expresado.

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ESJ Social Sciences

Exploring the Lived Experiences of Inclusive Education Teachers Handling Students With Intellectual Disability: A Mixed Method Approach

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p90](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p90)

Submitted: 25 January 2021

Accepted: 31 March 2021

Published: 30 April 2021

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Cite As:

Sanchez, RS., Chua, L., and Melgar, BR. (2021). Exploring the Lived Experiences of Inclusive Education Teachers Handling Students With Intellectual Disability: A Mixed Method Approach. *European Scientific Journal*, ESJ, 17(12), 90. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p90>

Abstract

This paper focuses on exploring the lived experiences of inclusive education teachers handling students with intellectual disability in terms of their stressors, coping mechanisms, fulfilling experiences, and opportunities. A mixed method using questionnaire and one-on-one interview were employed in gathering the needed quantitative and qualitative data from the 13 purposively chosen respondents. Frequency and simple weighted mean were used in interpreting the quantitative data, while the Groenewald's process of phenomenological analysis was employed to extract themes from the qualitative data. Results revealed that the students' behavioral issues were the only potential stressors of the inclusive teachers. They coped via using cognitive, social, and physical coping resources. Students' positive transformations, understanding the child through team teaching, and road to salary augmentation were the themes generated as their fulfilling experiences and opportunities. It is recommended that schools offering inclusive

education should equip their teachers with pedagogical knowledge in handling the behavioral issues of students with special needs through providing relevant trainings.

Keywords: Inclusive education, lived experiences, stressors, coping mechanisms, fulfilling experiences and opportunities

Introduction

Inclusive education has been the trend in special education all over the world. Most countries across the world are adopting this move in education. Philippine is one of those countries which adopted this curricular innovation. However, the implementation of inclusive education in both public and private schools across the country was never a cinch to the teachers.

There are quite a number of public and private schools in Cebu City and across parts of the Philippines which offer inclusive education. Agbenyaga (2007) elaborated that the lack of skills and professional competence to effectively deliver the lesson to the special-need children may impose frustrations to teachers in inclusive classroom. Hence, having a degree and trainings in special education (SPED) is of great advantage to a teacher in an inclusive classroom.

Unfortunately, there are teachers accommodating learners with special needs without sufficient background in special education in some schools in Cebu City. The researchers had known of few inclusive education teachers who are non-SPED graduates handling students with intellectual disability. These teachers shared their sentiments, burnouts and stressors in handling students with special needs and regular students in one setting.

One of the problems they encountered is the deficiency of professional competence in teaching students with special needs in concurrence with the regular students. They asserted that they were not trained during their undergraduate years with the pedagogical practices in handling special students. Also, providing differentiated instruction, varying visual materials, and assessing special students' learning had caused them frustration. However, some non-SPED teachers reported that they were sent to seminars but asserted that those were inadequate for them to feel confident in teaching and dealing with the special needs of learners. Their lack of skills added up to their burnouts. Moreover, these inclusive education teachers also encountered problems in managing the class. They reported that the lack of background towards special education greatly affects their performance and effectiveness as teachers. With these, they explained that their level of confidence as inclusive education teachers was low. It is for these shared sentiments and burnouts this study was carried out.

The findings of this study served as cognizance among the school administrators of the lived experiences of the inclusive education teachers. This study attempts to capture their experiences in handling students with intellectual disability in terms of their potential stressors, coping mechanisms, and their perceived fulfilling experiences and opportunities.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to explore the lived experiences of inclusive education teachers handling student with intellectual disability (ID). Specifically, this study sought to determine their: (1) profile in terms of baccalaureate degree/ educational attainment, number of years teaching, number of students with ID in the class, and relevant trainings; (2) stressors in terms of administrative issues, support issues, student behaviour issues, classroom issues, parent issues, personal competence issues, professional competence issues, and personal competence issues; (3) teachers' coping mechanism in terms of cognitive, social, emotional, spiritual/philosophical, physical; and (4) fulfilling experiences and opportunities.

Literature Review

Teaching is indeed a fulfilling profession. For some, it is considered as a noble calling rather than a profession. Its responsibilities do not limit facilitating learning, but it extends beyond developing the learners holistically. These are reasons which affirm that teachers hold a very stressful accountability. Teaching profession ranked in the top quartile as one of the most complicated professions (Snowman & Biehler, 2000). Teaching is one of the top five most-stressful career choices and has the highest rate of career shifting to other professions (Lewis et al., 2011). Leitwood and Riehl (2003) also supported the contention that teaching in general is a stressful occupation.

For the past few decades, education among many countries had its major shift from separating students with special needs to include them in the regular classroom. This is called inclusive education or inclusion which in most countries is supported on a legal basis. Brackenreed (2011) negated that teaching SPED students together with the regular ones doubles the stress than teaching regular students solely. Hence, inclusion is a major stressor of the teachers.

When there is an imbalance between one's resources in coping with one's occupational demands in the work field, a stress occurs (Esteve, 2000; Wood & McCarthy, 2002; Troman & Woods, 2001). If these demands tend to exceed one's coping resources, they are likely to experience burnouts. A prolonged agony of occupational stress may deteriorate one's quality of teaching (Jaoul et al., 2004).

One of the major challenges any educational institution is facing in the recent years is the implementation of inclusive education (Sharma & Desai, 2002). The stress and burnouts are caused by parent-teacher relationship, student behavioural problems, co-worker relationship conflict, and the demands of schools and parents (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007). The lack of support system from the administration and co-workers are few of the

stressors of inclusion teachers (Sloan & LaPlante, 2002). Alghazo and Gaad (2004) averred that there is a very minimal support for inclusion. This usually occurs when learners have more challenging conditions and support needs (Talmor et al., 2005).

The lack of professional training and achievement are also contributing factors to the stress of the inclusive education teachers (Salend, 1998; Friedman, 2000; Izci, 2005). Nevertheless, there are some inclusion teachers who had trainings related to special education but raised their apprehension. These educators expressed that their trainings were not adequate to prepare them to teach inclusive classrooms (Danne & Smith, 2000). The lack of training in special education causes one to hold negative attitude towards inclusion (Leatherman & Niemeyer, 2005). Teachers having apprehensive attitudes may implement activities that promote exclusion rather than inclusion inside the classroom (Sharma et al., 2008). On the other hand, teachers with positive attitudes towards inclusion have higher tendencies to employ teaching strategies which accommodate individual differences (Forlin, 2010; Campbell et al., 2003).

With those stressors faced by inclusive education teachers, abundant resources of coping mechanisms are needed. Coping mechanism is the ability to handle stress more effectively (Hopkins, 2014). Most of the inclusion teachers solved their day-to-day stressors in the work field by actively finding solution to the problem, receiving social and emotional support from fellow teachers, reorganizing teaching situation, having active parental involvement, and changing pedagogical strategies (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007). Additionally, maintaining a positive self-image and outlook in life, constantly believing and motivating oneself may help inclusive education teachers cope with their stressors (Nketsia et al., 2016).

Methodology

Mixed method was utilized in the study as it involves both quantitative and qualitative data. To gather the quantitative data on the respondents' stressors and coping mechanism, the Inclusive Education Teacher Stress and Coping Mechanism Questionnaire by Forlin (2001) was adopted. The tool was modified making it a localized version. It is a likert-typed questionnaire that has three (3) parts. The first part aims to gather personal information from the respondents. The second part gathers data on their stressors and the third gathers their coping mechanisms. One-on-one interview with open-ended questions was carried out to gather qualitative data on their fulfilling experiences and opportunities. The interview guide questions underwent scrutiny and validation check by two (2) experts.

However, below are the sample guide questions:

1. How is your experience in handling students with intellectual disability in an inclusive setting?
2. How do you describe your life as an inclusive education teacher?
3. How do you describe your usual day? Please elaborate.
4. What is/are your greatest accomplishment/s as an inclusive education teacher handling students with intellectual disabilities?

This study totally involved 13 inclusive education teachers handling students with intellectual disability from private and public schools of Cebu City, Philippines. They were determined using purposive sampling. During the data collection process, they were asked to answer the questionnaire first. After then, a one-on-one interview was performed that lasted for 30-40 minutes with their consent.

The collected quantitative data were presented in a tabular form. Their scores were analyzed and interpreted through getting the weighted mean. The qualitative data were interpreted using thematic approach following Groenewald’s process of phenomenological data analysis which observes 5 phases: (1) bracketing and coding of responses; (2) delineating units of meaning; (3) formulation of themes using the clustered units of meaning; (4) summarizing the verbatim answers, validating and modifying it as necessary; and (5) extracting general themes (Groenewald, 2004).

Results and Discussions for Quantitative Data

Table 1 below presents the profile of the inclusive education teachers handling students with intellectual disability.

Table 1. Respondents’ Profile

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
School	Private	6	46.15%
	Public	7	53.85%
No. of Students with ID in the Classroom	1-2	10	76.92%
	3-5	2	15.38%
	6-7	1	7.69%
Educational Attainment	Non-SPED Graduate	7	53.85%
	Non-SPED Graduate w/ MAED units	3	23.08%
	SPED Graduate	0	0.00%
	SPED Graduate w/ MAED units	3	23.08%

No. Years of Teaching	Less than a year	2	15.38%
	1-5	4	30.77%
	6-10	2	15.38%
	11-15	1	7.69%
	16 up	4	30.77%
Relevant Training	0	4	30.77%
	1-2	8	61.54%
	3-4	1	7.69%
n=13			

As depicted in Table 1, seven (7) of the respondents were teaching in private school, while six (6) were teaching in public schools. The most number of students with ID included in an inclusive classroom is seven (7), while the least is one (1). This result supplies evidence that there are more students with ID being integrated in private inclusive classrooms than in public inclusive classroom in Cebu City, Philippines. With this, public inclusive education teachers most probably experience fewer problems than those private inclusive education teachers as they have smaller quantity of students with ID in their classrooms. In comparison, they only need less amount of time for adjustment, individual education plan (IEP), and lesson plan making.

With respect to educational attainments and relevant trainings, results revealed that there are more non-SPED graduates handling inclusion than those SPED graduates. Moreover, the results showed that five (5) of the respondents have taught inclusive classes for more than 10 years and all of them have attended less than 5 relevant trainings. This means that the schools they are teaching have not been procuring them with trainings on teaching inclusive classrooms. The lack of training in dealing with both regular students and special-need students in one setting imposed stresses and burnouts towards inclusion teacher, causing them to hold negativities on inclusion implementation (Leatherman & Niemeyer, 2005).

Table 2 below shows the administrative issues as contributing stressors of inclusive education teachers.

Table 2. Administrative Issues Stressors

Descriptions	Weighted Mean	Remarks
Funding	1.54	
Obtaining child's relevant information	2.15	Does Not Apply
Record keeping	2.15	Not
Accountability of educational outcomes	2.38	Stressful
Support Personnel Coordination	2.31	
Routines	2.31	
Physical Adaptation	2.00	
IEP Planning	2.92	Somewhat
Adjusting units plans	2.92	Stressful
Taking the responsibility of the child's welfare	2.85	
Grand Mean	2.35	Not Stressful
n=13	Legend: 1.0- 1.8 = does not apply 1.9 - 2.6 = not stressful 2.7 - 3.4 = somewhat stressful 3.5 - 4.2 = quite stressful 4.3 – 5.0 = extremely stressful	

Out of ten (10) administrative stressors, only three (3) were perceived as somewhat stressful by the inclusive education teachers. In total, the administrative issues have a grand mean of 2.35 which is not stressful. Clear enough, the inclusive education teachers' accountability on the student's learning and paper-work responsibilities did not impose significant stress and burnout on them. This finding contradicts the claim of Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2007) that papers-works related responsibilities and the pressure of child's learning compels stress on the inclusion teachers. It is possible that on the first few months of teaching, these paper-work related responsibilities could be the sources of stress. However, after few months of adjusting and getting use to the teaching routines, these responsibilities were not anymore perceived as stressors.

Table 3 below depicts the support issues as potential stressors of inclusive education teachers.

Table 3. Support Issues Stressors

Descriptions	Weighted Mean	Remarks
Accessing speech therapy	1.69	Does Not Apply
Speech and language	1.62	
Occupational therapy	1.92	Not Stressful
Physical therapy	1.85	
Resource teacher	2.08	
Allocating teacher aid	1.85	
Employing teacher aid	1.85	
Replacement during sick leave	2.00	
Childs' educational resources	2.77	
Class Resources	3.00	
Grand Mean	2.06	Not Stressful
n=13	Legend: 1.0- 1.8 = does not apply 1.9 - 2.6 = not stressful 2.7 - 3.4 = somewhat stressful 3.5 - 4.2 = quite stressful 4.3 – 5.0 = extremely stressful	

Among the ten (10) support issues, only two (2) were perceived as somewhat stressful. It obtained a weighted mean of 2.06 which means not stressful. In general, the support issues do not entail stress towards the inclusive education teachers. They less likely encountered difficulty in finding support for educational resources and accessing paraprofessionals in special education. Intellectual disability, depending on its case, requires less to no support from the paraprofessionals such as the physical therapist, occupational therapist, and speech therapist in general. These students usually require task analysis of academic instruction and self-help skills trainings (Inciong et al., 2007). With this, support issues do not act as stressors for the inclusive education teachers.

Table 4 below presents the students' behavior issues as contributing stressors of inclusive education teachers.

Table 4. Student Behavior Issues Stressors

Descriptions	Weighted Mean	Remarks
Limited speech	2.54	
Manipulative	2.62	
Over loving	2.31	Not
Unaware of danger	2.54	Stressful
Poor mobility	2.15	
Verbally rude	2.62	
Unpredictable reactions	2.38	
Runs away	2.62	
Behaviour problems	2.38	
Short attention span	3.00	
Poor communication skills	2.69	
Attention seeking	2.77	Somewhat
Hyperactive	3.15	Stressful
Withdrawn	2.92	
Dominates classmates	2.69	
Disturbs others	2.91	
Throws tantrums	3.40	
Physically attacks	2.85	
Inappropriate social skills	3.73	Quite Stressful
Grand Mean	2.77	Somewhat Stressful

n=13

Legend: 1.0- 1.8 = does not apply
 1.9 - 2.6 = not stressful
 2.7 - 3.4 = somewhat stressful
 3.5 - 4.2 = quite stressful
 4.3 – 5.0 = extremely stressful

Out of the nineteen (19) indicators under the student behaviour issues, results indicated that there were ten (10) issues which were perceived by the teachers as somewhat and quite stressful. In its totality, student behaviour issues got a weighted mean of 2.77 which is somewhat stressful. This confirms that inclusive education teachers encountered dilemma in addressing students' misbehavior in the classroom. Few respondents shared that they were having difficulty with their students with intellectual disability being too sensitive, portraying childish attitude, and sometimes aggressive

behavior. This confirms the finding of the study of Agbenyega (2007). He found out that the teachers’ major concern was on their lack of skills to effectively deal with special-need students in an inclusive setting.

Table 5 below presents the classroom issues as potential stressors of inclusive education teachers.

Table 5. Classroom Issues Stressors

Descriptions	Weighted Mean	Remarks
Hygiene issues	2.46	
Child’s interpersonal relationship with other students	2.54	Not Stressful
Sexual behaviour	2.54	
Time available for other students	2.62	
Monitoring other students	2.38	
The class is disrupted by the child	2.31	
Grand Mean	2.48	Not Stressful
n=13	Legend: 1.0- 1.8 = does not apply 1.9 - 2.6 = not stressful 2.7 - 3.4 = somewhat stressful 3.5 - 4.2 = quite stressful 4.3 – 5.0 = extremely stressful	

As portrayed in Table 5, results show that all of the issues under classroom category got an average of 2.62 and less. This reveals that the inclusive education teachers perceived them as not stressful. This notifies that in its totality, inclusive education respondents experienced insignificant difficulty in monitoring the students’ relationship with their peers in the classroom. Those SPED-graduate teachers are most likely to possess positive attitudes in managing the inclusive classrooms; thus, they are more successful (Orel et al., 2004). In contrast, those who are not are expected to have dealt this issue on their first few months of teaching.

Table 6 below portrays the parent issues as potential stressors in teaching inclusive classrooms as perceived by the inclusive education teachers.

Table 6. Parent Issues Stressors

Descriptions	Weighted Mean	Remarks
Excessive meetings	1.77	Does Not
Parent/teacher tension	1.69	Apply
Limited contact	2.15	
Parent(s) in the classroom	1.85	Not
Lack of understanding	1.92	Stressful
Lack of understanding of the child's prognosis	1.92	
Unwillingness of the parent(s) to support	1.92	
Socio-economic disadvantage	2.00	
Grand Mean	1.90	Not Stressful
n=13	Legend:	1.0- 1.8 = does not apply
		1.9 - 2.6 = not stressful
		2.7 - 3.4 = somewhat stressful
		3.5 - 4.2 = quite stressful
		4.3 – 5.0 = extremely stressful

All of the indicators under parent issues got a weighted mean of 2.15 and less than that means not stressful and does not apply. The inclusive education teachers did not have dilemma in dealing and collaborating with parents. They did not encounter difficulty in seeking help and reporting the child's strengths, weaknesses, and progress to the parents. Additionally, it can be implied that the inclusive education teachers were comfortable and open towards discussing with the parents any concerns regarding the learning of the students. This finding contradicts the claim of Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2007) that the parent-teacher relationship is an additional stress to the inclusion teachers.

Table 7 below portrays the professional competence issues as potential stressors in teaching inclusive classrooms.

Table 7. Professional Competence Issues Stressors

Descriptions	Weighted Mean	Remarks
Insufficient pre-service education	2.15	
Inadequate in-service education in SPED	2.07 2.46	Not Stressful
Inadequate in-service education in meeting the child’s educational needs	2.23	
Sustaining an active learning environment	2.62	
Determining how much to challenge the child	2.54	
Confusing laziness with the child’s inability	2.31	
Ability to teach other students effectively		
Grand Mean	2.34	Not Stressful

n=13

Legend: 1.0- 1.8 = does not apply
 1.9 - 2.6 = not stressful
 2.7 - 3.4 = somewhat stressful
 3.5 - 4.2 = quite stressful
 4.3 – 5.0 = extremely stressful

Overall, the professional competence issues gained a weighted mean of 2.34. This indicates that it did not inflict stress towards the inclusive education teachers. Though most of the respondents were non-SPED graduates, their professional competence in teaching inclusive classrooms was not considered as stressful. However, they reported that during the first few months of teaching inclusive classrooms, professional competence was deemed questionable. Nevertheless, during the later months when they have already adjusted the routines, teaching inclusive classes was not perceived as stressful anymore. They shared that seeking solace and assistance from their co-teachers contributed to their speedy adjustment. This contradicts the assertion of Agbenyaga (2007) that the lack of skills and professional competence as well as the insufficient prior exposure and knowledge in special education (Izci, 2005) can adversely affect the effectiveness of the inclusive education teacher.

Table 8 below displays the personal competence issues as potential stressors in teaching inclusive classrooms.

Table 8. Personal Competence Issues Stressors

Descriptions	Weighted Mean	Remarks
Meeting the child's needs	2.23	
Undertaking tasks associated with the child's condition e.g. toileting	1.42	Not Stressful
Empathising with parents	2.15	
Responding to the child's personality	2.54	
Maintaining the child's safety	2.15	
Maintaining the safety of the other children	2.31	
Meeting the parent(s) expectations	2.54	
Socio-economic disadvantage	2.23	
Grand Mean	2.26	Not Stressful
n=13	Legend: 1.0- 1.8 = does not apply 1.9 - 2.6 = not stressful 2.7 - 3.4 = somewhat stressful 3.5 - 4.2 = quite stressful 4.3 – 5.0 = extremely stressful	

As exuded on the table, all of indicators under personal competence issues are having weighted mean of 2.54 and less. Likewise, its total weighted mean is 2.26 which denotes that inclusive education teachers did not experience difficulty in teaching students with intellectual disability in as far as their personal abilities, skills, knowledge, and self-efficacy are concerned. With this result, it can be implied that the respondents have high beliefs in their innate abilities to teach student with intellectual disabilities in inclusive classrooms.

Table 9 below illustrates the findings on the cognitive coping resources as one of the coping mechanisms employed by the inclusive education teachers.

Table 9. Cognitive Coping Resources

Descriptions	Weighted Mean	Remarks
Develop other interest outside school	3.38	
Concentrate on what has to be done next	3.69	Somewhat
Assure yourself that things will get well	3.85	Useful
Get the child moved to a special classroom or school	2.92	
Don't think it too much	2.85	
Enlist support	2.69	
Look on the bright side of things	3.92	Quite
Think about how a person you know would handle the situation	3.46	Useful
Come up with different solutions	3.77	
Make a plan of action	4.00	
Grand Mean	3.35	Somewhat Useful

n=13

Legend: 1.0- 1.8 = I do not use
 1.9 - 2.6 = not useful
 2.7 - 3.4 = somewhat useful
 3.5 - 4.2 = quite useful
 4.3 – 5.0 = extremely useful

The table reveals that all the indicators of cognitive coping mechanisms are useful as perceived by the respondents. Overall, the cognitive coping mechanisms gained a grand mean of 3.35 which means somewhat useful. Therefore, majority of the inclusive education teachers used cognitive coping resources as their way of coping with their stressors. They maintained a positive mindset and outlook towards teaching inclusive classes. They tend to focus more on what their students can do, instead of what the students cannot do. They tend to be optimistic in life in general. A good way to cope up with the currently-faced stress is by maintaining a positive mindset and outlook towards teaching students with exceptionalities (Antoniou et al., 2009).

Table 10 below reflects the cognitive social resources as one of the coping mechanisms employed by the inclusive education teachers.

Table 10. Social Coping Resources

Descriptions	Weighted Mean	Remarks
Discuss the situation with principal	3.15	
Ask a relative or friend for advice	3.38	Somewhat
Increase the number of support personnel	2.85	Useful
Keep others from know what how bad things are doing	2.85	
Discuss situation with specialist personnel	3.23	
Discuss situation with colleagues	3.00	
Look on the bright side of things	3.92	Quite
Discuss the situation with the child's parent(s)	3.62	Useful
Seek help & resources from teachers	3.54	
Seek professional help for the child	3.54	
Seek professional help for yourself		
Grand Mean	3.27	Somewhat Useful

n=13

Legend: 1.0- 1.8 = I do not use
 1.9 - 2.6 = not useful
 2.7 - 3.4 = somewhat useful
 3.5 - 4.2 = quite useful
 4.3 – 5.0 = extremely useful

The results show that the social coping resources obtained a total weighted mean of 3.27 which confirms that such coping resources were somewhat useful as perceived by respondents. The inclusive education teachers made use of their social networks to provide them support and comfort when stress arises. These social networks include co-teachers, immediate family, relatives, friends, and the students' parents. Inclusive education teachers find solace with their encountered stressors from their co-teachers (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007). As a result, teachers who felt bombarded with stressors confided on their colleagues. They were comforted and given suggestions as solutions to the problems they are encountering.

Table 11 below portrays the philosophical/spiritual coping resources as coping mechanisms utilized by the inclusive education teachers in combating their stressors.

Table 11. Philosophical/Spiritual Coping Resources

Descriptions	Weighted Mean	Remarks
Use alcohol or medication	1.62	I Do Not Use
Seek transfer from the school	1.54	
Resigning from teaching	1.38	
Meditation	1.21	Not Useful
Seek spiritual/ religious support	3.00	
Draw on past experiences	3.15	Somewhat
Leave the child to work independently	2.62	Useful
Maintain sense of humour	3.77	Quite Useful
Grand Mean	2.42	Not Useful

n=13

Legend: 1.0- 1.8 = I do not use
 1.9 - 2.6 = not useful
 2.7 - 3.4 = somewhat useful
 3.5 - 4.2 = quite useful
 4.3 – 5.0 = extremely useful

The most used philosophical/spiritual coping resource is maintaining a sense of humour with an average of 3.77 that has an interpretation of quite useful. This was confirmed by Brackenreed (2011) in his study on *“Identifying Teachers' Strategies for Coping with Perceived Stressors in Inclusive Classrooms.”* The results unveiled that maintaining a sense of humour and optimism consoles them as they face stressors.

Nonetheless, the least-used coping resource is resigning from teaching which has a mean of 1.38 (I do not use). This vividly implies that these inclusive education teachers oftentimes experienced hardship that imposed high-level stress; hence quitting teaching is never a choice for them. In its totality, philosophical/spiritual coping resources accumulated a weighted mean of 2.42 which is not useful. The inclusive education teachers perceived philosophical/spiritual coping resources as not effective in combating against their encountered stressors. In comparison with the cognitive and social coping mechanisms, philosophical/spiritual coping resources is less likely used.

Table 12 below illustrates the physical coping resources as coping mechanisms used by the inclusive education teachers in dealing with their stressors.

Table 12. Physical Coping Resources

Descriptions	Weighted Mean	Remarks
Physical exercise	2.92	Somewhat Useful
Grand Mean	2.92	Somewhat Useful
n=13	Legend: 1.0- 1.8 = I do not use 1.9 - 2.6 = not useful 2.7 - 3.4 = somewhat useful 3.5 - 4.2 = quite useful 4.3 – 5.0 = extremely useful	

Result unveiled that taking some form of physical exercises such as aerobics or sports is a useful coping mechanism in coping with all the stresses embedded as teacher of students with intellectual disability in an inclusive setting. As exuded on the table, it gained a mean of 2.92 which can be interpreted as somewhat useful. This finding signifies that doing some actions on promoting one’s physical wellbeing is a powerful tool in relaxing the mind and body. This therefore makes it an effective resource as a coping mechanism. Physical exercises do not only target the physical wellbeing of an individual, but rather it also improves the mental health of a person. It is believed that a healthy physical wellbeing decreases the level of negative response to stress and allows the teachers handling inclusive classes to recover faster.

Table 13 below illustrates the emotional coping resources as coping mechanisms used by the inclusive education teachers in dealing with their stressors.

Table 13. Emotional Coping Resources

Descriptions	Weighted Mean	Remarks
Share feelings with the children in class	2.15	I Do Not Use
Keep your feelings to yourself	1.92	
Apply for sick or stress leave	1.62	
Meditation	2.42	Not Useful
Write down your feelings	3.23	Somewhat Useful
Hope that the situation will go away or be over	3.23	
Grand Mean	2.43	Not Useful
n=13	Legend: 1.0- 1.8 = I do not use	

- 1.9 - 2.6 = not useful
- 2.7 - 3.4 = somewhat useful
- 3.5 - 4.2 = quite useful
- 4.3 - 5.0 = extremely useful

As illustrated in the table, the emotional coping resources accumulated a weighted mean of 2.43. This indicates that the inclusive education teachers perceived these coping resources as not useful in general. Most of the respondents did not find reducing stress through writing/journaling and keeping it by themselves as effective as the cognitive and social coping resources. They oftentimes shared their sentiments and burnouts with their colleague rather than keeping it to themselves. They usually shared their sentiments to gain emotional support and comfort. Between male and female teachers, it is the female teachers who are prone to using this kind of coping mechanism (Antoniou et al., 2009).

Results and Discussions for Qualitative Data Fulfilling Experiences and Opportunities

Adhering to Groenewald's process of phenomenological data analysis, there were two (2) extracted general themes of the inclusive education teachers' fulfilling experiences. These are the *child's positive transformations* and *understanding the child's nature through team teaching*. Likewise, one (1) general theme extracted as their perceived opportunities is *road to salary augmentation*.

Theme 1: Child's positive transformations

Teaching in an inclusive classroom has never been an easy task as it demands a lot of preparations. This task subsumes from preparing varied activities, teaching materials, and assessment tools that can cater both for the regular and SPED students. Managing students' behaviour is also a crucial responsibility of the teacher. However, amidst all the dedication and sacrifices an inclusive education teacher does just to gain extra guarantee of students' learning, a simple student improvement is celebrated. Being able to change students' inappropriate behavior, seeing academic improvement, and social skills improvement are considered as fulfillment. This is manifested by the following respondents.

"To be able to change their bad and inappropriate behaviour. That's already a big thing to me as a teacher with this kind of students." **Inclusive Education Teacher Respondent (IETR 2)**

"My most fulfilling experience is when the child learns from me. When they have score to present to their parents. When they easily get the lesson even without the help of the shadow teachers" **(IETR 2)**

“My greatest accomplish was when I let the child read. I actually had teary eyes back then... hahaha” (IETR 8)

Theme 2: Understanding the child through team teaching

A regular teacher faces regular students, a self-contained SPED teacher faces all SPED students, but an inclusive education teacher faces both regular and SPED students. This mere fact attests that inclusion is stressful by nature. Nonetheless, embarking on this kind of experience could also be fulfilling. Few respondents shared that one of their fulfilling experiences is to be able to finally understand the nature of their students with intellectual disability. This includes knowing the history of the child and understanding why they behave the way they do. Taking these inputs into consideration led the inclusion teachers to properly deal and teach their students. Consulting and asking suggestions from their colleagues had also helped the teachers to properly handle students with intellectual disability. This is evident by the following respondents:

“In so far, my fulfilling experience was when I finally learned how to handle students with special needs.” (IETR 10)

“During my undergraduate years, I was only exposed to regular children, I’ve learned a lot on how to deal with these children” (IETR 3)

“At first, it was hard for me but as time passed by, it was not that hard anymore because my co-teachers were helping me.” (IETR 4)

Theme 3: Road to salary augmentation

The perceived opportunity of inclusive education teachers having been able to handle students with special needs is that it could be a way to improve one’s living. Experience in teaching inclusive education could be one of the many means in ameliorating one’s source of income. This is a common presumption among most Filipino teachers, basing it on the notion that special education teachers are always in demand abroad especially in America. It is believed that SPED teachers have more chances of teaching abroad than other specializations of teaching. This is manifested by the following respondents:

“I’m going to tell the truth... hahaha. I’m going to Amerika and be a SPED teacher there.” (IETP 3)

“You can go abroad. You will be qualified in applying abroad.” (IETP 4)

“I think the opportunities that await me is that we all know that SPED teachers are really in demand in the Philippines and outside Philippines. If you want bigger salary, you can go to the US.” (IETP 11)

Conclusion and Recommendation

The inclusive education teachers, especially the non-SPED graduates, experienced difficulties in teaching inclusive classrooms during their first few months of teaching. After the adjustment period, out of the seven potential stressors, only the student behavior issues were perceived as stressors by the inclusive education teachers. They armored themselves with cognitive, social, and physical coping resources coupled with their perceived fulfilling experiences and opportunities to combat their stressors. It is therefore recommended that schools offering inclusive education should equip their teachers with pedagogical knowledge on how to handle students with special needs with their misbehavior through providing relevant trainings. It is important to note that the researchers experienced difficulty in looking for inclusive education teachers handling students with intellectual disability. Hence, due to the rarity of the respondents to be involved in the study, the insufficiency of the sample size was its limitation. The future researchers are therefore encouraged to replicate the study with sufficient sample size and to explore also the lived experiences of those teachers handling students with other types of exceptionalities such as autism, emotional and behavioral disabilities, multiple and severe disabilities, deafblindness, learning disabilities and other types of disabilities.

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Actions to Perfect Integrating Evaluation in The Training Of Physical Education Teachers

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p113](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p113)

Submitted: 20 February 2021

Accepted: 21 April 2021

Published: 30 April 2021

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Cite As:

Davila, AAI., Martel, AJG., and Gracian, OA. (2021). Actions to Perfect Integrating Evaluation in The Training Of Physical Education Teachers. European Scientific Journal, ESJ,17(12),113. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p113>

Abstract

Experience is shared in the application of actions aimed at improving the training of physical educators. It also highlights the evaluation as a substantial element in the training of the professional of physical culture at the Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua, Mexico. It takes the evaluation as a didactic category that allows integrating all the elements of the teaching-learning process and in its application to verify the effectiveness of the training process. This paper focuses on the elaboration of didactic actions to improve the professional performance of the Physical Culture of students through evaluations in real contexts. Methodologically, collaborative research was used as a variant of participatory action research and as a case study method. As a significant result, it was possible to elaborate and apply the actions to improve the integrative evaluation, which allows evaluating the integration of all the didactic elements in terms of practical performance.

Keywords: Evaluation, interdisciplinary evaluation, professional performance, teaching, teaching learning.

Introduction

The practice of the evaluation places its origins in Imperial China, with emphasis on the tests that were put into practice by introducing several tests of practical and academic skills to combat nepotism in the selection of state officials. According to research conducted by Dupuy and Hechavarria (2017), for similar reasons exams were introduced in the western world in the 19th century. It is also proposed that the school system incorporates several forms of execution to guide students, which in the first half of the twentieth century was related to the way individuals were selected to access the different educational programs.

Even though the pedagogical conceptions about evaluation are linked to the evolution of knowledge over time, it is due to the crisis in education and society that this topic began to give more interest since the second half of the twentieth century (Dupuy & Hechavarria, 2017).

In recent years, evaluation has been assumed as a didactic component of the teaching-learning process which requires a conception of knowledge integration that allows establishing a connection between the knowledge nodes of various disciplines and sciences.

In relation to the subject, it has been investigated in depth about the necessary teaching competences in the teaching-learning processes, especially linked to university studies of initial Teacher Education. An important group of these professional competences are those related to the subject of evaluation. This includes those that refer to the evaluation of student learning, as well as the evaluation of teaching performance and teaching-learning processes in the classroom (Hernán et al., 2019).

However, the evaluation based on interdisciplinary ensures that students not only put their theories into practice, but also have the space to apply in an integrated way the knowledge of various disciplines acquired during their training to their real performance. On the other hand Dupuy and Hechavarria (2017), Masero et al. (2018), Naranjo (2018), Salazar (2018), among others, affirm that despite the dissimilar research that is carried out on this regard, there are still gaps that gives the assumption that teachers have an insufficient domain of the theoretical-methodological reference on interdisciplinarity.

Based on their study results, they report inadequacies in the methodological treatment of interdisciplinary relationships from the year group, as well as in the use of the potential offered by the subjects for interdisciplinary work. It is scarce to take advantage of the possibilities offered by the interdisciplinary approach to teacher evaluations. As a result, it has not yet become a systematic activity of the teaching-educational process in the Facultad de Ciencias de la Cultura Física. Students have difficulties in relating or integrating knowledge in the solution of different

teaching situations. Therefore, the development of skills to solve teaching tasks with independence is limited, allowing them to determine the essence, establish links and relationships, and apply knowledge to new situations.

On the other hand, Dupuy and Hechavarria (2017) stated that the groups of years and pedagogical, although they try to respond to the preciseness of the curricula in relation to interdisciplinary evaluations, do not develop methodological activities for this purpose and only raise the knowledge nodes by taking the integrative exam as a reference. This is because interdisciplinary evaluations are not conceived in a systematic way during the whole semester, complicating the completion of the integrative exam. Given this problem, it becomes clear that there is no daily integrative exercise that determines the corresponding bases from each of the subjects taught to integrate the contents in each evaluation exercise.

Students have difficulties in relating or integrating knowledge in the solution of different teaching situations. As a result, the development of skills to independently solve teaching tasks is limited, allowing them to determine the essence, establish links and relationships and apply knowledge of new situations, which constitutes the fundamental problem of this study.

The above mentioned allows us to propose, as an objective, the elaboration of didactic actions to develop the interdisciplinarity in the evaluations of the Licenciatura en Educación Física. Hence, this is aimed at improving the professional performance of the graduates of the Degree in Physical Culture of the Facultad de Ciencias de la Cultura Física de Chihuahua.

Based on the above, it is considered that establishing didactic actions based on interdisciplinarity that takes into account the theory-practice relationship will improve the quality of the teaching-learning process validated in the practical performance of students.

Based on the foregoing, the study is considered important because it guarantees the training of teachers in the development of actions from the evaluation to develop interdisciplinary practices in students. Thus, this would establish the foundation of knowledge on scientific bases, based on the integration of the diversity of knowledge of the different disciplines, in order to promote ways of thinking with independence, creativity, and integrality of the contents that they learn. Also, it would further materialize in the delivery of training units or physical education classes or any other stage of the physical culture where this professional works.

Methodology

The study adopts the methodological approach of qualitative research based on the in-depth analysis of a case in a natural situation (Soto, 2015). In that sense, it was considered to use the case study as a design and the action

research method, understood as a reflexive process in which the teacher integrates and participates (Soto, 2015). The main tools used were the semi-directed interview, the field diary, the participatory observation, the video recording, and the interdisciplinary reflective dialogue.

To carry out the study, the UACH Facultad de Ciencias de la cultura Física was selected as a workspace. The development of the research procedure allowed us to consistently achieve the objectives of the study, which was developed in three stages:

I. Analysis and Characterization of Teaching Practice:

There were 46 class sessions of the subject "Theory and Methodology of Physical Education" taught in the Bachelor of Physical Education. The observation process was carried out by two professors. Its development took place in the first and second semester of the 2016-2017 academic years. Participating students attended the 7th and 8th semesters, respectively, with a frequency of two teaching activities per week. Likewise, these two teachers were interviewed using the ECOE technique (Martínez et al., 2005). The results of this stage served as input to arrive at the design of the interdisciplinary evaluation.

Results of the Teacher Interview

The focus of the interview was aimed at interdisciplinary evaluation in the performance, planning, execution and control of the physical activity process, and the treatment of the diversity of the teaching process in the classroom.

Seeking to respond to the integrative needs of teachers, the interview focused on ruling out those inadequacies that could hinder the evaluation process. The results are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Interview with teachers

Categories	Criteria	Results
Interdisciplinary evaluation	Integration	Content exchange, no relationship between subjects.
Attention to diversity	Relationship between the general theory of sport and the specific one of each	Lack of support resources to facilitate the scientific foundation.
Teaching link to practical reality	<i>Motivation</i>	The contents do not respond to real professional performance.

The category Interdisciplinary evaluation, integration criteria, showed the judgment of the teachers, who pointed out as the main difficulties of the students, the dosage of the load (volume and intensity ratio), the use of methods (discontinuous and continuous), the development of the activities through play (content-methods relationship), performance independence, and pedagogical communication.

The professors considered the evaluation to lack an interdisciplinary treatment, which makes the training of the student more complex. This is in addition to the fact that the preparation of the professors is totally disciplinary. Despite this, they attach great importance to the integral training of the physical education teacher, arguing that they are aware of the need to enhance this aspect of comprehensive evaluation in students based on the exchange of content of various disciplines in the teaching of physical activity.

They recognize the need for a clear and defined idea to ensure that student learning can meet the demands of the evaluation, so that everything taught acquires meaning and meaning to exercise its interdisciplinary function. This is corroborated when students have to apply their knowledge in practice, not being able to contribute significantly, and when they copy models that they have not generally lived.

The category link of teaching to practical reality, motivational criteria, showed that teachers consider that the evaluation should remain in a general framework, since the specificity is provided by the context in which the student performs. This indicates the segmentation between the general and the particular, pointing out the impossibility of learning the theoretical-methodological general. In addition, it points out that the singular accentuates the fact that the contents do not respond to real professional performance. This determines the need to establish strategies for teachers to conduct this process in a consistent manner, always in correspondence with their particular requirements and with a more specific orientation on methodological programs.

II. Design and Implementation of Actions to Improve the Integrative Evaluation: A collaborative group was formed. Immediately, the actions were designed and the proposal was initiated by establishing seminars and workshops to achieve proposals for the restructuring of programs. The training program was carried out in 60 hours of guided practice and 40 hours of autonomous practice. The organization of the work of the collaborative group took the form of dyads and triads.

III. Construction and Validation of Actions: They were designed and validated for the development and evaluation of competencies in the area of Physical Education, taking as a unit of analysis the didactic sequence. For the

construction of the training projects, the results of the analysis of the teaching practice were considered, as well as the interdisciplinary planning approach.

Results

Characterization of Teaching Practice

In the analysis of the teaching practice, it was observed that it considers the relationship between the general theoretical and methodological content of the training process, with the specificity of the sport chosen by each student. In that sense, the training oscillates between two opposite poles; the general and the specialized. Thus, it shows that none of them helps in a coherent performance of the teacher in training, which brings with it a partial link between teaching and the reality that the student will face in its future and consequently with the integrative evaluation.

It was found that the teaching tasks are oriented on the basis of the previous experiences that students should have according to the semester they are taking and the subjects prior to the subject Theory and Methodology of Physical Education. In general, there is a theoretical teaching detached from the practical, especially not observed in didactic planning. Elements that support an interdisciplinary approach to the theoretical-methodological elements of the chosen sport shows a separation of practice and content of matter with the reality that hinders the evaluation process.

Regarding teaching, it is evident that the professors observed that they conducted their dissertation on the subject from a physiological approach well above the level of student preparation, thereby causing disinterest and low levels of motivation. There are no spaces for the student to integrate the content into practical action.

As a result of its analysis in this article, the characterization of the teaching practice organizes its results in two dimensions: 1) Documentary analysis of classes prepared by the students, 2) Results of the teacher interview. For its analysis, different categories and criteria are used in each dimension.

In the documentary analysis of classes prepared by students, 54 classes developed by students at the end of the subject Theory and Methodology of Physical Education in the 2015-2016 academic years were analyzed. For its assessment, the following criteria were taken: the interdisciplinary approach during the formulation of the objectives, content selection and methodological indications, and method determination.

Table 2. Documentary analysis of training plans prepared by the students

Categories	Criteria	Results
Interdisciplinary evaluation	Integration	Lack of inter-matter articulation.
Theory-practice relationship	Contextualized	Little relationship between theory and performance.
Teaching didactics	Thematic content structure	Absence of logical order applicable to reality.

The Interdisciplinary Evaluation category, in its integration criteria, shows difficulties in determining the objectives of the class. This shows plans with a poor relationship between the objective and the content of the class, thereby affecting the interdisciplinary foundation, which creates a lack of inter-material articulation.

The results of the theory-practice relationship category, contextualized criterion, showed another important aspect, "the selection of activities", in which a certain bias was perceived. When related to the reality for which it is planned, it is seen from poor correspondence between the volumes established by the students in the class and the class system. The main difficulties are conditioned by the limitations of the students to fundamentally determine the contents to be used in their context, which shows little transfer of theory to practical performance.

The Teaching category of teaching, thematic content structure criteria, showed limitations when sequencing the classes. In this regard, difficulties are evident in establishing the duration of each methodological indication to determine the sequence in the creation of the motor habit.

These difficulties presented are mainly conditioned by the schematics with which the students carry it out. This is largely because students make mistakes in the sequencing of the classes that make up the methodological plan, and they do so with partial correspondence based on the type of activity demanded by the different ages and their contents. Furthermore, the absence of an order is also a perceived logical content applicable to reality.

Construction and Validation of Actions

The built actions are made up of ten theoretical and practical classes. For this purpose, the teachers were provided with support for the achievement of the evidence of performance and for the gradual construction of each project.

As a result of the workshops given to the teachers, the actions (guides for the student) were designed. The project is operationalized through the ten didactic sequences, which are described below.

Table 3. Schedule of activities for the application of interdisciplinary evaluation

Contents			
1	2	3	4
Methodological system of class planning	Teaching principles of physical education	Application of the game method in real contexts	Interdisciplinary evaluation in real contexts

It shows how the objective of the subject is fulfilled in four class frequencies, likewise, the coherence of the contents is guaranteed. Thus, this allows the establishment of the proposed methodological steps for the derivation of these contents from the general didactics to the specific elements of physical education.

Actions to Improve the Integrating Evaluation

1. The components of the preparation are identified (technical-tactical, psychological, physical, theoretical, and social), and are seen from the statistical calculation based on the percentages to determine the number of weeks for each period and time or space for evaluation.

2. The relationship of these spaces with the basic law of “bio adaptation” training (biological balance between the processes of synthesis and degeneration) is established based on the determination of activities (content-load-training methods). Approaching from biomechanics, the topics "energy systems" is linked to each objective of each class, as well as the description of joints of each body segment for the demonstration and correction of errors (methodological indications) as progress is made in each stage.

Discussion

The term “evaluation” refers to a generic concept that is constituted from the semantic point of view in a multiform activity that is consubstantial to any type of action aimed at causing changes in an object, situation or person (Dupuy & Hechavarria, 2017).

In this sense, among others, Naranjo (2018), Masero et al. (2018), Salazar (2018), and Hernán et al. (2019) agreed that the ultimate purpose of the evaluation processes is to be able to determine the level of congruence between the learning objectives and their achievements. They also need evaluation as a systematic activity that should be integrated into the

educational process and consequently allows an integrative analysis of the relationship between the results and the learning objectives provided in the subjects and the curriculum.

The evaluation allows the identification of the evolution that the professional in training is reaching, accurately measuring the achievement of the student during the teaching-learning process. This is done so that adjustments, variations, new methods, and means can be made to achieve the proposed objectives.

Therefore, the evaluation is considered as an integrative process that is carried out throughout the training process, permanently during the learning activities, that clarifies the students based on the criteria used to assess their performance. Hence, this makes the process of self-evaluation, its critical and self-critical spirit, more motivating and dynamic such that it assumes from its analysis new ways of learning and becoming the protagonist of its own learning.

In this sense, the idea that the student is a participant in this evaluation process is assumed, since they are placed in a position based on the need to integrate knowledge, values, and feelings in close connection with the objectives and contents that are evaluated.

The previous approach corroborates the need to achieve through the evaluation significant changes that fosters the developer learning. It is a way to achieve the objective of the study, establishes its links with the rest of the components of the teaching process, and has a productive content as long as it corresponds to the objective.

Cañadas et al. (2018) supported this approach by saying that university teachers must apply methodological and evaluative strategies that facilitate strengthening key competencies during training and that these are transferable to their future professional field. Not only must they have an impact on the learning of certain concepts, procedures, etc., but they must allow them to apply them in the classroom. Hence, perpetuating the outdated ways of focusing teaching should be avoided. It has been shown that graduates reproduce the same methodology they received during their training, instead of applying the theories they study at the university. However, this is a fact that justifies the need for students to perceive a real change in their training to subsequently adapt to the needs of the work context. Among these practices, evaluation is presented as a fundamental element for this objective.

The evaluation helps in evaluating the performance that the professional is reaching, and it precisely measures the achievement of the student during the teaching-learning process. This is done so that the adjustments, variations, new methods, and means can be applied to achieve the proposed objectives.

Therefore, the evaluation in its integrating character is carried out throughout the training process, permanently during the learning activities, using non-traditional forms of evaluation. Consequently, it also help students to know the criteria used to value their performance so as to help them review what they are doing and develop their capacity for self-evaluation, their critical and self-critical spirit.

In this sense, among others, Albear et al. (2016), Díaz et al. (2017), and Calderón and Soler (2016) coincided in addressing the need to promote teaching new ways of assessing based on originality as an element that leads to student motivation and consequently the apprehension of integrative content.

These authors consider evaluation as the stage of the educational process that has a regulatory function that intervenes in the students' relationship with knowledge of teachers with students, of students with each other, and of teachers and parents (Dupuy & Hechavarria, 2017).

On the other hand, Albear et al. (2016), Dupuy and Hechavarria (2017), and Díaz et al. (2017) considered that evaluation is an interactive process of reflection that results not only to corroborating the achievements made, but it also allows the student to participate in this process of self-evaluation of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

The evaluation is a process that guarantees the space of analysis in practicing the assimilation and appropriation of the contents taught in teaching, where the fulfillment of the objectives at each stage of the teaching process is measured (planning, evaluation intervention).

The model of the Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua (UACH) emphasizes teaching based on academic skills and is understood as the ability to mobilize cognitive resources to solve problems (Guzmán & Marín, 2013).

At the Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua, this training process is based on an educational model that considers competency-based education. It is also based on philosophical and methodological components that start from the analysis of the professional and educational fields where the career takes place, which allows the building of a broad vision of the profession of the physical educator and the search for the implementation of curricula focused on professional performance. In addition, this helps to maintain a balance between the knowledge, know-how, and being of the individual in training.

A curriculum is organized in such a way that the different competences that make up the career converge in relevant performances based on designs and operationalization of student-centered academic processes, flexibility, and the role of the teacher as facilitator. An educational model identified

with the opening fosters the academic mobility of students and teachers between programs, academic modalities, and institutions.

The curriculum for the career of Physical Culture is understood as a training process that integrates in the evaluation of the professional skills and the system of values of the career in each student, which must be expressed in their cognitive development through a reflective, critical, and self-critical thinking, as well as creative thinking that leads to an integral procedure. Thus, this makes it possible to educate and train a professional with communicative competencies (Dupuy & Hechavarria, 2017).

In this sense, Physical Culture students show obstacles in the performance of independent work and its fulfillment (a situation that limits their practical performance), and consequently the existing deficiencies identified in the objective relationship - content - method - evaluation.

The above is reflected based on the insufficient preparation from the perspective of the development of skills, knowledge, motor experience, and values to act in a leading way during their training process, assuming the evaluation as part of said process, based on the lack of systematicity in relation to evaluations of an integrative nature.

In this sense, Fernández (2010) emphasizes that the practice of interdisciplinarity requires that the teachers should learn to communicate, which implies a total modification of the university professor, who must be willing to be more than an expert in a discipline. He should be someone who, in addition to teaching, should become a trainer of subjects or personalities.

In principle, interdisciplinarity fosters the integration of theoretical and practical elements, allows the relationship of logical and analytical thinking of the Educational Teaching Process, as well as the linking of subjects and different disciplines.

On the other hand, Columbié et al. (2017), Dupuy and Hechavarria (2017), Jardaneh (2016), Lenoir (2013), Mendoza (2015), Morales (2017), Santos et al. (2017), Sosa et al. (2017), and Vieites and Caride (2017) agreed that interdisciplinarity in higher education is an important opportunity for students to make connections, raise and find answers to complex situations, and adjust learning in a comprehensive and better organized way that allows them to relate with what they are studying in the different disciplines. This is as a result of a new relationship that exists between the student and the teacher, and based on the training of teachers in interdisciplinary work. Here, he should closely associate theory with practice, which will contribute to creating new structures, new content, and new teaching methods.

These authors made assessments of the behavior in the training process of the Physical Culture and highlighted its importance in the selection of the contents from which these relationships are established. They defined interdisciplinarity operationally as a “didactic process aimed at the approach,

cooperation and integration of the diversity of knowledge of the different disciplines and sciences in order to promote ways of thinking with independence, creativity and integrality in pedagogical performance”.

Therefore, with these analysis, it is facilitated to direct concrete actions that guarantee the students to train and clarify their knowledge in a direct relationship with the praxis, nourish themselves of all the possibilities offered by the utility of the convergence areas according to the experiential contexts and situations, and develop professional skills that enhance their role in their own training.

In this sense, interdisciplinary relationships are defined as: a concept that refers to the interaction between two or more disciplines, the product of which enrich their conceptual frameworks, their procedures, their teaching, and research methodologies (Fragoso et al., 2017).

Interdisciplinary work involves a teaching-learning process where no additional or associated content is proposed, but rather it is necessary to establish connections and relationships in the modes of action, knowledge, skills, rules of conduct, feelings, values and integrity, and permanent change.

Therefore, interdisciplinarity is assumed as links or links of interrelation and cooperation between the objectives, contents, and methods of various disciplines, which the teacher uses to merge the knowledge of the students until it forms integrative skills. These skills can be verified in the process of evaluation with productive character so that they achieve professional skills that allow them to know, think and do in an integrated way.

This highlights the imperative need to enhance interdisciplinary evaluation to achieve the training of more competent professionals with skills that are applicable to real contexts.

Currently, teaching in higher education demands from teachers and students more comprehensive ways of thinking and acting, contributing to the creation of spaces that start from the practice and, depending on it, applying the theoretical knowledge that is shared in the classroom classes. Thus, this determines the development of professional skills that are expressed in the motor behavior of the Physical Culture professional in training.

In this sense, Llano et al. (2016) assume the need for the union of all disciplines or subjects, where interrelations are established between the contents, the methods, and other didactic components. In Llano's opinion, interdisciplinary cognitive nodes (NCI) can also be included within the avenues for the establishment of interdisciplinarity. It is the criterion that NCIs can be established among all didactic components: objectives, contents, methods, organizational forms, teaching, and evaluation means.

However, it also presents obstacles that hinder interdisciplinary work, highlighting that teacher training is disciplinary, so they must break a

formative paradigm when facing a new way of structuring their activity and interacting with other knowledge in which they do not because they are specialists. For this disciplinary training, they consider their discipline the most important within the curriculum in addition to the fact that the training curricula of professionals have an eminently disciplinary cut and, above all, the lack of experience in interdisciplinary work.

On the other hand, these authors report that interdisciplinarity is a goal never fully achieved and hence should be sought permanently. It is not just a theoretical approach; it is first and foremost a practice. Its perfectibility is carried out in practice and as real experiences of teamwork is found, its possibilities, problems, and limitations are exercised.

The methodological teaching preparation of teachers is crucial in the treatment of interdisciplinarity, since they must know in depth the profile of the graduate, the study plan of the career, the programs, calendar plans, and the organizational forms of teaching subjects in question to face linking and application actions. The debate, the organization, and proper planning of didactic actions to be carried out constitute essential premises to carry out the integration (Valdés et al., 2013).

They also propose the need to ensure that students assimilate new content and that they can integrate them. That is why it is important to define that the student in the teaching process is not only a receiver of concepts, but he must be able to analyze, interpret, and apply them. For this, the teacher through productive teaching methods should encourage and enable their active participation in the learning process.

Dupuy and Hechavarria (2017) pointed out that despite the dissimilar research that is carried out in this regard, there are still gaps that allow us to assume that teachers have insufficient mastery of the theoretical-methodological reference on interdisciplinarity in the year-of-the-year collective, as well as in the use of the potentials offered by the subjects. Therefore, this results in little use of the possibilities offered by the interdisciplinary approach to teacher evaluations. Nonetheless, it has not yet become a systematic activity of the teaching-educational process in the Faculty of Physical Culture.

In this same order of ideas, it states that interdisciplinarity has been widely studied and the proposals abound from diverse theoretical and methodological references. However, how to integrate knowledge into practice and the essential preparation for it, mainly linked to teachers in the direction of the teaching-learning process, continues to be a priority within the contemporary educational system.

The evaluation offered valuable data based on the results of the research since this was based on the analysis of the study plan, the analytical programs of the subjects, as well as the planning and execution of the

methodological activities developed in the semester related to interdisciplinary evaluation. It also allows us to assess the interdisciplinary conception of evaluations in the curriculum, the projection of methodological scientific and teaching work with an interdisciplinary approach, and the preparation of the pedagogical collective to assume interdisciplinarity in the evaluation process as a final projection of the teaching-learning process.

In this criterion, aspects of relevance and significance of the contents to be integrated were assumed, which allowed the evaluation process to be perfected. This is based on gaining clarity of the contents they learned, how they achieved their link with others to support decision-making process (the existing procedures), and how to apply them to reality.

Conclusion

The characterization of the teaching practice makes it possible to identify the main insufficiencies in the daily practice, which gave way to the exchange between teachers. They took as their basis the analysis of their own teaching practice, achieve the design of evaluation actions under the interdisciplinary perspective, generate alternatives for teacher improvement that boosted academic productivity, and provide application spaces in real situations.

The elaboration of didactic actions to improve the professional performance of the student of Physical Culture through a manual of procedures that takes into account the interdisciplinary allowed the close participation with the teachers and managed to assess the orientations of educational practices, guaranteeing that they planned under. In this approach, this process offered tools for the restructuring of the analysis of each topic and revealed the links between the disciplines that are directly related to Physical Education.

The construction of this manual that includes integrative actions guaranteed in the teachers, the exchange of knowledge with the sciences related to physical activity and with other specialists from other areas or sceneries of the Physical Culture, creating spaces for reflective practice that led them to think about interdisciplinary planning and consequently achieve greater preparation and application spaces in real situations.

It is a necessity to reconsider the conception of evaluations in the career of Physical Culture so as to achieve the development of integrative skills in future professionals and with it their training based on academic competencies.

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ESJ Social Sciences

High-Performance Work System & Employee Performance in Public Sector: Testing the Mediating Effect of Job Engagement

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p129](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p129)

Submitted: 28 February 2021

Accepted: 21 April 2021

Published: 30 April 2021

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Cite As:

Qureshi, FS., and Tasneem, AK. (2021). High-Performance Work System & Employee Performance in Public Sector: Testing the Mediating Effect of Job Engagement. *European Scientific Journal, ESJ*, 17(12),129. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p129>

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the impact of high-performance work systems on employee performance mediated by job engagement of the employees working in the public sector organization. The paper attempts to explain how high-performance work systems influence the employees and motivate them to perform in the organization. The study goals to deliver the understanding of high-performance work systems that influences job engagement which in turn significantly affects employee performance. To test the study's hypotheses, we collected data from a field study of 500 employees working in 25 public sector banks. Our results show that a high-performance work system is significantly related to employee performance and this relationship is mediated by job engagement. This shows that employees who are given improved high-performance work systems showed high job engagement along with high employee performances regardless of their gender and other diversity. Perspectives related to high-performance work systems pose a positive outcome on the employee performance are considered dominant in the current investigation.

Keywords: High-performance work systems, job engagement, employee performance, public sector organizations

Abbreviations: High performance work system (HPWS); Human Resources (HR); Research and Development (R&D); Human Resource Management (HRM); Structured Equation Modeling (SEM)

1.Introduction

In the last couple of decades, it has been observed that organizations are adapting high-performance work system practices (HPWS). It has been proposed that a high performance work system is potentially encouraging the management to build their employees for competitiveness (Tsai, 2006). HPWS is viewed as the key factor to performance outcomes due to which it is contemplated to be the important building block of contemporary management and is supposed to impact positively and significantly to both the individual and organizational performance (Fu et al., 2015). This elaborates that more the organization applies HPWS activities, higher level of employees' performance is likely to be obtained (Messersmith & Guthrie, 2010). It has been cited by many scholars and researchers that to make the organizations more efficient and gain competitive edge, high-performance work system helps as important constituent (Aryee et al., 2012);(Bowen & Ostroff, 2004); (Liao,Toya, Lepak & Hong, 2009); (Zhang, Akhtar, Bal, Zhang & Talat, 2018). The employee's motivation, commitment and their competencies can be evaluated by the application of internally linked and constant human resource practices (Aryee et al., 2012); (Datta, Guthrie, & Wright , 2005). Workshop activities and practices are generally interlinked by HPWS in order to increase the level of trust within the employees and raise the employee's intrinsic motivation and thus, this enhances organizational commitment. It is normally said that HPWS's are only about HR operating procedures and initiatives however they are constituted upon both the high work level of the employees as well as alternative work practices.

This research paper examines the influence of high-performance work systems on employees' performance with the mediating role of job engagement in the public sector of Pakistan. It has been observed that competition for the public sector organization has turned out to be more aggressive. In order to get more enhanced performance, HRM and the use of HPWS ought to be interrogated in the perspective of public organizations (Steijn, 2004). It has been observed by great scholars that a high-

performance work system correlated with employees' performance has been considered as an important field of study which gives other researchers and readers the point to focus on the factors associated with them (Tsai, 2006). In this study, it is going to be analyzed that public sector organizations must enhance their employees' performance by improvising a high performance work system.

Despite the increasing influence of HPWS on employees' performance by the public sector organizations, there is still limited research available on HPWS in the public sector. It has been argued by many studies that most of the work systems in the public sector have failed to achieve their expected outcomes mainly due to their incapability to design training, promotional and employment practices that all lie under HPWS program which only target specific goals (Aryee et al., 2012). Pakistan's public institutions focus more on departments like Procurement, Finance, Accounts, R&D and less on HR department hence, it becomes essential for these public institutions to pay attention to HR in order to increase employees' performance through HPWS.

The aim of this paper is to empirically assess the influence of HPWS including training practices, employee participation and employee promotion on employees' performance. The study will also empirically identify the impact of HPWS on job engagement and examine the relationship between job engagement and employees' performance.

The major contribution of the research is that it will provide much needed pragmatic data on the high-performance work systems and its influence on employee performance in public sector organizations. This paper will help the researchers to study the behavior of the employees working in public sector organizations in Pakistan who are taking different training and increasing their performance intrinsically for the benefit of both the employees' as well as the public institutions. This study will also aid the managers, employers and management to practically implement the concept of HPWS amongst public sector employees. This will inform employers how HPWS activities can enhance their employees' performance by increasing the influence of job engagement. Employers and managers are encouraged to study this literature that will help them increase their knowledge about the impact of HPWS on employees' performance in public sector organizations. Moreover, it will help HR analysts to play effectively with HPWS activities which results in the increased employees' performance. Data produced from this paper will be used to show how HPWS has affected employees' performance in the public sector of Pakistan. In addition, it is hoped that this research paper will be the beginning of an ongoing body of research into the domain of all employees working in a public organization.

Following are the research questions,

- 1: What is the influence of HPWS including training practices, employee participation and employee promotion on employees' performance in the public sector of Pakistan?
- 2: What is the relationship between HPWS and job engagement in the public sector of Pakistan?
- 3: What is the relation between job engagement and employees' performance in the public sector of Pakistan?

Next section contains a literature review, exposing the knowledge and information needed for hypotheses development. Further, in the methodology section the method of research is explained. Then the findings will shed light upon our hypotheses and will lead to the final conclusion and a further discussion on the subject where the future implications of the findings will be mentioned.

2.Literature Review

2.1 High-Performance Work System:

High performance work-system can be defined as the set of activities used to build the organizational as well as individual performance (Boxall & Purcell, 2008). High performance work system is contemplated as a significant factor in organizations and it has a significant impact on employees' performance (Hartog & Verburg, 2004). The system of work in the public institutions is solely managed and functioned by the people who are working there. So, it could be said that in order to raise high performance work, public organizations need to improve performance through their people. Earlier studies show that Guest has defined two approaches and named them 'ideal type' to human resource management. One approach is known as a high commitment model and second one is the performance management model. The reconciliation of these two approaches has been made through HPWS. In order to achieve high performances, organizations ensure that HR practices, such as training practices, promotion practices and employee participation must be adapted to lead those employees whose abilities and high competencies encourage them to participate and use their knowledge to exercise motivation (Guest, 2007). The HR practices that are mentioned above will be discussed here.

Firstly, it has training practices which include training and developments of the employees working in an organization (Nassazi, 2013). Training practice is one of the important factors of high-performance work systems. These practices include different workshops and activities that are planned and organized by the experts, for the knowledge enhancement of the employees. It has been cited that these trainings practices are required for

three different level such as strategic level, tactical level and operational level (Wognum, 2001). Training practices are used to cover the gap between the current and the expected employees' performance in the future. It has been quoted that training practices lie under the functions of Human Resource Development that have been considered as the important key role of HRM (Weil & Woodall, 2005). It must be ensured by organizations that proper training practices ought to take place once the policies regarding employee performance are evaluated. Training practices have been seen as one of the major roles within HRM which gained great attention by most of the academic researchers (Beardwell, Holden & Claydon, 2004). It has been added by Beardwell et al., (2004) that technological developments and changes within organizations in the form of trainings have made employers realize that in order to be successful, there is a dire need of investment on the employees for training purposes. The main benefit of training is to gain and enhance the knowledge, abilities and skills towards job related tasks. This can be considered as both the short term as well as the long-term benefit for any organizations. It has been stated that there are few advantages of trainings such as 1: High moral which states that the employees who take trainings have now high-level confidence and encouragement. 2: Low cost of production defines that the employees who are now trained and are skilled, would spend less time on production and would manufacture it with efficiency without wasting material and equipment. 3: It helps to improve the availability and quality of the work of employees. 4: Lower turnover shows that training employees bring sense of responsibility and thus, it avoids labor turnover and absentees. Training and skill development amongst the employees have become necessary in order to reduce errors in productivity and outcomes for any organization(Cole, 2002).

Secondly, promotion is contemplated to be the shift in the job of any employee for higher compensation (McCausland, Pouliakas &Theodossiou , 2005). It has been said that practices in the promotion can lead the organization's intention to improve from wherever that is necessary to satisfy its need for efficient employees (Armstrong, 2009). Promotional practices are considered as a vital aspect in the career of the employees that affects the aspects of the work experience. This results into the important factor of employee mobility that involves an increase in wages, which in return can have a positive impact on job attachment and time management (Blau, & DeVaro, 2007); (Clark, 2001); (Francesconi, 2001). Moreover, it has been analyzed that the powerful signals can be shown by the senior management to inform existing employees that there are attractive development opportunities available to them. Public sector organizations can use promotional practices as an incentive for highly qualified employees which creates reward for employees to apply greater inputs. So, promotion is

considered as the best tool in order to motivate employees if they put significance value on their promotion itself. The concept of increase in salaries can encourage employees to work with all of their strengths and enthusiasm.

Lastly, employee participation is defined as the processing cycle of employee involvement that is intended to provide the opportunities to the employees to influence them and take participation in decision-making on the matters that affects them. It is a process that allows the employees to bring in some influence over their job and conditions about what they do. Another concept of employee participation has been defined that it is a process in which the management and the subordinates share the decision-making (Zohoori, 2008). It can be divided into two forms such as material and immaterial. In material participation, it includes every type of financial involvement of the employees in the organization such as organization's profit, stocks or gain or other forms. Whereas, immaterial participation has the employees in the institutions for information, coordination and decision processes (Chen & Aryee, 2007).

2.2 Employee Performance:

Employee performance can be seen as the contributions and the efforts which an employee contributes to achieve goals for the organization. Employees are contemplated as the major resource of competitive advantage in organizations. There is an approach of employee performance named "commitment approach", which assesses employees as a source of values and beliefs. It has been noticed that for institutions, employee performance plays a vital role. There are several factors of employee's performance such as quantity, quality and timeframe of outcome and cooperativeness along with the full attention at work (Güngör, 2011). Improvements in the performance of individuals can easily help HR analysts to predict the further improvement of public organizational performance. Another definition of employee performance is the information of every result and outcome that have been achieved in a specific time and job duty. Employee performance is the system of rating the employees' abilities and skills in any organizations. The performance of the employees can be divided into good and poor performance phases. Good performance can be measured by evaluating the increased perception of clienteles in service aspects whereas poor performance can be measured by analyzing the complaints lodged by. The performance of the employees can really be understood as how well the tasks given to the employees were executed - how effectively and efficiently. The management in organizations can inform the employees about their performance quarterly or annually and further discuss which areas need to be improved. Whilst, measuring the employee's performance, it could be seen

that the process that categorizes some results and outputs within a specific time period can be really helpful in the evaluation and organization of overall as well as individual performance (Coens & Jenkins, 2000). It has been mentioned that in order to monitor and check the performance of the employees, the measurement system such as quality performance management approach or balanced scoreboard approach is implemented on employees (Platts & Sobo'tka, 2010). Regarding productivity, it has been cited that there is another performance measure that is productivity which covers both the efficiency and effectiveness (Bhatti & Qureshi, 2007). Those organizations that are high performing and have good organizational structure motivate their employees to participate in decision-making, goal-setting and problem-solving issues. This participation increases productivity and performance of the employees.

Regarding the characteristics of employee performance, primarily creativity is contemplated. Creativity can be analyzed from the results drawn at the end of the work process (Gilson, Litchfield & Gilson, 2015). It has been suggested that the creation of new ideas is important to the employee's performance whereas, creativity is the first step of innovation (Zhou & Su, 2010);(Zhang & Bartol, 2010). Creativity is considered as a high-risk taking process that has a high chance of failure and those employees who are willing to take more risks are called creative (Duan,Liu,& Che, 2018). Paulus (2002), mentioned that creativity is not only applicable for the first stage of the innovation process however, it is actually a recurrent method in order to achieve the specific goal which, at the first stage includes the idea generation meanwhile in the second stage it includes the implementation (Shalley & Zhou, 2008). It has been observed that creation of ideas and then its implementation become the basis of every employee's competitiveness (Anderson, Poto'cnik & Zhou, 2014). It becomes the responsibility of the management to unify those employees who suggest creative ideas. This process will encourage creativity and innovativeness in employees and when employees are performing a project, the intensification of creativity increases and plays a role of mediator amongst the employee performance due to organizational creativity (Williams & Foti, 2011);(Chen, 2006).

Employee voice is the other trait of employee performance that can be defined as the employees taking participation in the decision-making and goal-setting of institutions. The key term 'voice' can be conceptualized by analyzing studies on employment relations (Budd, Gollan & Wilkinson, 2010); (Lavelle, Gunnigle & McDonnell, 2010); (Wilkinson & Fay, 2011); (Wilkinson et al, 2016). Employee voice is considered to be the way of expressing dissatisfaction by employees to their organizaions. It has been written that the employee voice is the words that take place between employees and organizations to get their point of views, problems, and

suggestions and to communicate them to the management (Bryson, 2004). However, this definition of employee voice is restricting employees from participating in decision-making roles. There has been another definition of employee performance which states it as the process and the structure that encourage the employees to take part in the decision-making process and give their suggestions to the organization for its betterment (Boxall & Purcell, 2003).

Another constituent of employee performance is proactive behavior. It is seen that proactive behavior is meaningfully coherent to key organizational criteria. Proactive behavior helps job performance as this behavior selects and creates the events which boost the chances of high level of employee performance. It has been suggested that proactive behavior can be really helpful in enhancing the overall performance by engaging employees in different activities i.e., development of skill, resource allocation, negotiation, socialization and gathering of resources (Parker & Collins, 2010).

2.3 Job Engagement:

William Kahn was the first person who introduced the concept of job engagement in 1990s. Moreover, the concepts of engagements and disengagements were explained by Kahn. There are three psychological conditions being defined by William such as safety, availability and meaningfulness and this is all related to engagement and disengagement. After the work of William, it has been stated that SAM (safety, availability and meaningfulness) is considered to be the key elements of job engagement that is totally related to job performance as job role fit (May, Gilson & Harter, 2004). Similarly, different scholars have defined the concept of job engagement. For instance, job engagement is said to be satisfaction, involvement and enthusiasm of employees working in organizations (Harter, Schmidt, Killham & Agarwal, 2009). The work that describes dedication, absorption and robustness by fulfilling the state of mind and considered as positive is called as job engagement (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2010). It has been stated that engaged employees are those who are willing to perform work other than the job description and highly dedicated and enthusiastic about their work and as far as disengaged employees are concerned, they are not dedicated and vigorous at all and try to keep themselves disconnected from work (Report, 2003). It has been differentiated from engaged employees with the disengaged ones. It has also been quoted that engaged employees use their personal skills and abilities and transmit those abilities to other employees for better achievement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

According to Woodruffe (2006), it has been noted that job engagement is totally dependent upon satisfaction of the needs of employees

by managers, whereas these needs can be: salary compensation, satisfaction of job and potential of an employee. Job engagement of an employee shows the height of emotional attachment to an organization which provokes him or her intrinsically to put all the effort in work (Gibbons, 2006). It was Solidate (2007), who summarized the work of Gibbon in order to mention the several key factors of job engagement. 1: What is the nature of the job? 2: understanding if employee' performance is contributing to the institution's performance 3: trust and esteem amongst the employees by the management 4: career growth opportunities 5: relationship with ones' senior or employer. It has been observed in many organizations that there are some factors which encourage the employees to work with passion. These factors are salary, job security and job conditions and if these factors are lacking then it would lead to employee dissatisfaction. In contrary to this, to get the better performance there must be the implementation of motivation factors such as recognition, appreciation, growth and achievement. There has been a categorization between engagement drivers and employee disengagement drivers (Scarlett, 2007). Regarding engagement drivers, there are job assignment, freedom, advancement, individual's growth and recognition; whereas factors such as company pride, benefits, manager and goals are considered to be disengagement drivers. Therefore, it could be predicted that by measuring these drivers, an organization gets a reliable technique to quantify the engagement level of employees. Another theory of employee engagement that consists of two points: one is employee satisfaction and second is employee commitment. Discussing briefly about employee commitment it is suggested that it is related to the level of happiness an employee assigns to put attribution and efforts to the organization and especially the way an employee feels about the employment (Peters, 2007). Whereas employee commitment is about their feeling for the institution and the attachment to remain within it, in order to serve them with dignity and perform highly, thus resulting in the improvement of such organization (Macky & Boxall, 2008); (Ahmed et al., 2010).

2.4 High Performance Work System & Employee Performance:

In today's world, there are a number of factors which can affect the organizational growth and development. In coherence with the statement earlier, considering the development of organizations, high performance work system and its characteristics can play an essential role in improving the performance of the employees. As a result, the organizations are able to face the competition and be the leader of all. This signifies a major difference amongst the organizations who put HPWS activities for the better employees' performance and organizations who do not. As employee performance has a positive impact on the organization, it could be said that

due to HPWS and its activities, employee performance becomes a function of overall institutional performance (Purcell et al., 2003). HPWS not only improves the overall performance of employees but also enhances the knowledge, skills and abilities, and the attitude of employees, which as a result contributes to the performance of the organization.

The branch of training practices of HPWS in relation with employee performance has been discovered as interesting findings. It plays a significant role on employees' performance. By observing the positive impact of employee performance by the skill development, abilities and competencies an employee has, training has been proved to generate improvements in the performance which would result in the benefits for both the employee as well for the organization (Appiah, 2010). Another theory, states that HPWS is considered to be dealing with skill abilities and performance deficit as a method to improve employee performance (Swart et al., 2005); (Wright & Geroy, 2001).

The importance of promotion practices in any organization is contemplated to be a motivating factor that helps the employees to be committed with their job and results into increased employee performance. It is noticed that promotion practices are supposed to change the behaviors of employees, management and also the organization (Grant & Ashford, 2008). Promotion practices have a positive influence on employee performance in such a way that if employees are being compensated by promotion practices, there will be an urge to work with all of the energy and enthusiasm which will result in increased employee performance. While, in the context of employee promotion, it has been suggested that behaviors of employee through development of resources which an employee has, would enhance their creativity and innovation resulting in the performance of the job (Feldam, 2012). Employees who have positive attitude towards their job can be rewarded and trained in such a way that employee promotion encourages employee performance. This proves that employee promotion is positively influencing employees' performance in the organizations.

Further, with reference to the influence of employee participation on employee performance, it is seen that HPWS is a set of activities from HR that are built to encourage employees' skills, abilities and engagement in order to gain a competitive advantage (Datta, Guthrie, & Wright, 2005). The concept of employee participation shows that how much an employee is interested in decision-making concerns, how much he or she is willing to take part in problem solving matters, and if he/she is concerned with these matters it clearly states the positivity and thus, it would result in increased performance of the employees (Chiang, Hsu & Shih, 2015). This overall context shows that employee participation has positive impact on employee performance. Hence, following hypothesis is developed,

H1: a) Training Practices, b) Employee participation, and c) Employee Promotion have a positive relationship with employees' performance.

2.5 High Performance Work System and Job Engagement:

It has been mentioned that the impact of HPWS has a stronger and significant influence on employee work outputs and organizational performance. Since then, HPWS has been focusing on supporting development in employees by enriching their skills and abilities, motivating them to participate in decision-making and enhancing work tasks with increased job engagement and commitment to work in the organization which ultimately leads to the institutional performance (Snape & Redman, 2010). Whenever, there is an implication of HPWS in any organization, there becomes a probability that employees will return this action by increasing job engagement and commitment to work. So, this is the bridge in this research paper that demonstrates the job engagement which mediates the relation amongst the HPWS and employee performance (Christian et al., 2011) which forms a positive relationship that what organization offers to employees and what in return employees do. The active and willing participation of employees in decision-making, problem-solving situations and giving the suggestions to the management is referred to as employee engagement which is observed to be directly linked with job fit, attitude, behavior and performance of the employees (Mahdi et al., 2014). It has been suggested that HPWS is coherent with HR practices of any organization in such a way that it shows the direct significance with job engagement and employee performance (Snape & Redman, 2010). Thus, it can be concluded in the end that HPWS has a positive influence on employee performance with a mediating role of job engagement in an organization.

H2: a) Training Practices, b) Employee participation, and c) Employee Promotion has a positive impact on job engagement.

2.6 Job Engagement and Employee Performance:

In order to drive organizations, job engagement in employees has now become an essential part for the achievement and success over the past few years. Employees who are engaged feel satisfaction and sense of commitment to their work, are contemplated to be the star employees of the organizations with their performance. It has been observed that job engagement has a positive influence on employee creativity, voice and employee proactive behavior that are the main characteristics of employee performance. Nowadays, creativity is a key factor for the organizational performance, long term survival and success just like employee engagement (Anderson, Potočnik & Zhou, 2014). It has been suggested that a high level of relationship between employees and their job drives creativity and

innovation (IPMA-HR, 2010). It is mentioned that employees need to be flexible, innovative and creative to contribute their efforts beyond the normal tasks (Sundaray, 2011). These evidences show that job engagement has positive influence on employee creativity. Employee voice can be defined as constructive behavior of the overall performance of an organization rather than criticizing the employees. Comparing the job engagement with employee voice, it could be analyzed that job engagement can be measured as an expressive view in supportive institutions (Goldberg et al., 2011). Those employees who are highly motivated and dedicated to their work push themselves to speak and think for the development of the organization (Hassan & Batool, 2015). It has been quoted that those employees who are highly engaged in their work are more likely to speak up. This shows that job engagement has a positive influence on employee voice (Liang & Farh, 2012). Talking about the impact of job engagement on proactive behavior of an employee, it could be seen that employees who have high level of job engagement take initiatives on regular basis. Moreover, job engagement is contemplated to be the main personal resource for proactive behavioral approach. It has been cited (Schmitt et al., 2016) that employees who have high job engagement put all of their efforts to their work and place high value, attention and care on it as well, which leads them to put more contributions onto their work. It has been suggested that as change orientation is being involved by proactive behavior, it is required by the employee to pay concentration on their work through job engagement (Agarwal et al., 2012). Those employees who are said to be engaged employees, experience significant feelings at work such as hope, pride, inspiration and dedication while doing their job, and this phenomenon drives proactive behavior whilst promoting effective functioning at work (Schaufeli, Taris & Bakker, 2006). This shows that job engagement has positive impact on proactive behavior.

H3: Job engagement has a positive influence on employee performance.

From the above written literature with the citation of different scholars, it has been proved that job engagement plays a mediating role between the relationship of HPWS including training practices, employee participation, employee promotion and employees' performance.

H4: Job Engagement mediates the relationship between a) Training Practices, b) Employee Participation, and c) Employee Promotion with employees' performance.

2.7 Social Exchange Theory:

In this paper, the supporting theory that is going to be implemented is the social exchange theory, which was initially introduced by Blau in 1964. In most of the studies, it could be seen that social exchange theory has been applied to conceptualize the relationship between HPWS and employee performance. This theory has been widely used by great scholars. Furthermore, it has been observed from the previous studies that social exchange theory is contemplated as the most suitable theory for its implication with HPWS. According to the social exchange theory, performance of employees is supposed to characterize those public organizations which implement HPWS activities frequently and it is expected to be reciprocated by employees in the perspectives of employee wellbeing for better employee performance (Chang & Chen, 2011). As HPWS, defines the activities related to HR for the wellbeing of employees, the social identification of the individuals in an organization elaborates how much an employee responds to the exchange program (Hogg et al., 2005); (Peccei & Van, 2019).

The previous literature findings and hypotheses development, has led to the advancement of the following conceptual framework,

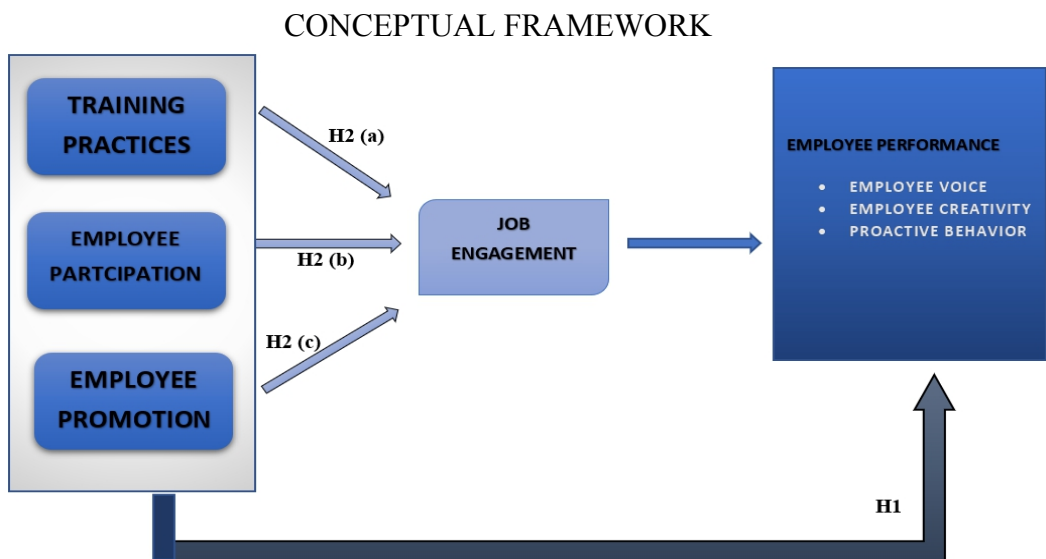


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework
Source: Author

3.Methodology

The research design selected in this paper is descriptive because it provides the accuracy to describe a population or sample size.

3.1 Population and Sampling:

Employees who are working in public banking sector are the target population used to conduct this research. It is observed that the study population of this research is more diversified in the way that it has been conducted amongst different age groups, different genders and income groups, based on which results would be more effective and significant. The sample size of this paper is mainly made up of employees, including the management of public banks. 500 employees are targeted from 25 public sector banks of Pakistan. This number of sample size helps to bring more accurate and significant results.

3.2 Research Setting:

This research was conducted in Pakistan specifically in the public banking sector. In 1991, there were amendments in the Bank Nationalization Act and almost 23 banks were built and out of them, only 10 banks got licensed. The MCB and Allied Bank transferred their ownership to most of their management by the end of 1993. The lending to small and medium companies had earlier been neglected. However, being excited with the spirit of liberalization, the landscape of banking sector changed significantly. Now, nationwide, there are 9500+ branches of all the public banks operating in Pakistan which are catering to the needs of around 30 million deposit account holders. (Ahmad, Malik, & Humayoun, 2010).

3.3 Research Instrument:

For collection of data for the research, a questionnaire-based survey with close ended structuring items was used. Questionnaires were administered in English. 500 questionnaires were distributed among 25 public sector banks. Questionnaire-based surveys was used because they are less expensive, are easy to analyze, comparable and most importantly, reliable and valid.

3.4 Measurement of Variables:

Below is the table which shows the items, scale and dimensions of the variables used in the study. In order to measure the responses of the population, Five-point Likert scale ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 5(strongly agree) was used to measure the items. The rating and scale of the

choices was made in order to measure the variability of responses from the respondents and is as follows:

Table 3.4.1: Measurement of Variables

No	Constructs & Variables	Codes	Items
1	Training Practices	TP	4
2	Employee Participation	EPa	4
3	Employee Voice	EV	4
4	Job Engagement	JE	6
5	Employee Performance	EP	12

3.5 Data Analysis:

SPSS Amos was used to conduct structural equation modeling (SEM) for data and path analysis of the relationship between dependent, independent variable and mediator. SEM is a multivariate statistical framework which includes the solving capability of linear equations and comprehends other methods such as regression, path analysis, factor analysis and variance estimates. SEM was used to best observe and analyze relationship between the correlated variables.

4.Data Analysis

Frequency Table:

Table 4.1 (a): AGE

Source:

		Author			
		Frequen cy	Percen t	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Val id	18- 25	167	33.6	33.6	33.6
	26- 35	153	30.4	30.4	64.0
	36- 45	92	18.4	18.4	82.4
	46- 60	88	17.6	17.6	100.0
	Tota l	500	100.0	100.0	

In description of the frequency table of age i.e., table 4.1(a), it comprises 5 age groups and amongst them only 4 age groups have responded. In the age group ranging from 18 to 25 years, there are 167 respondents out of 500, which means the respondents from this age group were the most abundant. The smallest respondents age group belongs to 46 to 60 years. This shows that people from this age group have minimum participation in analyzing the data and also have the least impact on the study.

Table 4.1 (b): Gender

Source: Author

	Freque ncy	Perce nt	Valid Percent	Cumulativ e Percent
Valid Male	331	66.5	66.5	66.5
Female	169	33.5	33.5	100.0
Total	500	100.0	100.0	

In describing the frequency table for gender in 4.1(b), male population is the largest among the two gender groups in this study and it has a major impact on the study for data analysis. Whereas, the female population is half of male population and it has not contributed to the same extent for the analyzing of the data.

Table 4.1 (c): Designation

Source:

Author

	Freque ncy	Perce nt	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Manager	187	37.4	37.4	37.4
Supervis or	155	31.0	31.0	68.4
Director	135	27.0	27.0	95.4
Worker	23	4.6	4.6	100.0

Total	500	100.0	100.0
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In describing the frequency table for designation in Table 4.1 (c), the maximum number of people which responded to the question was 500, out of which 187 were the managers who shared the responses about the study. Minimum sample from the population was of the people who are workers and their contribution in the analysis of data of this study is low. By this analysis, we can come to a conclusion that managers have contributed more in getting responses thus, they have a major impact on the analysis of the study.

Table 4.1 (d): Income

Source:

		Author			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	25,000-49,999	158	31.6	31.6	31.6
	75,000-99,999	138	27.6	27.6	59.2
	50,000-74,999	117	23.4	23.4	82.6
	Above 1,00,000	87	17.4	17.4	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

The above given table 4.1(d) best describes that respondents who are earning between 25000 up to 49,999 PKR have given maximum participation in filling the survey. This shows that 31.6% of the respondents who have filled the questionnaire have an earning ratio of less than 50,000 PKR.

Descriptive:

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics

Source:

	Author				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender	500	1.00	2.00	1.3380	.47350
Age	500	1.00	4.00	2.2020	1.08792
Designation	500	1.00	4.00	2.0280	.93218
Income	500	1.00	4.00	2.3080	1.09340
Valid N (listwise)	500				

Above table shows the descriptive values of four given demographic variables. This test is run to reinforce the reactions. The above given table 4.2, shows the descriptive statistics of this study. The results of descriptive analysis showed that all variables were found significant in area of study. In this statistic, gender have minimum and maximum mean values of 1.00 and 2.00 respectively. There are given the minimum and maximum value of all other variables as well. This table also shows the deviation with mean. The standard deviation of every group is positive which shows that results are significant.

Reliability:

Table 4.3 (a): Case Processing Summary

Source: Author

		N	%
Cases	Valid	500	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	500	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

In the table 4.3 (a), number of valid data or N (valid for at process) is 500 units, while missing or data that is excluded is zero which means that every data is processed.

Table 4.3 (b): Reliability Statistics
Source: Author

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.415	4
0.459	4
0.736	4
0.519	6
0.583	12

Reliability test is basically the measure of consistency of a test under different conditions. Cronbach's Alpha is a measuring tool and unit for reliability test and it is profoundly used for this research. In the table 4.3 (b) above, the value of Cronbach's alpha for different variables varies. The Cronbach's alpha for different variables is significant and positive, which shows the relationship and framework between the variables to be reliable and positive.

Table 4.4.: Correlation

Source: Author

		Training_ Practices	Employee_ Pa rticipation	Employee _Promoti on	Job_Enga gement	Employee_Perfor mance
Traini ng_Pr actices	Pearson Correlation	1	.372**	.441**	.800**	.264**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	500	500	500	500	500
Emplo yee_P articip ation	Pearson Correlation	.372**	1	.745**	.586**	.278**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	500	500	500	500	500
Emplo yee_P romoti on	Pearson Correlation	.441**	.745**	1	.688	.285**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	500	500	500	500	500
Job_E ngage ment	Pearson Correlation	.800**	.586**	.688**	1	.360**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	500	500	500	500	500

Empl yee_P erform ance	Pearson Correlation	.264**	.278**	.285**	.360**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	500	500	500	500	500

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlation:

A correlation test is run to measure or calculate the strength of a relationship between the relative movements of two variables. A number less than -1.0 or greater than 1.0 is considered to be an error in measurement of correlation. The correlation for training practices and employee participation is 0.372. p-value for this correlation is 0.000 and it is not technically zero as SPSS does not give value to more than 3 decimal places. As $p < 0.05$, so reject the null hypothesis of no relationship and conclude that the relationship is statistically significant. Table 4.4 shows that employee participation has a positive impact on employee performance giving the value of 0.278, which is significant. Similarly, employee promotion also shows positive impact on employee performance that is 0.258, indicating the significance of correlation.

Table 4.5 (a): Regression Weights
Source: Author

		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	L a b e l
Job_Engagement <---	Training_Practices	.507	.019	26.234	**	*
Job_Engagement <---	Employee_Participation	.090	.027	3.389	**	*
Job_Engagement <---	Employee_Promotion	.303	.029	10.505	**	*
Employee_Performance <---	Job_Engagement	.245	.028	8.619	**	*

In the above given table 4.5 (a), it has been measured that the probability of getting a critical ratio as large as 26.234 in absolute value is less than 0.001. It can be seen that the regression weight for training practices in the prediction of job engagement is significantly different from zero at the 0.001 level (two-tailed). Similarly, the probability of getting a critical ratio as large as 3.389 in absolute value is less than 0.001. Likewise, the regression weight for employee participation in the prediction of job engagement is significantly different from zero at the 0.001 level (two-

tailed). These statements are approximately correct for large samples under suitable assumptions. Hence, it is proved that in regression weights, the drawn results are significant.

Table 4.5 (b): Standardize Regression Weights
Source: Author

			Estimate
Job_Engagement	<-- -	Training_Practices	.610
Job_Engagement	<-- -	Employee_Participation	.106
Job_Engagement	<-- -	Employee_Promotion	.340
Employee_Performance	<-- -	Job_Engagement	.360

Table 4.5 (b) shows that when training practices goes up by 1 standard deviation, job engagement goes up by 0.61 standard deviations. When employee participation goes up by 1 standard deviation, job engagement goes up by 0.106 standard deviations. When employee promotion goes up by 1 standard deviation, job engagement goes up by 0.34 standard deviations which ultimately shows that the results are significant.

Table 4.5 (c): Squared Multiple Correlation
Source: Author

	Estimate
Job_Engagement	.784
Employee_Performance	.130

It is estimated in table 4.5 (c) that the predictors of job engagement explain 78.4 percent of its variance. In other words, the error variance of job engagement is approximately 21.6 percent of the variance of job engagement itself. It is estimated that the predictors of employee performance explain 13 percent of its variance. The error variance of employee performance is approximately 87 percent of the variance of employee performance itself.

Table 4.5 (d): Covariance Estimate
Source: Author

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	L a b e l
Training_Practices	<-->	Employee_Participation	.175	.023	7.787	***	
Employee_Participation	<-->	Employee_Promotion	.328	.025	13.340	***	
Training_Practices	<-->	Employee_Promotion	.199	.022	9.022	***	

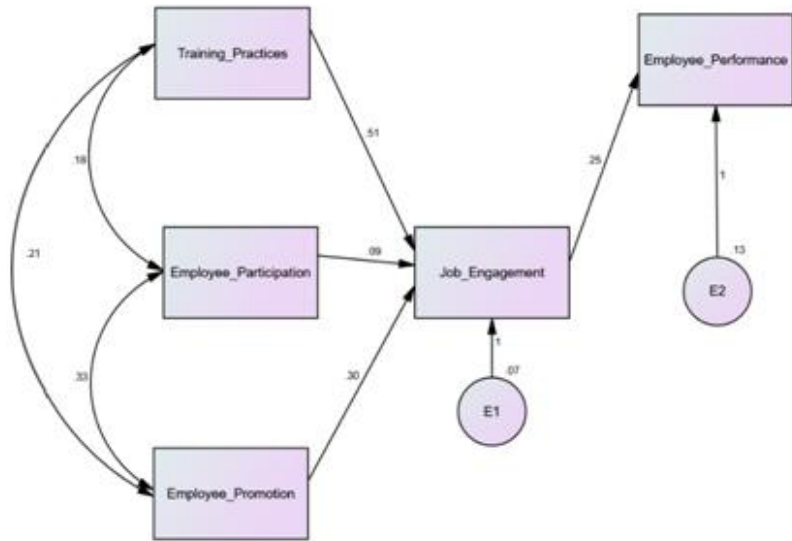
In the table 4.5 (d), the probability of getting a critical ratio as large as 7.787 in absolute value is less than 0.001 which shows that the covariance between training practices and employee participation is significantly different from zero at the 0.001 level (two-tailed). Similarly, the probability of getting a critical ratio as large as 13.34 in absolute value is less than 0.001 which depicts that the covariance between employee participation and employee promotion is significantly different from zero at the 0.001 level (two-tailed). Hence, it is proved that results of covariance estimates are significant.

Table 4.5 (e): Variances Estimates
Source: Author

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
Training_Practices	.482	.031	15.796	***	
Employee_Participation	.461	.029	15.796	***	
Employee_Promotion	.420	.027	15.796	***	
E1	.072	.005	15.796	***	
E2	.134	.009	15.796	***	

The probability of getting a critical ratio as large as 15.796 in absolute value is less than 0.001. It shows that the variance estimate for training practices is significantly different from zero at the 0.001 level (two-tailed). Likewise, for the other variables. they have absolute values less than 0.001 illustrating the positive and significant influence.

SEM Model Path diagram:



Result:

Minimum was achieved.

Chi-square= 4.245

Degree of freedom= 3

Probability level= 0.0236

The appropriate distributional assumptions are met and the specified model is correct, then the value 0.0236 is the approximate probability of getting a chi-square statistic as large as the chi-square statistic obtained from the current set of data. For example, if 0.0236 is .05 or less, the departure of the data from the model is significant at the .05 level and hence, it shows that p value is significant for this chi-square.

5. Discussion

The study emphasized on reviewing the impact of high-performance work system on employee performance. In the reliability test for the conducted study, it has been proven that the variables studied in this research are strongly related and appropriate. The male respondents were more abundant than the females which impart a true depiction of Pakistan's work culture. The demographics of the study are relevant and significant. The results drawn elucidated that training practices, employee participation and

employee promotion enhance the employee's performance which is effective in gaining the job engagement of employees. HPWS has been bringing into focus the support development in the employees by enriching expertise, inspire them to take part in decision-making and strengthening job hence, this will improve their job engagement and increase public institutional performance. The literature presented in this paper sheds light to the varying aspect of managerial role that management should play its part in considering the employees needs and requirements of updating the work systems that would help them in efficient. Job engagement comes with the commitment that happens through system efficacy and correct job employment. Many respondents have varied responses according to their personal experiences and job requirements which propels management to recognize the needs of employees. As per study findings, employees who are given better high-performance work system displayed high job engagement as well as high employee performances irrespective of gender and other diversity.

6. Conclusion

The aim of the study was to identify the significance of the variables mentioned in this research i.e., high-performance work system, job engagement and employee performance. The study has provided the insights of HPWS influencing job engagement which affects employee performance significantly. In view of the remit of the study, aspects relating to HPWS posing positive effect on the employee performance dominate in the current account of findings. This is the least researched area in context of this subject matter. The research is of valuable importance for Pakistan and other South Asian countries, due to cultural similarity of the regions. In addition to this, the managers will also utilize the data to motivate their employees through applying such work systems to increase the efficiency of employees as well as the organization's performance. Managers will also gain knowledge of how to engage employees and motivate them to be more loyal to the organization. Most importantly, this research would also help public sector organizations to work with a similar pace of the private sector of Pakistan.

7. Limitations & Future Implications

There are certain limitations that impeded the conduct of our research from going on smoothly. Firstly, due to COVID-19 pandemic, monetary and time constraints, a cross-sectional research was carried out thus, it was not possible to study behavior and attitudes over a longer period of time. Secondly, not being an employee within the public organization served as a

hindrance in collection of data. Thirdly, due to lack of time, response bias that might have influenced the results could not be tested. Lastly, the sample size was small. The research results based on responses from 500 public sector employees, may not be able to represent the whole population. Such limitations can be catered in the future, to make the findings of the study more applicable, accurate, expandable and valid in nature. These factors can be taken into consideration in the next phase of the research and more extensive research can be done in order to get a comprehensive understanding of the problem statement.

The results drawn from the study also embody a range of subtopics to be discussed in future research such as work environment and work incentives, as they are major contributors in identifying employee performance along with the high-performance work systems. Researchers could use this data to modify variables for further studies. There are employees who work in a politically pressurized environment and face hindrance in growth and development however, this factor cannot be ignored and hence, serve as a future implication for researchers. An amalgamation of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods on a large sample size might also permit for improved data collection and valid conclusions in the future. A longitudinal study can be conducted that might identify significance of problem statement over a longer period of time.

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ESJ Social Sciences

Adoption of Mobile Marketing in the Telecommunication Industry of Tanzania: The Effects of Perceived Usefulness, Ease of Use, and Customer's Knowledge

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p160](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p160)

Submitted: 25 January 2021

Accepted: 20 April 2021

Published: 30 April 2021

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Cite As:

Chille, JF., Shayo, AF., and Kara, SN. (2021). Adoption of Mobile Marketing in the Telecommunication Industry of Tanzania: The Effects of Perceived Usefulness, Ease of Use, and Customer's Knowledge. European Scientific Journal, ESJ, 17(12),160. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p160>

Abstract

This paper focuses on identifying the factors affecting customer's adoption of mobile marketing by examining the effects of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and perceived customer's knowledge in the telecommunications industry of Tanzania. The study extended the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), with Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DOI), in predicting the customer's mobile marketing adoption. Survey strategy was employed in data collection by administering the structured questionnaires and collected data using multi stage sampling on 406 respondents in Dar es Salaam. After then, it was analyzed using factor

analysis, correlation analysis, and multiple linear regression analysis. Findings indicated that perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and perceived customer knowledge have significant and positive influence on the adoption of mobile marketing in the telecommunication industry in Tanzania. The study contributes to telecommunication practitioners with the integrated theoretical framework, which suggest that telecommunication practitioners need to develop mobile platforms that are easy to use, useful in solving customers' problems and in designing products whose benefits are easily understood by customers. Through holistic mobile marketing approach, this study makes parsimonious contribution to knowledge by using few variables in predicting the customer's adoption of mobile marketing in Telecommunication industry in Tanzania.

Keywords: Mobile Marketing, Perceived usefulness, Perceived ease of use, perceived customer knowledge, Technology Acceptance Model.

1.0 Introduction

The increased adoption of mobile marketing has boosted business productivity worldwide (Hall, 2018). This has been facilitated by the use of mobile marketing applications in undertaking marketing activities. Currently, mobile marketing platform is among the marketing channels of distribution for enhancing business interactions and communication between customers and marketers (Asa & Uwem, 2017; Barutcu *et al.*, 2017). The emergence of advanced mobile technology has facilitated the increase in business opportunities, hence assisting marketers and customers' linkage without the consideration of time and place (Eze *et al.*, 2020).

According to Mobile Marketing Association (MMA, 2009) definition, mobile marketing is the marketing activities and processes facilitated by mobile technologies through wireless communication for creating, communicating, and delivering customers' and stakeholders' value through mobile devices online (Ström *et al.*, 2014).

There is a growing body of knowledge concerning mobile marketing adoption in developed countries (Mansour, 2016), but the adoption is still little in developing countries (Lamptey, 2017). Among the various models that has been applied is the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Ajibade, 2018 ; Davis *et al.*, 1989), which indicated much adoption of mobile marketing in developed countries (Lamptey, 2018).

Lately, the advancement of mobile marketing in Tanzania is gradually being evidenced by the presence of technological development that facilitates vast online transaction services (URT, 2018). If well utilized, these offer compelling opportunities to a number of consumers to interact through mobile technology in order to increase their marketing and business capabilities (Jauhari & Dutta, 2010). Despite that, the number of customers involved in mobile marketing in Tanzania is still low in comparison to other African countries (Chille *et al.*, 2021; Malamsha, 2019; Masamila, 2014; Mtebe & Raisamo, 2014; Mwantimwa, 2019; Wilson & Mbamba, 2017). However, there are paucity in studies concerning mobile marketing in Tanzania (Lwoga & Lwoga, 2017; Malamsha, 2019). It is evident that most of the past studies in Tanzania were based on mobile payment and mobile banking as part of mobile marketing. However, there are scantily any studies that have focused on mobile marketing in terms of perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEOU), and perceived customer knowledge (PCK). This is based on the holistic way of mobile marketing as per its definition and scope as described by the Mobile Marketing Association (MMA, 2009; Lwoga & Lwoga, 2017; Malamsha, 2019), compared to the studies done in developed countries (Lamptey, 2018).

Past studies have indicated that using TAM alone showed that actual behavior and behavioral intention could be different phenomenon to the adopters, and this is the setback in using the TAM model alone (Ajibade, 2018; Keung *et al.*, 2004). In their study, Rodgers (2003) and Saaksjarvi (2003) indicated that, in order for individuals to adopt the new technology, there is a need for the customers' understanding of the products and services through customers' knowledge, and this knowledge is transmitted gradually as explained on Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DOI). With those reasons, this study has combined the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to include the Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DOI) by adding a construct of perceived customer knowledge. Thus, this is in studying the factors that influence the adoption of mobile marketing in telecommunication industry in Tanzania and testing it.

Due to paucity in studies guided by Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) on the effects of PU, PEOU in Tanzania, especially in the telecommunication industry, compared with developed countries (Lamprey, 2018), this study attempts to design and develop "Integrative Adoption Model" by combining the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DOI) for localized Mobile Marketing Technologies (MMT) that ties with customer involvement in driving business transaction. This is done by assessing the effects of Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) as the major constructs of TAM and extending the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) with the construct of Perceived Customer Knowledge (PCK) which is guided by the Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DOI), in order to identify the factors that can influence customers' mobile marketing adoption in the telecommunication industry in Tanzania.

Basically, the research study responds to the insufficient contextualized adoption models, and the new ways of interacting with advanced technologies that offer a wide-range of online marketing services. As such, the model will entrench customers to adopt the cutting edge of mobile marketing technology designing, development, and implementation process throughout the product or service cycle.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) has been used in various studies in Tanzania for assessing the effects of user acceptance of mobile payment (Antony & Mutalemwa, 2014; Lwoga & Lwoga, 2017; Kalugendo, 2018). Perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived awareness, perceived benefits, and cost effects were used to influence mobile banking adoption (Abdinoor & Mbamba, 2017). Furthermore, this also include the following: Perceived trust and ease of use in adoption of mobile marketing (Chille *et al.*, 2021); perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and compatibility (Lwoga & Lwoga, 2017); and the relationship between mobile

payment knowledge and perceived ease of use (Lwoga & Lwoga, 2017). Another model that has been used is the Unified Theory of Acceptance of Technology (UTAUT) (Chachage *et al.*, 2013; Tossy, 2014). However, these studies places emphasis on students' intention to use mobile payment (Chachage *et al.*, 2013); mobile payment acceptance on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) (Kalugendo, 2018); mobile banking (Abdnoor & Mbamba, 2017); mobile payment (Lwoga & Lwoga, 2017); and relationship between consumer personality, web design, and trust on consumer purchase of automobile using trust and signaling theories (Masele & Malama, 2019). Nonetheless, there are scant studies which have been done in Tanzania on the effects of Perceived Usefulness (PU), Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), and Perceived Customer Knowledge (PCK) on mobile marketing adoption especially in the telecommunication sector.

Since there are few studies on mobile marketing adoption, especially on the effects of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and perceived customer knowledge on customers' mobile marketing adoption especially in the telecommunication sector, most of the studies done are on the aspects of mobile payment and mobile banking (Lwoga & Lwoga, 2017; Malamsha, 2019). Thus, their findings have indicated that there is still low adoption on mobile marketing platforms, which implies that there are scant studies on the holistic mobile marketing approaches as per definitions of the Mobile Marketing Association (MMA, 2009).

However, previous studies in both developed and developing countries have mixed results on the influence of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use with mobile marketing. Some scholars found positive and significant relationships (Abdinoor & Mbamba, 2017; Hamza & Shan, 2014; Lwoga & Lwoga, 2017; Suki & Suki, 2011; Tobbin & Kuwornu, 2011), while other scholars found insignificant relationships either on perceived usefulness or ease of use with mobile marketing adoption (Chinomona & Sandala, 2013; Hu *et al.*, 2019; Kim *et al.*, 2010).

Past studies have also indicated mixed results on the effects of customer knowledge on technology adoption especially on the mobile marketing adoption. On one hand, some studies have indicated positive relationship between customer knowledge and mobile marketing adoption (Bosil & Junhiack, 2009; Lwoga & Lwoga, 2017; Obina & Nkoe, 2016). On the other hand, other studies indicated non-significant effects between customer knowledge and mobile marketing adoption (Aydin & Burnaz, 2016; Musa *et al.*, 2016). However, these studies were mostly on ether mobile payment or mobile banking and not holistic mobile marketing as per the objectives under this study.

Nevertheless, there are few studies in telecommunication industry, specifically on customers' adoption of mobile marketing and relating it with

perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use and perceived customer knowledge in telecommunication industry in Tanzania. Therefore, due to paucity of studies in the sector, there is a need to assess the influence of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and perceived customer knowledge on mobile marketing adoption in the telecommunication industry in Tanzania.

There are various models and theories which have been used in describing the adoption and diffusion of technology. These are; Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 2002), Theory of Reasoned Action (Khraim *et al.*, 2011), Technology Organization Environment (TOE) (Pudjianto *et al.*, 2011), Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DOI) (Rodgers, 2003), Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Venkatesh *et al.*, 2016). Among these theories and models, TAM has been used in many studies because it highlights better adoption behavior of consumers in using technology (Ofori, 2019). The current study has revealed that there is a need of using TAM by combining it with DOI to increase the explanatory power of the model in predicting customers' adoption of mobile marketing in telecommunication industry in Tanzania. The major TAM constructs are Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), which are behavioral components of the model, while other components of the model are Behavior Intention (BI) and Attitude (AT) as supporting components of PU and PEOU (Venkatesh *et al.*, 2012).

However, Behavior Intention (BI) under TAM was dropped as previous studies have indicated that BI does not necessarily lead to the actual use of the system (Ajibade, 2018; Bagozzi, 2007; Taylor & Todd, 1995). However, in his study, Davis *et al.* (1989) argued that attitude partially influence the perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU) towards behavior intention (BI). Ren (2019) also argued that subjective norms manipulation affects only behavior intention (BI) and not attitude, and concluded that an attitude can remain the same to an individual regardless of the adoption and innovation process in new information technology. With those reasons therefore, attitude was also excluded as part of this study under TAM constructs. Therefore, this study attempts to design and develop "Integrative Adoption Model" by combining the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DOI) by assessing the effects of PU, PEOU, and PCK in order to identify the factors that can influence customers' mobile marketing adoption in the telecommunication industry in Tanzania.

Perceived Usefulness and the Adoption of Mobile Marketing

Perceived Usefulness (PU) is the major construct of the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989) by which consumers can prefer a product

when they think it useful to them. This in turn reinforces the consumer's intention to adopt the product or service (Kim *et al.*, 2010). Many studies have indicated the use of perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU) as major components of technology adoption.

Various studies have shown significant effects on PU and the adoption of mobile marketing (Abdinoo & Mbamba, 2017; Hamza & Shah, 2014; Mehra *et al.*, 2020; Olubumni & Adeyemi, 2018). Therefore, this study has proposed the hypothesis on the factors that influence customers' adoption of mobile marketing in telecommunication industry in Tanzania as follows:

H1: Perceived usefulness has significant and positive influence on customers' adoption of mobile marketing in the telecommunication industry.

Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) and the Adoption of Mobile Marketing

Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) refers to how a person feels in using the technology that s/he will be free from effort (Venkatesh *et al.*, 2016). According to Venkatesh *et al.* (2016), consumers will always perceive ease to use the information system at an earlier stage when they experience using the proposed information system, in accordance with their beliefs on the information system products or services they are using.

Various studies have shown significant effects on PEOU and the adoption of mobile financial service (Chitungo & Munongo, 2013; Hamza & Shah, 2014; Kim *et al.*, 2010; Said *et al.*, 2019 ; Tobbins & Kuwornu, 2011; Wamuyu, 2014), when consumers are using the mobile marketing products and services. In Tanzania, Lema (2017) indicated that perceived ease of use does not influence the adoption of mobile financial services for the unbanked population. However, Lwoga and Lwoga (2017) found that PEOU has influence on mobile payment. Also, Lubua and Semlambo (2017) indicated that PEOU has a significant influence on mobile payment in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Therefore, this study proposed the following hypothesis:

H2: Perceived ease of use has significant and positive influence on customers' adoption of mobile marketing in the telecommunication industry.

Perceived Customer Knowledge (PCK) and the Adoption of Mobile Marketing

Perceived customer knowledge refers to individual learning about innovation and thereafter finds information about innovation (Rodgers, 2003). Various studies have shown significant effects on Perceived Customer Knowledge and adoption of mobile financial service as part of mobile

marketing (Bosil & Junhjack, 2009; Obina & Nkoe, 2016; Lwoga & Lwoga, 2017), while the study by Aydin and Burnaz (2016) and Musa *et al.* (2016) indicated that customer knowledge has no influence on mobile marketing adoption by customers. Therefore, this study proposed the following hypothesis:

H3: Perceived customer knowledge has significant and positive influence on customers' adoption of mobile marketing in the telecommunication industry.

Methodology

The study was undertaken using primary data from mobile phone users from the five municipalities of Dar es Salaam, namely Ubungo, Kinondoni, Ilala, Kigamboni, and Temeke. The areas were chosen due to the large contribution of Dar es Salaam to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which accounts for 30% in 2018 (Tanzania Invest, 2018). Out of 440 questionnaires, 406 were returned. The questionnaires collected information about respondent characteristics, Adoption of Mobile Marketing (AMM), Perceived Usefulness (PU), Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), and Perceived Customer Knowledge (PCK). The population consisted of all customers of the three telecommunication companies namely Vodacom, Airtel and MIC (T) Limited (Tigo) in the 5 municipalities. Multistage sampling was applied in the selection of respondents who use mobile marketing platforms.

7-point Likert type scale was used ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Perceived Usefulness (PU) was measured by five items, which were adapted from Davis (1989) and Gao *et al.* (2011). Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) was measured by five items, adapted from Venkatesh *et al.* (2012) and Gao *et al.* (2011). Perceived customer knowledge was measured by 4 items adapted from Wang *et al.* (2009) and Kim *et al.* (2010), while the Adoption of Mobile Marketing (AMM) were measured by 7 items adopted from Davis (1989) and Duzevi *et al.* (2016).

Results

Respondent Characteristics

The sample characteristics under the study were the customers of the three telecommunication companies. First are the employees which included the respondents with formal employment and paid up salaries who had mobile phones, accounting for 128 (31.5%) of the respondents. Second are business persons such as sales agents and wholesalers of consumers and industrial products who have mobile phones, accounting for 89 (21.9%) of the respondents. Third are customers working in the informal sectors (not with formal employment) which were retailers of consumers and industrial products with mobile phones, accounting for 96 (23.6%) and 93 (22.9%) of

them were students from tertiary education institutions. Since gender has an influence on technological adoption (Lwoga & Lwoga, 2017), the gender of the respondents was analyzed. Out of 406 participants who returned the questionnaires, 203 (50%) participants were females and 203 (50%) were males.

Reliability Test

Reliability was tested to ascertain if the available research tools measures the intended outcomes (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Cronbach’s alpha was used to measure the internal consistency of the research instruments. The results on the reliability on Cronbach’s alpha ranged from 0.905 to 0.921. Since all the values were above 0.7, which is the cutoff point, this indicated that the questionnaire used was reliable in measuring the studied constructs (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Table 1 indicates the reliability results.

In order to assess if items measured the same construct, exploratory factor analysis was done. Before exploratory factor analysis, Kaiser Mayer Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett’s Test for Sphericity (BTS) were tested for factor analysis suitability. Hence, it is argued that KMO should be greater than 0.6 and BTS values should be less than 0.05 of the significant level to indicate that Factor Analysis is suitable for the data (Basto & Pereira, 2012). Since BTS had a value of less than 0.001 and KMO had a value of 0.8, the data were suitable for FA.

According to Basto and Pereira (2012), for items which measure similar outcomes to have similarities, factor loading should have the cutoff point of above 0.3 such that the item with factor loading above 0.3 were retained for analysis. As indicated in Table 2, factor loading had value above 0.3 which is the cutoff point which indicated that items were reliable for the studied phenomenon and analysis.

Table 1. Summary of Reliability and Validity of Data

Construct	Reliability			
	Cronbach’s alpha	No. of items	KMO	BTS X ² (P-Value)
Adoption of Mobile Marketing	0.921	7	0.915	1840.2 (<0.001)
Perceived Usefulness (PU)	0.920	5	0.894	1427.878 (<0.001)
Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)	0.905	5	0.857	1286.215 (<0.001)
Perceived Customer’s Knowledge (PCK)	0.899	4	0.842	970.949 (<0.001)

Source: Fieldwork, (2020)
 Where;

KMO: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy
 BTS: Bartlett's Test of Sphericity

Table 2. Factor Loading for each item under the studied constructs

Construct	Item	Factor Loading
Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)	PEOU1	0.879
	PEOU2	0.855
	PEOU3	0.845
	PEOU4	0.838
	PEOU5	0.837
Perceived Usefulness (PU)	PU2	0.893
	PU4	0.890
	PU3	0.875
	PU1	0.862
	PU5	0.834
Perceived Customer Knowledge (PCK)	PCK3	0.885
	PCK4	0.878
	PCK2	0.871
	PCK1	0.869
Adoption of Mobile Marketing (AMM)	AMM1	0.837
	AMM2	0.819
	AMM3	0.831
	AMM4	0.8
	AMM5	0.794
	AMM6	0.836
	AMM7	0.842

Source; Fieldwork (2020)

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

Only one component was extracted per each construct from its related variables.

The solution was not rotated (No rotated component matrix)

Correlation Analysis

Correlation Analysis was undertaken to establish the relation between the variables. According to Senthilnathan (2019), correlations ranging from +0.00 to +0.30 shows little correlation, +0.30 to +0.50 shows low correlation, +0.50 to +0.70 moderate, +0.70 to +0.90 high, and +0.90 to 1.00 extremely high correlation. Multicollinearity is possible in the model when $r \geq +0.9$ (Senthilnathan, 2019). The correlation in Table 3 indicates that correlation between independent variables and dependent variables ranges from $r = 0.550$ to $r = 0.707$ at $p < 0.01$. This shows that all independent variables have significant relationship with Adoption of Mobile Marketing (AMM) in the Tanzania telecommunication industry.

Table 3. Inter- Correlation among Variables (N=406)

Variable	AMM	PU	PEOU	PCK
AMM	1	0.692**	0.568**	0.550**
PU	0.692**	1	0.707**	0.787**
PEOU	0.568**	0.707**	1	0.597**
PCK	0.550**	0.787**	0.597**	1
N	406	406	406	406

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); Source; Fieldwork, (2020)

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis was undertaken in order to test the hypothesis of the studied objectives. As indicated in Table 4.5, the fitness of the model used was analyzed based on the analysis and indicated the F statistics to be $F = 186.04$, which was significant at $p < 0.001$. Thus, this indicated the model was fit on the studied phenomenon and that all variables explained the adoption of mobile marketing. The coefficient of determination (R squared) was 0.699 and the adjusted R was 0.696, which indicated that all variables showed 70 percent on the adoption of mobile marketing.

Furthermore, model residuals were independent as the Durbin Watson statistic was closer to 2. The data obtained had value less than 1. Hence, no evidence of outliers was found. According to Daoud (2018) for absence of multicollinearity, VIF should range between 1 to 5 and the Tolerance should range from 0 to 1. This indicates the absence of multicollinearity on the model as indicated in Table 4.

Table 4. Overall Linear Regression Assumptions and Model Summary

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig(P).	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlation	Tolerance	VIF
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Partial		
PU	0.792	0.030	0.357	6.784	(<0.001)	0.253	0.46	0.321	0.272	3.681
PEOU	0.768	0.056	0.19	3.31	0.001	0.077	0.303	0.163	0.229	4.376
PCK	0.750	0.33	0.12	2.07	0.039	0.006	0.233	0.103	0.226	4.429
R	0.795	R squared	Adjusted R	Std error of estimate	Dublin Watson	F	Sign (P value)			
		0.699	0.696	0.55	1.783	186.04	(<0.001)			

Source; Field work, 2020

Effect of Perceived Usefulness (PU) on AMM

The findings from Table 4 indicated that Perceived Usefulness (PU) has significant effects on the adoption of mobile marketing as there was a significant positive association as one scale increase in PU resulted into a 0.36 (95% CI: 0.253, 0.46) increase in AMM at $p < 0.001$. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis that Perceived usefulness significantly influences adoption of mobile marketing is supported and the null hypothesis is rejected.

Effect of Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) on AMM

The findings from Table 4 indicated that Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) has significant effects on the adoption of mobile marketing at 0.19 (95% CI; 0.077, 0.303) at $P = 0.001$. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is supported that Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) significantly influences adoption of mobile marketing, while the null hypothesis is rejected.

Effect of Perceived Customer Knowledge (PCK) on AMM

The findings from Table 4 indicated that Perceived Customer Knowledge (PCK) has significant effects on the adoption of mobile marketing (95% CI; 0.006, 0.233) at $P = 0.039$. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is supported

that Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) significantly influences adoption of mobile marketing, while the null hypothesis is rejected.

Discussion

The findings have established the significance of mobile marketing for the researchers and practitioners concerning the adoption of mobile marketing in telecommunication industry. The findings have indicated that perceived usefulness positively influences adoption of mobile marketing. This implies that mobile service providers and researchers should attach the need of consumer usefulness on the mobile marketing products and services as it was noted that customers in the telecommunication industry in Tanzania are prone to the usefulness of the mobile marketing platforms which can reduce the customer's problems.

Consequently, the findings are consistent with the study done by Abdinoo and Mbamba (2017), Hamza and Shah (2014), Mehra *et al.* (2020), and Olubumni and Adeyemi (2018). Thus, they indicated that perceived usefulness is significant in influencing mobile marketing adoption. In theoretical understanding, these findings give important knowledge on the important factors in customers' adoption of mobile marketing products in telecommunication industry in Tanzania, particularly the importance of perceived usefulness as the important determinants of consumers' adoption of mobile marketing products and services. The findings are consistent with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) that PU influences consumers' adoption of technology.

Regarding the findings on Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), results indicate that it has significant effects on the adoption of mobile marketing in the telecommunication industry in Tanzania. These findings are consistent with the studies done by Chitungo and Munongo (2013), Hamza and Shah (2014), Kim *et al.* (2010), Said *et al.* (2019), Tobbins and Kuwornu (2011) that PEOU significantly influence adoption of mobile financial services. As Lwoga and Lwoga (2017) insisted that mobile marketing is still in its infant stages in Tanzania, mobile marketing service providers should ensure that their products are easily accessed by customers and that they are easy and simple to use. This will facilitate more adoption of mobile marketing platforms.

The findings are not consistent with the study done by Chinomona and Sandala (2013) in South Africa; Hu *et al.* (2019) in China; Kocukusta *et al.* (2015) in Hongkong, which found insignificant relationships between perceived ease of use with mobile marketing adoption. These could be attributed to the contextual factors that customer preferences and adoption of

mobile marketing products are influenced by the culture, environmental factors, lifestyles, and demand patterns (Wamuyu, 2014). The important findings on this study entails that mobile marketing strategies by the mobile marketing service providers need to ascertain the demographic differences of their customers before designing and selling their mobile marketing technology in the market.

In theoretical understanding, these findings give out the important factors in customers' adoption of mobile marketing products, particularly the importance of perceived ease of use, as the important determinants of consumers' adoption of mobile marketing products and services in the telecommunication industry in Tanzania. The findings are consistent with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) that PEOU influences consumers' adoption of technology.

The study has adopted the Technology Acceptance Model by the use of two main constructs which are Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use in the context of assessing the factors influencing customers' adoption of mobile marketing in telecommunication industry in Tanzania. However, the study extended the TAM and included Perceived Customer Knowledge (PCK) which was guided by the Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DOI). It also indicated the importance of customers' knowledge of mobile marketing platforms before adoption (Acheampong *et al.* 2019). This indicates that the customers in the telecommunication industry in Tanzania will find the mobile marketing platform useful and easy to use when combined with the customer's understanding of the mobile marketing products and services. Therefore, mobile service providers in the telecommunication industry in Tanzania should emphasize the need for promotion of the mobile marketing products and services, by giving customers knowledge on mobile products, in order to entice more customers to adopt the mobile marketing technology.

Conclusion

The objective of the study was to identify the factors affecting the adoption of mobile marketing in telecommunication industry in Tanzania by assessing the effects of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and perceived customer knowledge. The overall findings of this study conform to the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) in assessing the effects of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use on adoption of mobile marketing in Tanzania. Therefore, this shows a positive influence on the adoption of mobile marketing in Tanzania. The integrated theoretical framework from TAM and DOI constructs of PU, PEOU, and PCK show a significant influence on customers' adoption in telecommunication industry

in Tanzania. In addition, the integrated theoretical framework has indicated the parsimonious contribution in predicting the adoption of mobile marketing in Tanzania by using fewer variables of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and perceived customer knowledge which have showed high explanatory power on the study findings in explaining the adoption of mobile marketing. Empirically, it can be concluded that mobile service practitioners need to develop mobile platforms and applications that are easy and useful on the consumers' perspectives and which are easily understood based on its benefits by the customers.

Study Recommendations

In theoretical underpinning of the study, the construct of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use were part of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), whereas Perceived Customer Knowledge construct was part of Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DOI), which provided significant understanding of the customer's adoption of mobile marketing in telecommunication industry in Tanzania. It has revealed that customers perceive positive adoption on mobile marketing platforms and accept those platforms that are easy to use and useful. Hence, they need to understand the mobile products and services offered in order to adopt. Also, consumers should assess the mobile marketing products depending on how the system is useful and easy to use.

Mobile service providers and researchers need to understand their customers' benefits on the mobile marketing products. This is because customers are focused on usefulness and ease of use on the products or services, which have been indicated as important components of customers' benefits. In addition, service providers (practitioners) need to improve their marketing and business strategies in relation with understanding the consumers' demands, markets, and types of products with the reflection of understanding of customers' benefits (Asiedu & Sarfo, 2013). Kotler and Keller (2012) opined that the consumers' preference on products or service is the core benefit of the product a consumer is looking for. This will imply that mobile service providers ought to improve the performance of the mobile marketing systems and programs over time, and also undertake thoroughly marketing research that will stimulate customers' benefits in terms of usefulness and ease of use of mobile marketing products (Kumar *et al.*, 2018). This will trigger much adoption for the better business growth of the telecommunication sector. This could be attained by proper segmenting of the customers, by understanding the needs of products in terms of usefulness and ease of use to them.

Subsequently, these findings revealed that customers need products that are easy to use. Most designers in the information system often think of

designing products that are useful and of ease of use to the customers. However, it should be understood that usefulness and ease of use is important but not sufficient (Venkatesh *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, it should be understood that customers need products that are easily understood by them. Therefore, mobile service providers need to understand their customers' needs and demands, and influence the consumers' interests, by explaining the benefits of their products and services in order to offer more differentiated products that conform to the customers' knowledge (Kwamboka *et al.*, 2018).

Mobile service stakeholders and government should work hand-in-hand in formulating better policies that can assist mobile service providers to sell more on mobile products and services that meet the demands of the customers. This calls for the mobile service stakeholders' improvement by having better technology infrastructure, which goes with the support of reduction in tax by the government to stimulate customers' demand. Thus, this will enhance the economy of the country and the growth of the telecommunication business in Tanzania.

Areas for Further Study

This study used the TAM constructs of Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use and added the new construct of Perceived Customer Knowledge from the Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DOI). The combined model, therefore, can be used in future studies in other sectors such as banking, manufacturing, and tourism for further understanding of the factors influencing customers' adoption of mobile marketing in Tanzania and other developing countries.

There are a lot of factors which have not been undertaken in this study, and further studies regarding the adoption of mobile marketing in Tanzania need to be done. The fact that the study was done only in one region out of the 26 regions of Tanzania, could mean that the sample may sometimes not be the actual representation of the entire population regarding mobile marketing adoption in Tanzania. However, this study was limited to Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, and Perceived Customer Knowledge. Further study may include other factors such as perceived enjoyment, perceived risks, attitude, compatibility, system characteristics, and perceived behavioural intention in understanding the factors influencing the customer's adoption of mobile marketing in telecommunication industry in Tanzania.

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ESJ Social Sciences

Organizational Conflict Management: The All Important Public Universities Performance Strategy Under Neglect in Kenya

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p181](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p181)

Submitted: 15 March 2021

Accepted: 02 April 2021

Published: 30 April 2021

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Cite As:

Mwaniki, MG., and Muathe, MAS. (2021). Organizational Conflict Management: The All Important Public Universities Performance Strategy Under Neglect in Kenya, European Scientific Journal, ESJ, 17(12), 181. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p181>

Abstract

Workplace conflicts are inevitable in any work-organization. However, there is contestation as to whether management of organizational conflicts enhances or deteriorates employees' performance. This study sought to determine the effect of organizational conflict management techniques, namely negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance, on employees' performance in selected public universities in Kenya. The study was based on the human relations, human capital and contingency theories. The study adopted a positivist quantitative approach - a methodological approach that seeks to quantify data and generalize results from a sample of a target population in an objective manner using statistical means. The study adopted descriptive research design. The study population was employees of the selected public universities in Kenya. A sample of 160 participants was chosen using stratified and simple random sampling methods. Gathered data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Both ANOVA and regression analysis were utilized in analysis of the data. The study established that there was a strong positive and significant relationship between negotiation,

mediation as well as collaboration and employees' performance in the selected public universities in Kenya as the three variables had positive beta coefficients and p-values less than the set significance level threshold. However, avoidance was found to have a negative and significant relationship with employees' performance in the selected public universities in Kenya as denoted by its negative beta coefficient value and a p value less than the set significance level threshold. The study concluded that negotiation, mediation and collaboration positively influenced employees' performance while avoidance adversely affected employees' performance. Consequently, the study recommends that the managements of public universities in Kenya may apply a mix of these organizational conflict management techniques to achieve optimal outcomes in resolution of organizational conflicts.

Keywords: Organizational conflicts, Negotiation, Mediation, Collaboration, Employees performance, Universities

Introduction

Performance in the firm is a process that is characterised by the management of the employees and coming to an agreement on the best practices to use to achieve agreed results. This process is continuous and flexible (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). Performance in any firm is as a result of a sequence of processes that are done in an agreed flow from the gathering of resources to development of competencies and capabilities and coming up with systems to act as a guide to ensure that the firm employees achieve the desired results (Al-Matari, Al-Swidi & Fadzil, 2014). In view of this, firm performance can be viewed as the end result or outcomes of organizational activities and operational processes (Stannack, 2016). The essence of an organization's performance, as noted by Al-Matari et al. (2014) and Lazarus (2014), lies in its link to employees' and customers' satisfaction, employees' productivity and reported margins for the organization.

The evolution of the resource-based view (RBV), amplified the role of employees in an organisation's performance. Through it, the contributions of an entity's human resource are now identified as a core measure of its performance (Olang, 2017). Today, employees are regarded as important assets of any firm. The performance of employees has further been shown to influence firm performance (Agwu, 2013). According to Lazarus (2014), for employees to perform as expected, there should be directional and motivational factors that help them perform their duties with efficiency and effectiveness. Stannack (2016) argued that employee performance denotes individual employee's results after making an effort to do their responsibilities. Similarly, Siljanen (2010) pointed that the performance of

an employee is characterized by completion of his or her responsibilities as provided for by the firm.

From these perspectives of employee performance, it is evident that in simple words, employee performance means the contribution that an individual employee makes towards the attainment of organizational goals (Parmenter, 2015). Measuring the performance of an individual worker requires providing the worker with certain tasks and expectations, motivating and enhancing the competencies of the worker and assessing the outcome and giving constructive feedback (Williams, 2012). When well handled, management of staff performance is meant to lead to more engaged and motivated workers, greater focus on improving business results and a more nurtured talent (Ndulue & Ekechukwu, 2016). To optimize employee performance, deliberate effort must be made by those in authority within the organization to enhance the facilitators/enablers of employee's performance while at the same reducing or eliminating any factors that adversely impact on employee performance (Stannack, 2016).

The nature of today's firms, whether in the service or manufacturing industry and whether public or private, inevitably generates conflicts which result from the scarcity of freedom, positions and resources, structurally challenges such as communication and leadership problems as well as differences in the personality, attitudes, feelings, needs and perceptions between and/or among the staffs (Saranya, 2016). Workplace conflict is thus endemic in most of the contemporary organizations and manifests in various forms including rivalries, fight for power and favor, jealousy, personal conflicts or in more serious forms such as staff strikes and legal actions (Mughal & Khan, 2013).

Longe (2015) explains workplace conflict as the lack of good rapport that happens because the actual or perceived needs, goals, interests or values of the different members of the same do not agree and there is frustration as each of them tries to bring their own contribution to the achievement of the firm's goals. Organizational conflicts are bound to occur especially because the firm has different individuals and the daily relationship with others can lead to disagreements and discord in the firm (Awan & Saeed, 2015). Thus, conflict in the workplace is common and will always happen especially because there is competition for security, recognition, power and roles (Olang, 2017).

In the management of today's organizations, executives face difficult decisions relating to the choice of conflict resolution mechanisms and choosing the best means to resolve conflict fairly while still motivating the employees to do their best so that they can deliver organizational goals and objectives (Kazimoto, 2013). However, conflicts in the work place are not always a bad thing. In some instances, they provide a chance for

reconciliation and learning opportunities for the good of the worker and the firm (Kehinde, 2011). This is suggestive of the fact that a conflict that is resolved properly can enhance the organization through identification of viable solutions that take into account the various interests and needs of the conflicting parties (Agwu, 2013). Indeed, if properly handled, conflicts can improve the performance of an individual (Awan & Saeed, 2015). However, their effects can lead to negative consequences especially if they result to hate among the employees or teams in the workplace with attendant negative consequences such as missed deadlines, delayed decisions, depression, reduced teamwork and opting to solve problems alone rather than as a team, distrust, poor customer service, disruptions while doing tasks, diversion of employees' time and energy from the main issues, among others (Mwangi & Ragui, 2013; Awan & Saeed, 2015).

Organizational conflict management (OCM) reduces the negative elements of conflict and increases the positive conflict elements by use of various styles and techniques in managing the conflict(s) between and/or among individuals or groups (Prause & Mujtaba, 2015). According to Ajike et al. (2015) organizational conflict management involves the firm identifying the root of the conflict and coming up with ways to minimize or stop the conflict. Similarly, Rahim (2017) expressed the view that organizational conflict management is characterized by coming up with effective methods to control conflict and to improve the positive effects of conflict so as to allow the workers to learn and be effective in completing their responsibilities. This therefore shows that organizational conflict management techniques refer to methods that the management uses to resolve workplace disputes (Currie et al., 2017).

In this study, four organizational conflict management techniques were used as the study variables. These included avoidance - which employs a lose/lose approach where both parties of the conflict withdraw or fail to deal with the issue(s) causing the dispute; mediation - where parties in conflict involve an impartial third party to help them resolve the dispute; negotiation - this is a conversation made among parties especially in times of conflict whose aim is to reach a beneficial outcome for all the parties involved and to solve the issues at hand; and collaboration - where everybody wins and the parties to the dispute agree willingly to meet the other party's needs (Currie et al., 2017).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Employee performance is an integral part of every organization and an organization's overall performance largely reflects the performance of its employees (Agusioma, 2018). Attaining high levels of work performance

among the universities employees in Kenya has proved to be challenging for the universities' management (Ibua, 2017). Over the years, the performance of employees in the country's institutions of higher learning have been adversely affected by persistent workers strikes and go-slows, which paralyze learning in the institutions, as the university staffs protest over poor working conditions, low pay, understaffing among other grievances (Ng'ethe, 2013).

As a consequence, the low performance of the universities employees in the country is manifested in high levels of absenteeism, high staff turnovers, failure of students to complete their courses within the prescribed timeline and generation of graduates who barely fit into the job market (Mwanza, 2012). Given that organizational conflicts are inevitable within university settings owing to the diversity and dynamism of the workforce, it was imperative that an empirical investigation was carried out to examine how conflict management affected employees' performance in these institutions.

Studies on management of organizational conflicts and its effect on employees' performance by Mughal and Khan (2013) in South Korea, Pradhan and Jena (2017) in India, Agwu (2013) and Ajike et al. (2015) in Nigeria and Donkor et al. (2015) in Ghana - all emphasized on the need for organizations to utilize relevant conflict resolution mechanisms to achieve amicable resolution of conflicts to safeguard employees' performance. Similarly, local studies on workplace conflicts and employees' productivity including Mwangi and Ragui (2013) - air transport sector; Mwikali (2016) - Kenya Power and Olang (2017) - Stima Sacco Society Limited, shared the view that lack of conflict resolution mechanisms negatively affected work performance of workers.

None of the local studies evaluated the impact of organizational conflict management techniques on employees' performance in Kenya's public universities. This indicated that there was dearth of empirical literature on organizational conflict management techniques and employees performance in Kenya's public universities which was the research gap addressed by the current study.

2.0 Review of Literature

2.1 Theoretical Review

The two theories that formed the basis of this study were human relations theory and contingency theory. Human relations theory is attributed to Mayo who is hailed for its development in 1933. Mayo examined the impact of motivation, social relations and satisfaction levels of workers on the productivity of the employees. Mayo stressed on the power that is in

natural teams where he explained that social relations are always more important than the structure of the organizations. According to him, communication which is a two-way process between the employee and the manager and vice versa is important. Additionally, leaders should effectively communicate to the employees their work objectives to allow them to make the right decisions (Currie et al., 2017).

Firms also expect their members of staff to efficiently communicate information to others, to openly express their feelings, to deduce the feelings of others and to amicably resolve disputes and come to an understanding as this theory does not recognize conflict as a creative force (Prause & Mujtaba, 2015). When executives are able to have such competencies, they can maintain good relationships with their customers (Mughal & Khan, 2013). The theory emphasizes conflict resolution and its effect on employee performance making it relevant to the current research study.

Contingency theory is a behaviorist theory formulated in 1958 by Woodward. The theory argues that there are many ways of managing a firm. The best course of management is contingent or depends on internal and external forces. Firms should come up with the best managerial system for that time after considering the conditions and situation the firm is in (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). Thompson points out a big challenge for firms in his 1967 classic organization in action model as the achievement of originality in a world faced by uncertainties. According to him, firms seek to meet certain results. However, they are in a dynamic environment that is surrounded by uncertainties which makes it difficult for them to come up with the right plan that can be fully employed to give the desired results. According to Thompson, although firms are open systems the environment in which they are is uncertain and the firms have little control over it (Cole & Kelly, 2011).

According to the contingency theory, a firm should come up with clear decisions and actions which have a relationship with some defined environments that are able to create a match (Islam & Hu, 2012). The theory further postulates that the organization does not only owe a duty of care to its shareholders only but to its stakeholders too. Examples of these stakeholders include employees, suppliers, customers, communities, creditors, government and regulatory bodies, and current and potential investors all who impact the firm performance in a significant way (Agusioma, 2018). But those who are against the theory's arguments base their arguments on the notion that the theory lacks an explanation on the action to be taken where the leader and the situation at hand do not match and that the theory further fails to give an explanation as to the reasons why some leaders with their leadership styles do well in some situations but fail terribly in others (Lazarus, 2014).

When applied to organizational conflict management, this theory argues that the choice of the conflict management techniques is contingent on the setting/context from which the conflicts arise (Toku, 2014). This theory thus advances the notion that conflict management approaches or mechanisms can vary considerably, depending on the organizational circumstances that led to the emergence of the conflicts. Thus, the management must carefully select conflict management techniques in light of prevailing circumstances in the organization and the desired conflict outcomes (Cole & Kelly, 2011). The theory was relevant to the current research since it evaluates the impact of contingent variables such as conflicts on organizational workforce performance.

2.2 Empirical Review

In an empirical study conducted among Icelandic organizations on conflict management methods, intergroup and interpersonal forms of workplace conflicts were found to be common. The study observed that diverse conflict resolution approaches had a positive impact on organizational effectiveness and led to a rise in employee productivity (Violetta, 2012). Similarly, Zhu (2013) in a study conducted in China, agreed with the view that negotiation as a method of conflict management was an antecedent to employees in the organization to have constructive dialogues and increased their willingness to stay with the organization. Similar observations were made by Iravo (2011) who in a study on conflict management and its impact on performance of public secondary schools in Machakos County, Kenya concluded that it was evident that a positive significant association did exist between effective management of conflicts and the schools' performance. However, while these studies illuminated the discourse on conflict management in organizations' context, they failed to establish the link between various conflict resolution techniques and employee performance, a gap addressed by the current study.

In an empirical investigation carried out in Nigeria, Ajike et al. (2015) examined how conflict management influences organizational performance of Nigerian Access Bank Plc. This was a case study using 81 members of staff as the sample who were from three Lagos branches of the bank. They were administered with questionnaires to respond to. Descriptive and regression analysis with the help of SPSS helped determine the association between conflict management and the bank's organizational performance. The results indicated a favorable association between the two variables under study ($r= 0.715$; $p<0.05$). A recommendation made was that the banks management should come up with different and proper methods to resolve disputes immediately they arose before they could escalate to unsolvable levels. The current study differed from this study in that it was

based on institutions of higher learning as the study units and not a bank as was the case in Ajike et al.'s study. Further, while Ajike et al.'s study was a case study, the current one was a survey involving several institutions.

In another Nigerian study, Longe (2015) sought to know the impact of conflict in the workplace on organizational performance using the case of a Nigerian manufacturing organization. The study participants consisted of 250 employees of the firm chosen by the use of the stratified random sampling method. A validated structured questionnaire was the data gathering research tool. Data analysis was made with the help of inferential and descriptive statistics. The results indicated a favorable and significant positive association between collaboration as an integrative conflict management technique and the organizational performance of the selected manufacturing firm. Regression analysis outcomes showed that the variable that gave the highest positive correlation with the performance of the organization was collaboration. The conclusion made was that conflict could not be avoided in contemporary organizations and depending on the conflict management methods adopted, it could positively or adversely influence organizational performance. While this study was done in a manufacturing firm in Nigeria, the current study was done in universities in Kenya.

In a study carried out in Kenya, Mwikali (2016) investigated the impact of the use of methods of managing conflict on the performance of staff of Kenya Power Limited. The descriptive study had a target population of 1055 respondents. The sample has 290 participants who were chosen by purposive and random sampling methods. Questionnaires were the data gathering tools in the study. Inferential and descriptive statistics with the assistance of SPSS version 20 analyzed the primary data. The results of the study showed that many of the participants were in agreement to a great extent that mediation as a conflict resolution mechanism influenced employees' performance and that involvement of impartial third parties to mediate parties in conflict had a high chance of achieving a positive outcome in relation to resolving of organizational conflicts. However, while this study was based on a firm in the energy sector in Kenya, the current study is based on institutions in the country's education sector. Further, Mwikali's study also focused on a single entity while the current study derived its data from several institutions.

2.3 Study Hypotheses

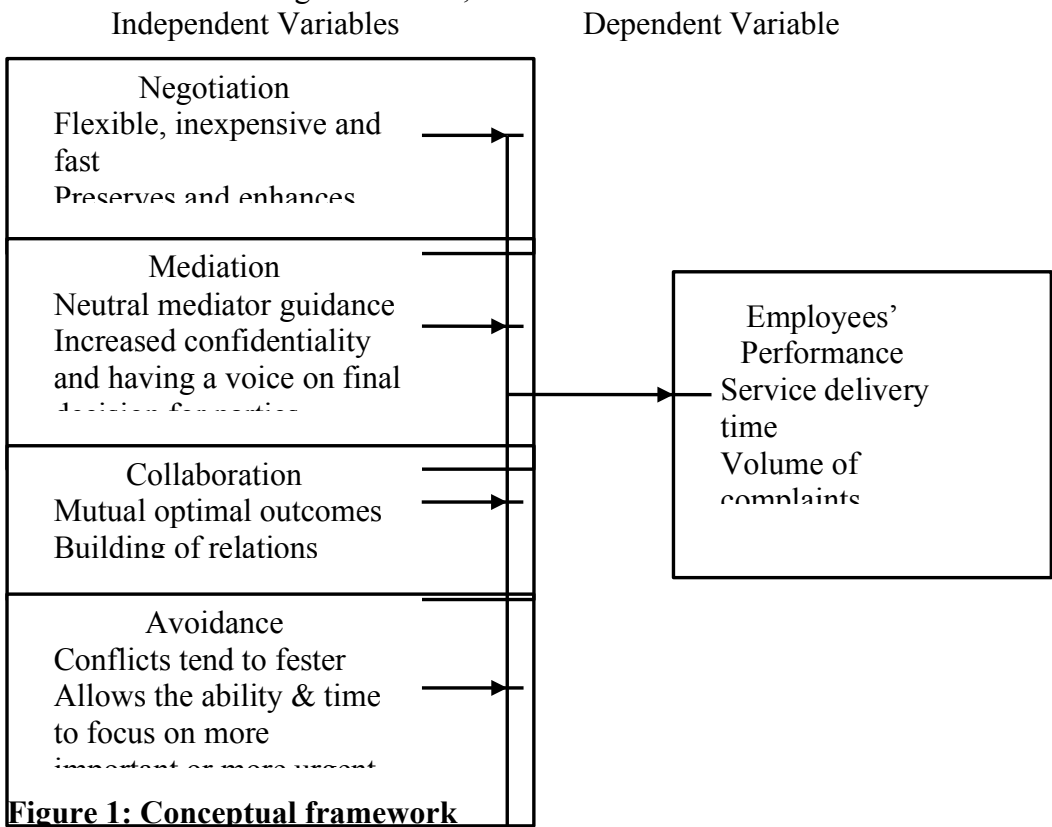
The null and alternate hypotheses tested in the study included;

Ho(1). Negotiation had no significant effect on employees' performance in selected public universities in Kenya.

H1(1). Negotiation had a significant effect on employees' performance in selected public universities in Kenya.

- Ho(2). Mediation had no significant effect on employees’ performance in selected public universities in Kenya.
- H1(2). Mediation had a significant effect on employees’ performance in selected public universities in Kenya.
- Ho(3). Collaboration had no significant effect on employees’ performance in selected public universities in, Kenya.
- H1(3). Collaboration had a significant effect on employees’ performance in selected public universities in, Kenya.
- Ho(4). Avoidance had no significant effect on employees’ performance in selected public universities in Kenya.
- H1(4). Avoidance had a significant effect on employees’ performance in selected public universities in Kenya.

The conceptual framework showing the study variables and their indicators was as illustrated in Figure 1 below;



3.0 Research Methodology

The study adopted a positivist quantitative approach - a methodological approach that seeks to quantify data and generalize results from a sample of a target population in an objective manner using statistical means. This approach was deemed suitable for the study as it is systematic, scientific and objective in nature and allows formulation of a hypothesis and the collection of numerical data to test this hypothesis. Thus, positivism gives rise to quantitative methodology - a methodology that involves the collection of 'scientific' data that is precise and based on measurement and is often analysed using statistics with the intention that the findings be generalizable. The study adopted descriptive research design. Kothari (2004) and Muathe (2010) points out that this kind of design provides a glimpse of the current situation in its environment. The design aims to give reliable data on the behaviors, events and situations as they happen naturally. This design was preferred as it enabled the description of the subject under review devoid of bias or manipulation. The study population was 1,600 employees of the selected public universities in Kenya. A sample of 160 participants was chosen using stratified and simple random sampling methods. The analysis of the gathered data was done using descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. The research findings were presented in the form of frequencies, means, percentages and standard deviation. Association between the study variables analysis was achieved using correlation and multiple linear regression analysis. Confidentiality of information obtained, anonymity in processing and reporting of study data, voluntary participation and using the study data for research purposes only, formed this study's ethical considerations.

The multiple regression analysis model adopted for this study was as follows;

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where;

Y = Dependent variable (employees' performance)

X₁ = Negotiation

X₂ = Mediation

X₃ = Collaboration

X₄ = Avoidance

β₁ - β₄ = Beta coefficients of independent variables

ε = error term α = constant

The significance of the regression model was evaluated using F statistic while the significance of the regression estimators was evaluated using t statistic, both at 5% level of significance. However, prior to conducting the multiple regression analysis, the researcher performed three

diagnostic tests which included correlation, normality and multicollinearity tests. The diagnostic tests done were important as they helped ensure the data gathered met the given assumptions made in the use of regression analysis.

4.0 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

4.1.1 Negotiation as a Conflict Management Technique

The study sought to establish the effect of negotiation as a conflict management technique. The study determined the level of agreement by the respondents with different aspects on negotiation as a conflict management technique in their organization using a scale of 1-5 where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree. Table 1 contains the findings.

Table 1: Respondents' level of agreement with statements on negotiation as a conflict management technique

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev
Negotiations provide a quick, inexpensive and flexible approach to conflict resolution	4.13	0.650
Negotiations help enhance communication among conflicting parties which preserves their relationships	4.29	0.595
Negotiations are usually risk-free since communication are prejudice free and when the parties can't come to an agreement, they are free to seek other	4.05	0.854
Negotiations can help clarify and narrow down issues and encouraging an environment of co-operation, openness and collaboration even when an agreement on the best decision is not achieved	4.21	0.628
Negotiations may lead to enhanced satisfaction and adherence to settlements when parties are made part of the decision making and the coming up with agreements	4.36	0.589

Source: Survey Data, 2020

The outcomes provided in Table 1 above indicate that workers of the chosen universities in Kenya were in agreement that negotiations may lead to enhanced satisfaction and adherence to settlements when parties are made part of the decision making and the coming up with agreements (mean = 4.36); negotiations help enhance communication among conflicting parties which preserves their relationships (mean = 4.29); negotiations can help clarify and narrow down issues and encouraging an environment of co-operation, openness and collaboration even when an agreement on the best decision is not achieved (mean = 4.21); negotiations provide a quick,

inexpensive and flexible approach to conflict resolution (mean = 4.13) and that negotiations are usually risk-free since communication are prejudice free and when the parties can't come to an agreement, they are free to seek other options (mean = 4.05). This implied that employees of the selected public universities in Kenya acknowledged the significance of negotiation as a conflict management technique in their organizations.

This agreed with Oni-Ojo et al. (2014) who also identified negotiation as one of the key conflict resolution techniques that yielded positive conflict resolution outcomes. The study espoused the view that negotiations were a viable dispute resolution mechanism that could help organizations manage workplace conflicts; thereby contributing to their success in attainment of organizational goals. Similar sentiments were shared by Ndulue and Ekechukwu (2016) and Olang (2017) who also observed that negotiation, as a conflict resolution technique, allowed parties in conflict to foster a climate of openness, cooperation and understanding leading to quicker settlement of disputes in turn enhancing staff performance. Awan and Saeed (2015) agreed adding that negotiations enhance relationships between warring parties and increases the likelihood of the parties' compliance with mutually agreed settlements to the conflict.

4.1.2 Mediation as a Conflict Management Technique

The study sought to examine the effect of mediation as a conflict management technique. The study sought to know the agreement levels of the respondents with different statements on mediation as a conflict management technique in their organization using a scale of 1-5 where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree. The results were as provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Respondents' agreement level with statements on mediation as a conflict management technique

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev
In mediation, the parties are active participants in dispute resolution and are provided with the chance to listen to each other without confrontation and in a confidential setting	4.14	0.691
Mediation enhances staff productivity as there is potential to a speedy resolution of conflicts, saving various resources including time and money	4.09	0.827
Mediation provides the conflicting parties with a chance to test the strengths, weaknesses and theories of their case	4.01	0.760
Mediation enhances staff performance as it preserves or allows continuing relationships between parties in conflict	4.20	0.650
Mediation facilitates staff performance as it is the parties, rather than the mediator who makes the final decision	4.27	0.679

Source: Survey Data, 2020

The study findings in Table 2 above indicate that the chosen public universities employees concurred that mediation facilitates staff performance as it is the parties, rather than the mediator who makes the final decision (mean = 4.27); mediation enhances staff performance as it preserves or allows continuing relationships between parties in conflict (mean = 4.20); in mediation, the parties are active participants in dispute resolution and are provided with the chance to listen to each other without confrontation and in a confidential setting (mean = 4.14); mediation enhances staff productivity as there is potential to a speedy resolution of conflicts, saving both time and money (mean = 4.09) and that mediation gives an opportunity for the conflicting parties to test the theories, weaknesses and strengths of their case (mean = 4.01). This implied that employees of the selected public universities in Kenya did acknowledge the importance of mediation as a conflict management technique and its role in enhancing staff performance in their organizations.

This concurred with Ajike et al. (2015) who also identified mediation as a viable conflict management technique by parties in conflict an opportunity to be heard in a confidential setting. Similar observations were made by Lazarus (2014) who pointed that mediation helps prevent lengthy contracted conflicts by allowing speedy resolution of arising conflicts. Olang (2017) and Mwikali (2016) also shared the view that mediation was a conflict resolution mechanism that had a high chance of achieving positive outcomes in relation to resolving of organizational conflicts.

4.1.3 Collaboration as a Conflict Management Technique

The study sought to investigate the effect of collaboration as a conflict management technique. The study sought to know the agreement levels of the respondents with different statements on collaboration as a conflict management technique in their organization using a scale of 1-5 where 1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5= strongly agree. The findings were as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Respondents’ agreement with statements on collaboration as a conflict management technique

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev
Embracing dialogue in managing conflicts results into positive conflict outcomes in turn leading to better employee performance	4.41	0.585
Collaboration helps in achievement of mutual optimal outcomes in conflict resolution given its focus on building relations and integrating solutions	4.22	0.693
Collaboration enhances employees performance as it emphasizes that the conflicting parties should be willing and prepared to meet each	4.18	0.675

other demands in full

The collaborating conflict management style provides a suitable way to bring together the different insights of individuals on the various problem perspectives and the end result can be an unwavering commitment to the decision made from all the parties	4.11	0.746
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Through collaborating conflict management style, all conflicting parties feel understood and valued	4.29	0.622
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Source: Survey Data, 2020

The study findings in Table 3 above indicate that staff from the chosen public universities in Kenya agreed that embracing dialogue in managing conflicts results into positive conflict outcomes in turn leading to better employee performance (mean = 4.41); through collaborating as a conflict management style, all conflicting parties feel understood and valued (mean = 4.29); collaboration helps in achievement of mutual optimal outcomes in conflict resolution given its focus on building relations and integrating solutions (mean = 4.22); collaboration enhances employees performance as it emphasizes that the conflicting parties should be willing and prepared to meet each other demands in full (mean = 4.18) and that the collaborating conflict management style provides a suitable way to bring together the different insights of individuals on the various problem perspectives and the end result can be an unwavering commitment to the decision made from all the parties (mean = 4.11). This implied that employees of the selected public universities in Kenya were cognizant of the important role that collaboration played in conflict resolution and creating an enabling working environment in their organizations.

The findings were in agreement with those of Toku (2014) who in a study on conflict resolution techniques in Ghana found that collaboration was a desirable conflict management technique as it strengthened the bond among organization members. The findings also agreed with Agwu (2013) who in a study carried out in Nigeria supported utilization of collaboration as a conflict management technique given its emphasis that the conflicting parties should be willing and prepared to meet each other's demands if possible. Agusioma (2018) and Iravo (2011) also shared the view that collaboration was one of the most effective conflict resolution techniques as it allowed resolution of organizational conflicts through dialogue, relationship building and integrating of varied solutions while also making parties to a conflict feel valued and appreciated.

4.1.4 Avoidance as a Conflict Management Technique

The study sought to determine the effect of avoidance as a conflict management technique. The study sought to know the agreement levels of the respondents with different statements on avoidance as a conflict

management technique in their organization using a scale of 1-5 where 1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5= strongly agree. The responses were as provided in Table 4.

Table 4: Respondents’ level of agreement with statements on avoidance as a conflict management technique

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev
Keeping off from insignificant conflicts improves an employee’s performance	4.06	0.824
The avoidance technique adversely impacts employees performance by allowing conflicts to fester	4.35	0.614
The avoidance technique focuses on the giving of time and ability to more urgent or crucial challenges instead	4.19	0.646
The avoidance technique gives one to prepare and gather data before acting	3.94	0.849
By failing to address conflicts, organizational long-term goals may fail to be met	4.39	0.608

Source: Survey Data, 2020

The responses in Table 4 above show that the chosen public universities in Kenya employees were in agreement that by failing to address conflicts, organizational long-term goals may fail to be met (mean = 4.39); the avoidance technique adversely impacts employees performance by allowing conflicts to fester (mean = 4.35); the avoidance technique focuses on the giving of time and ability to more urgent or crucial challenges instead (mean = 4.19); keeping off from insignificant conflicts improves an employee’s performance (mean = 4.06) and that the avoidance technique gives one time to better prepare and collect information before acting (mean = 3.94). This implied that employees of the selected public universities in Kenya did acknowledge that avoidance was not a favourable conflict management technique in their organizations.

This was in line with the findings of Longe (2015) who in a study carried out in Nigeria observed that avoidance was a conflict management approach that adversely impacted on organizational operation effectiveness as it led to delayed response to causes of organizational conflicts in turn leading to the conflicts exacerbating. Similar observations were made by Kehinde (2011) who also argued that avoidance was not a desirable conflict resolution technique due to its tendency of leaving conflicts to get out of hand due to causes of the conflicts remaining unaddressed. As argued by Ndulue and Ekechukwu (2016), timely conflict resolution is instrumental to workplace harmony and better staff performance. However, this cannot be achieved by leaving conflicts to fester as is the case with avoidance as a

conflict resolution technique, which makes it undesirable. These sentiments were also acknowledged by Oni-Ojo et al. (2014) and Saranya (2016).

4.1.5 Employees' Performance in the Selected Public Universities

The study also evaluated the respondents' agreement level with different statements made on employees' performance in their organization using a scale of 1-5 where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree. Table 5 shows the findings.

Table 5: Respondents' extent of agreement with statements on employees' performance

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev
There is notable decrease in client service waiting time in our organization	4.09	0.874
There is notable increase in employee productivity in our organization	4.03	0.764
There is a notable reduction in clients' number of complaints regarding the service quality of our organization	4.30	0.611
There is notable decrease in problem/complaint resolution time in our organization	4.24	0.655
There is improved transparency and accountability in service delivery in our organization	3.88	0.984
There is notable improvement in employees meeting the set objectives	4.12	0.717

Source: Survey Data, 2020

The responses in Table 5 above indicate that the staff members of the chosen public universities in Kenya were in agreement that there was a notable reduction in clients' number of complaints regarding the service quality of their organization (mean = 4.30); there was notable decrease in problem/complaint resolution time in their organization (mean = 4.24); there was notable improvement in employees meeting the set objectives (mean = 4.12); there was notable decrease in client service waiting time in their organization (mean = 4.09); there was notable increase in employee productivity in their organization (mean = 4.03) and that there was improved transparency and accountability in service delivery in their organization (mean = 3.88). This implied that there was general consensus among the majority of the employees of the selected public universities in Kenya that their performance at work had notably improved. In studies by Longe (2015) and Mwikali (2016), effective conflict resolution was also found to lead to improved employee performance. Similarly, Kehinde (2011) and Mughal and Khan (2013) were of the view that timely and effective conflict resolution creates a conducive working environment enabling employees to perform at the highest possible level translating into improved overall organizational performance.

4.2 Inferential Statistics

4.2.1 Diagnostic Tests Results

The diagnostic tests performed were correlation, normality and multicollinearity tests. The tests were important as they helped the study meet the provided assumptions made during the regression model analysis. The findings of the tests done were as detailed below.

4.2.1.1 Correlation Analysis

The researcher used the Pearson’s correlation analysis to evaluate the association between the study’s independent variables and the dependent variable at 5% significance level. The correlation analysis outcomes were as summarized in Table 6.

Table 6: Correlation matrix

	Employees’ performance	Negotiation	Mediation	Collaboration	Avoidance
Employees’ performance (r)	1.000				
(p) Sig. (2 tailed)					
Negotiation (r)	0.716	1.000			
(p) (2 tailed)	0.000				
Mediation (r)	0.662	0.037	1.000		
(p) Sig. (2 tailed)	0.018	0.321			
Collaboration	0.743	0.115	0.236	1.000	
	0.000	0.207	0.131		
Avoidance (r)	-0.481	0.088	0.045	0.123	1.000
(p) Sig. (2 tailed)	0.021	0.149	0.327	0.182	

Source: Survey Data, 2020

Results of the Pearson’s correlation coefficients, shown in Table 6 above, depicts that there was a strong favourable and significant correlation between negotiation ($r=0.716$, p -value <0.05); mediation ($r=0.662$, p -value <0.05) as well as collaboration ($r=0.743$, p -value <0.05) as conflict management techniques and employees’ performance in the selected public universities in Kenya. The findings also indicate that there was a negative and significant correlation between avoidance ($r=-0.481$, p -value <0.05) as a conflict management technique and employees’ performance in the selected public universities in Kenya.

Therefore, it is implied that the use of negotiation, mediation and collaboration as conflict management techniques positively influenced employees’ performance in the chosen public universities in Kenya while the use of avoidance, as a conflict management technique, had a negative impact on the performance of the said employees. This agreed with Agwu (2013), Longe (2015), Lazarus (2014) and Olang (2017) all of whom reported that negotiation, mediation and collaboration as organizational conflict

management techniques positively influenced employees' performance. The findings also agreed with those of Oni-Ojo et al. (2014) and Saranya (2016) who identified a negative association between avoidance and employee performance.

4.2.1.2 Normality Tests

In this study, normality of the gathered data testing was done with the help of the Shapiro - Wilk test. The study's significance level was $p = 5\%$. For $p \geq 0.05$ the assumption made was that there exists normality while for $p < 0.05$, the assumption made was that there was deviation from normality. The outcomes of this test are depicted in Table 7.

Table 7: Tests of Normality

Variables	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Negotiation	.881	52	.675
Mediation	.917	52	.724
Collaboration	.921	52	.703
Avoidance	.862	52	.649
Employees' performance	.945	52	.781

Source: Survey Data, 2020

From the outcomes in Table 7 above, the Shapiro-Wilk tests significance values were 0.675 for negotiation, 0.724 for mediation, 0.703 for collaboration, 0.649 for avoidance and 0.781 for employees' performance. From the results it's evident that the p-values of Shapiro-Wilk tests for each of the study variables were higher than the given alpha level of 0.05. This leads to the acceptance of the hypothesis that data used came from a normally distributed population. The outcome of the tests shows that the population was normally distributed. Since the normality test was encouraging and there was no violation of the normality requirements, the researcher could go on and perform the regression analysis.

4.2.1.3 Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity tests if the independent variables are highly correlated. The key emphasis of this test is that in case the extent of multicollinearity rises, the coefficients of the regression model end up being unstable and the coefficient standard errors become highly inflated. Multicollinearity, for this research was determined using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance values with VIF values of ≤ 3 and Tolerance values of > 0.1 . This was proof that there was no multicollinearity among the existing variables. Table 4.8 contains the multicollinearity tests results.

Table 8: Multicollinearity tests results

Variables	Collinearity Statistics	
	VIF	Tolerance
Negotiation	1.366	0.724
Mediation	1.511	0.618
Collaboration	1.140	0.857
Avoidance	1.709	0.915

Source: Survey Data, 2020

From the test results provided in Table 8 above, multicollinearity among the research independent variables doesn't exist as all the VIF results were lower than 3 while the variables Tolerance results were all >0.1 . Since no multicollinearity exists in the research independent variables, it was okay to do the regression analysis.

4.2.2 Regression Analysis

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between the variables being studied. The independent variables (negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance) were regressed against the dependent variable (employees' performance). The outcomes were as summarized below;

Table 9: Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.847 ^a	0.718	0.708		.5435

Predictors: (Constant), negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance

Source: Survey Data, 2020

According to Table 9 above, R square is the coefficient of determination indicating the change in the dependent variable due to variations in the independent variables. The R square value is at 0.718 indicating that a 71.8% change in employees' performance in the chosen public universities in Kenya was due to variations in the use of negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance as organizational conflict management techniques. Hence, 28.2% of variation in the dependent variable (employees' performance in the chosen universities in Kenya) could only be explained by other factors that were not part of the study model and were unstudied in this research.

Table 10: ANOVA (Analysis of Variance)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	91.714	4	22.92850	75.71	.0000 ^a
1	Residual	36.039	119	0.30285		
	Total	127.753	123			

a. Predictors: (Constant), negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance

b. Dependent Variable: Employees' performance

Source: Survey Data, 2020

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is made up of tests that give data on the variability levels within a regression model and are the basis on which the model significance is based on. The "F" column gives the statistic for determining the hypothesis that all $\beta \neq 0$ against the null hypothesis that $\beta = 0$ (Denscombe, 2014). From the results shown in Table 10 above, the significance value is .0000 which is lower than the given significance level of 0.05, showing that the regression model was statistically significant in determining the way negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance as organizational conflict management techniques affected the performance of employees in the selected public universities in Kenya. Further, outcome of the F critical at a level of significance of 5% is 2.58. Because the value of F calculated at 75.71 was higher than the value of F critical at 2.58, this is

enough affirmation that the used regression model was significant. The regression coefficients results were as provided in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Regression coefficients results

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.571	.645		5.536	.000
Negotiation	0.707	.151	.661	4.682	.000
Mediation	0.621	.187	.582	3.321	.001
Collaboration	0.736	.143	.714	5.147	.000
Avoidance	-0.469	-.209	-.427	2.244	.027

Source: Survey Data, 2020

From the findings obtained from the regression coefficients in Table 11 above, the regression model is given as;

$$Y = 3.571 + 0.707 X_1 + 0.621 X_2 + 0.736 X_3 + -0.469 X_4 + \ell$$

According to the above equation, taking the 4 predictor variables (that is, negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance) at a constant level of zero, employees’ performance in the selected public universities in Kenya would be 3.571. The regression analysis model also espoused the following results;

A unit change in application of negotiation as a conflict management technique would lead to a 0.707 positive change in employees’ performance in the selected public universities in Kenya. Given that the p value for negotiation (a value of .000) was lower than 0.05 the significance level, the relationship between application of negotiation as a conflict management technique and employees’ performance in the selected public universities in Kenya was significant. Thus, there exists a strong positive and significant relationship between application of negotiation as a conflict management technique and performance of employees in the selected public universities in Kenya. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected and the study accepted the alternate hypothesis that negotiation as a conflict management technique had a significant impact on the performance of employees in selected public universities in Kenya. Similar findings were reported by Zhu (2013) and Longe (2015) that negotiation as an organizational conflict management technique positively influenced employees’ performance.

A unit change in application of mediation as a conflict management technique would lead to a 0.621 positive change in employees’ performance in the selected public universities in Kenya. Given that the p value for mediation (a value of .001) was lower compared to the significance value of 0.05, the relationship between application of mediation as a conflict management technique and employees’ performance in the selected public universities in Kenya was significant. Thus, there was a strong positive and

significant relationship between application of mediation as a conflict management technique and performance of employees in the selected public universities in Kenya. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected and the study accepted the alternate hypothesis that mediation as a conflict management technique had a significant effect on the performance of employees in the chosen public universities in Kenya. In their studies, Ajike et al. (2015) and Lazarus (2014) reported similar findings that mediation as an organizational conflict management technique had a positive effect on employees' performance. Mediation, as a conflict resolution technique, was also found to favourably affect employees' performance as reported by Olang (2017) and Mwikali (2016).

A unit change in application of collaboration as a conflict management technique would lead to a 0.736 positive change in employees' performance in the selected public universities in Kenya. Given that the p value for collaboration (a value of .000) was lower than the selected significance level of 0.05, the relationship between application of collaboration as a conflict management technique and employees' performance in the selected public universities in Kenya was significant. Thus, there was a strong positive and significant relationship between application of collaboration as a conflict management technique and performance of employees in the selected public universities in Kenya. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected and the study accepted the alternate hypothesis that collaboration as a conflict management technique had a significant impact on employees' performance in selected public universities in Kenya. This concurred with findings by Toku (2014) and Longe (2015) who also identified a positive and significant association between collaboration as an organizational conflict management technique and employees' performance. Similarly, Iravo (2011) and Mwikali (2016) also reported that collaboration as a conflict resolution approach had a positive influence/effect on performance of organizational employees.

A unit change in application of avoidance as a conflict management technique would lead to a 0.469 negative change in employees' performance in the selected public universities in Kenya. Given that the p value for avoidance (a value of .027) was lower than 0.05 the given significance level, showing that the relationship between application of avoidance as a conflict management technique and employees' performance in the selected public universities in Kenya was significant. Thus, there was an inverse (or negative) and significant relationship between application of avoidance as a conflict management technique and performance of employees in the selected public universities in Kenya. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected and the study accepted the alternate hypothesis that avoidance as a conflict management technique significantly impacts employees'

performance in selected public universities in Kenya. The findings were in line with those of Kagucia (2014) and Awan and Saeed (2015) who also established that avoidance as a conflict resolution technique adversely impacted employees' performance, a view also espoused by Oni-Ojo et al. (2014).

5.0 Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The study concluded that application of negotiation, mediation as well as collaboration, as conflict management techniques was instrumental in enhancing the performance of employees in the selected public universities in Kenya. This is given that these three conflict management techniques had a positive and significant effect on the performance of employees in the selected public universities in Kenya. However, application of avoidance as a conflict management technique negatively impacted the performance of employees in the selected public universities in Kenya. This means that avoidance as a conflict management technique should not be used to resolve workplace conflicts in Kenya's public universities unless the conflicts in the question are trivial or inconsequential. Consequently, the study accepted the alternate hypothesis that negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance organizational conflict management techniques had a significant effect on employees' performance in selected public universities in Kenya.

This study makes a theoretical contribution towards enhancing the performance of public universities' employees in Kenya. This is by providing insights regarding the effect of various organizational conflict management techniques on the performance of the universities' employees. This is in appreciation of the fact that attaining high levels of work performance among public universities' employees in Kenya is at the core of ensuring that university education attains its mandate of supporting the Kenyan economy in producing highly competent and capable human capital required to drive the country's progress. It is also in appreciation that organizational conflicts are inevitable within the universities' settings owing to the diversity and dynamism of their workforce, hence the need to apply diverse organizational conflict management techniques to achieve amicable resolution of these conflicts especially in light of their potential adverse effect on employees' performance, if left unresolved. The results of this study may therefore be used to inform implementation of better policies within the institutions of higher learning to address workplace conflicts in an effort to enhance employee's performance.

5.2 Policy Implications

Among the selected universities staff and between them and the management(s) of these institutions, there should be greater emphasis in public universities in Kenya on the application of negotiation, mediation and collaboration organizational conflict management techniques in resolving workplace conflicts in light of their positive effect on employees' performance.

The administrators of Kenya's public universities should limit the use of avoidance as an organizational conflict management technique in light of its adverse effects on employees' performance. This organizational conflict management technique should only be applied when dealing with insignificant/less important conflicts.

The managements/administrators of Kenya's public universities should institute regular evaluations on how work disputes impact employees' performance within the institutions in the country. This could be helpful in guiding management decisions and choices as to the most effective organizational conflict management techniques to apply to resolve existing workplace conflicts.

Depending on the nature of organizational conflicts being experienced, the managements/administrators of Kenya's public universities may apply a mix of different organizational conflict management techniques to achieve optimal outcomes in resolution of organizational/workplace conflicts. This is in appreciation of the fact that a single organizational conflict management technique may not yield optimal resolution of the existing organizational conflicts. This is also in appreciation of the fact that organizational conflicts are diverse in nature and while one conflict management technique may yield positive results with respect to a given organizational conflict, it may not yield the same good results in a different kind of an organizational conflict.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

Primary raw data was collected from the employees of selected public universities in Kenya using a questionnaire as the research tool which helped in the provision of information to be used for the research. The researcher had no way to ascertain the honesty of responses given by the respondents. To limit the impact of this limitation, the researcher encouraged the participants to respond to the research tool honestly and assured them that their responses wouldn't be assessed by unauthorized individuals and would only help in coming up with the study findings and conclusions.

Some cases of incomplete or missing data in the questionnaires were encountered. To counter this limitation, the researcher performed data cleaning before the final analysis to ensure completeness of the information

availed through questionnaires. In addition, the study was limited to the universities' campuses located at the Kenya as the study units and hence the research outcomes may not be generalized to all the universities in the country. To counter this limitation, the study has recommended for a broader study on the research topic covering other universities in the country. Lastly, the current study failed to find sufficient literature on the study subject from local sources. As such the researcher also utilized literature materials from other external sources.

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ESJ Social Sciences

Economie d'échelle à l'interne et Covid-19 : Une tentative de voie de sortie en RDC

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p210](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p210)

Submitted: 01 March 2021

Accepted: 05 April 2021

Published: 30 April 2021

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ACCESS

Cite As:

Tsongo, KJ., and Shiko, AA. (2021). Economie d'échelle à l'interne et Covid-19 : Une tentative de voie de sortie en RDC. *European Scientific Journal*, ESJ, 17(12), 210. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p210>

Résumé:

Les pays en développement sont soumis à des études approfondies pour s'adapter à une nouvelle configuration économique naturelle à la suite de la situation d'autarcie imposée par la Covid-19. Cet article analyse la possibilité qui puisse exister par application d'une économie d'échelle interne pour faire face aux effets économiques de la Covid-19 en République Démocratique du Congo (RDC). La comparaison des variances a été faite à partir du test F de Fisher-Snedecor. N'étant pas à confondre au test exact de Fisher, cette loi a servi pour tester la participation de secteurs économiques dans le Produit Intérieur Brut (PIB) afin d'opter le secteur à appliquer cette économie. Les résultats font état de l'absence de différence de moyennes de secteurs économiques, ce qui dit qu'aucun secteur ne contribue significativement à la production du pays. Pratiquement, les résultats invitent les autorités politiques et opérateurs économiques à l'application de l'économie d'échelle dans un secteur de choix. Mais, si on se contentait des paramètres de tendance centrale et de modèle Solow-Swan, il serait conseillé d'exploiter plus le secteur primaire accompagné du secteur tertiaire. De cette recherche, on peut noter la présence d'une limite sur la

détermination des facteurs de production d'ordre général qui peuvent se déplacer entre les secteurs et des facteurs spécifiques.

Keywords: Economie- d'échelle, autarcie-forcée, secteurs économiques, COVID-19, RDC.

Internal Economy of Scale and Covid-19: An Attempt at an Exit Route in The DRC

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Abstract :

Developing countries are undergoing extensive studies to adapt to a new natural economic configuration as a result of the autarky imposed by Covid-19. This paper analyzes the possibility of applying an internal economy of scale to cope with the economic effects of Covid-19 in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The comparison of variances was done using the Fisher-Snedecor F test. Not to be confused with Fisher's exact test, this law was used to test the participation of economic sectors in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in order to choose the sector to apply this economy. The results show that there is no difference in the averages of the economic sectors, which means that no sector contributes significantly to the production of the country. Practically, the results invite the political authorities and economic operators to apply the economy of scale in a sector of choice. However, if we were content with the parameters of the central tendency and the Solow-Swan model, it would be advisable to exploit the primary sector along with the tertiary sector. From this research, we can note the presence of a limit on the determination of general factors of production that can move between sectors and specific factors.

Keywords: Economy-of-scale, autarky-forced, economic sectors, COVID-19, DRC.

Introduction

La situation économique mondiale continue de subir les séquences de la crise économique et financière de 2009. Egalement, la croissance a légèrement diminué en 2013 aux Etats-Unis se situant à 2,2% contre 2,3% en 2012, dans le pays de la zone Euro, après une baisse de 0,7% l'année 2013 (ANSD¹, 2015). Or, les pays font face à des perturbations de leurs prévisions depuis l'arrivée de la pandémie à COVID-19.

La crise Covid a eu des incidences financières redoutables. L'accroissement de l'endettement des entreprises aux Etats-Unis s'est redoublé d'une détérioration de sa qualité, à la fois dans l'univers investment grade et dans l'univers high yield. Dans de nombreux pays émergents et en développement, la situation est devenue critique (Michel & Sabrina, 2020).

Les crises systémiques, dont le moment de basculement (moment Minsky) est la panique pour la liquidité, sont gérées par les banques centrales par la prise en charge du marché monétaire, d'une part, le sauvetage des banques et autres institutions financières, d'autre part (BRI, 2020).

En mars 2020, quand le monde prit conscience de la gravité de la pandémie et quand les premiers confinements furent décidés, il n'allait pas de soi que les banques centrales devaient monter en première ligne. Cette crise était très différente des précédentes. La réponse des gouvernements a été rapide et massive : 11 700 Md\$ ou 12 % du PIB mondial selon l'estimation du Fonds monétaire international (FMI) en septembre 2020, dont la moitié sous forme de dépenses supplémentaires, de baisses d'impôt et de reports de charge et l'autre moitié sous forme de garanties et de prises de participation. (Benoit, 2020).

En RDC, par exemple, l'Institut d'émission a décidé, en date du 24 mars 2020, d'assouplir sa politique monétaire. Cette décision visait à garantir la liquidité au système bancaire et l'économie et procéder à une baisse de son taux directeur de 9,0% à 7,5% ainsi qu'à la réduction du coefficient de la réserve obligatoire sur les dépôt à vue en monnaie locale, lequel est passé de 2,0% à 0,0% (<https://Deskeco.com>).

Globalement, la croissance économique est ressortie à 3,3% en 2013, après 3,4% en 2012 (ANSD, 2015) mais au Benin, la contribution importante et grandissante de secteurs primaires et tertiaires à la croissance du PIB reflète l'impact de la production cantonnière et du commerce portuaire (Touré & Macwilliam, 2014). Pendant que trente ans plus tard, nous constatons que les habitants des pays en développement dont la subsistance est tributaire de l'agriculture sont encore, en règle générale, bien plus

¹ ANSD : est une Agence Nationale de la Statistique et de la Démographie en République du Sénégal. Elle est sous tutelle du Ministère de l'économie et des finances.

pauvres que ceux qui travaillent dans d'autres secteurs de l'économie et qu'ils représentent en forte proportion (Cervantes-Godey & Dewbre, 2010).

Quel secteur économique doit-on concentrer les activités économiques pour en tirer une économie d'échelle interne en RDC ?

Bresciani et Valdés font en particulier ressortir que la contribution de l'agriculture à la réduction de la pauvreté est systématiquement supérieure à la part de l'agriculture dans le PIB (Cervantes-Godey & Dewbre, 2010). Cependant, le contexte diffère selon le pays, le secteur des services représente aujourd'hui plus de 70% de l'emploi total et de la valeur ajoutée dans les économies de l'OCDE (OCDE, 2005).

Au cours de trente dernières années, dans l'économie du Québec, la part de l'emploi dans les services passe de 56,9% en 1966 à 73,5% en 1995, soit une progression de 16,6%. Cette progression s'est effectuée aux dépens du secteur primaire, dont la part décroît de 8,2% à 3,5% et du secteur secondaire (de 34,9% à 23,0%) (Direction de l'analyse de la Conjoncture industrielle, 1996). La croissance économique en 2019 a été principalement impulsée par le secteur tertiaire à hauteur de 1,7% contrairement à 2018 où le taux de croissance de 0,89% a été plus impacté par le secteur primaire (Banque Centrale du Congo, 2019).

Cet article démontrera statiquement le secteur qui participe différemment aux autres afin de voir si la spécialisation de ce secteur pourrait permettre à la République Démocratique du Congo de faire face aux aléas économiques causés par la Covid-19.

1. DEVELOPPEMENT THEORIQUE

Dans les théories préindustrielles, la croissance est expliquée par la progression de la force de travail, soit par la démographie et les évolutions sociétales. Selon Malthus (1798) cité par Donald (2007), si elle n'est pas freinée, la population s'accroît en progression géométrique. Les subsistances ne s'accroissent qu'en progression arithmétique. Donald (2007), d'où, il tient de limiter les naissances. Pierre & Annan (2005) démontrent l'importance du capital humain ou physique à long terme. L'offre (le capital, la terre, ...) a une importance par rapport aux facteurs relatifs à la demande (prix modélisés par les politiques internes et externes). Ces auteurs finissent par montrer que dans une phase de développement, les politiques internes, avant des taxes sur le secteur agricole permettent le transfert de ressources vers les autres secteurs.

Par contre, d'autres économistes expliquent la croissance par l'accumulation du capital, on parle des théories de l'accumulation du capital productif en économie fermée. Commençons par ceux (vers les années 1950-1980) qui estiment que la croissance est expliquée par des facteurs exogènes. Pour Harrod et Domar cités par Kibala (2019), une croissance stable ou

équilibrée exige à la fois le plein emploi et l'équilibre entre l'épargne et l'investissement (fil de rasoir) ; elle nécessite aussi une combinaison optimale des facteurs travail et capital considérés complémentaires. Ces auteurs estiment que la croissance n'est pas stable – soit que l'équilibre de plein emploi est un heureux hasard – du fait de l'insuffisance de capital, et parce qu'il n'est pas évident d'observer ces équilibres (équilibre épargne et équilibre emploi).

Autrement dit, pour Harrod et Domar, l'épargne est le moteur de la croissance, et les politiques d'encouragement à l'épargne ou à l'investissement sont préconisées. Contrairement à ces auteurs, Solow et Swan (1956) cités par Kibala (2019), on parle de modèle de Solow-Swan. Ils refusent l'idée d'un « fil de rasoir » et considèrent que si les marchés sont en équilibre, les facteurs de production sont substituables et ont chacun un rendement marginal décroissant, mais la production a des rendements d'échelle constants.

Les facteurs mobiles, qui peuvent passer d'un secteur à un autre, sont dans une situation intermédiaire : ils peuvent aussi bien gagner que perdre à l'ouverture (Krugman & al., 2017). Si Krugman tire conclusion sur les effets de l'ouverture de l'économie, cet article veut déterminer seulement le secteur qui profiterait de l'économie d'échelle par l'appui du gouvernement selon sa contribution dans la production du pays.

Solow-Swan estiment que – sous l'hypothèse de rendement marginal décroissant de capital – les effets positifs de l'épargne sur la croissance sont transitoires et finissent par s'épuiser à long terme quand l'économie atteint l'état stationnaire ou l'équilibre ; à ce niveau, le PIB par tête dépend du taux d'épargne, du taux de croissance démographique et du taux de dépréciation du capital (Mankiw, Romer et Weil, 1992). On parle de modèle de Solow augmenté. Après avoir confronté le modèle de Solow-Swan aux faits, ils présentent le « capital humain » (investissement) comme un facteur de croissance autant que le capital physique. L'idée est que la formation (dépenses en éducation) améliore les capacités productives des individus.

La prise en compte du capital humain a permis à ces auteurs de valider empiriquement les thèses de Solow-Swan (convergence économique). L'implication de l'individu au travail est un élément important comme le montrent Allen & Meyer cités par Mohamed & al. (2016) que l'implication est un état psychologique comportant une dimension affective, une dimension calculée et une dimension normative, et ayant une influence sur la décision de rester membre de l'organisation. Mohamed & al. concluent que la participation des salariés dans la prise de décision est un élément qui permet de développer l'implication.

Bien d'autres économistes (vers les années 1980-1990) pensent autrement, soutenant que la croissance est expliquée par des facteurs

endogènes, et s'intéressent aux déterminants de la productivité globale des facteurs/PGF (la technologie). On parle des théories de croissance endogène qui stipulent que, en l'absence de progrès technique exogène, la croissance peut perdurer sous l'hypothèse des rendements croissants du capital au niveau macroéconomique. Selon Romer (1986), en l'absence de progrès technique, la croissance est autoentretenu grâce aux externalités positives (externalité de réseau, accumulation d'un ensemble de connaissances et savoir-faire, etc.).

Ici, les politiques publiques doivent coordonner les décisions privées pour faire jouer les externalités. Pour Barro (1990), le capital public ou les infrastructures publiques (dépenses publiques : éducation, services publics, ...) empêchent la baisse des rendements marginaux du capital privé et favorisent la croissance à long terme par un effet d'offre (et non de demande). Les études empiriques de l'OCDE (Kibala, 2019) confirment cette thèse.

Toutefois, l'on note que le capital public peut freiner la croissance si son coût d'opportunité (distorsion, effets de congestion) est très élevé (l'impôt réduit la rentabilité des investissements et freinent ainsi l'accumulation du capital privé). Aghion & Howitt (1992) présentent « l'innovation » (les gains attendus) comme un facteur de croissance. Ils estiment que les gains et effort de l'innovation (soit l'extension de la gamme de produits ou différenciation horizontale, soit l'amélioration de la qualité des produits ou différenciation verticale ou d'échelles de qualité à la manière de Schumpeter) sont fonction du degré de concurrence sur le marché des produits et du régime de la protection intellectuelle.

Par contre, l'économie Congolaise a affiché une croissance de 6,5% en 2011 contre 7,2% en 2010, tirée par l'agriculture, les industries extraverties et le commerce (OCDE, 2012). Le manioc est la culture dominante et relativement importante (90% des fermes du corridor Monkoto) et constitue l'aliment de base dans la zone avec des chaînes de valeur telles que la chikwangue et la farine de manioc, utile dans la préparation du fufu et d'autre part, comme source de revenu par la vente de « lotoko », l'alcool indigène (Bonkena B.P. & al. 2000). Les institutions faibles du pays ont échoué à bâtir les fondations d'une économie résiliente et à absorber les chocs externes, exposant ainsi la société à des cycles de violence et d'appauvrissement (Banque Mondiale, 2018).

La croissance économique en RDC a été robuste, le PIB progressant en termes réels de 7% en moyenne entre 2010 et 2012, jusqu'à atteindre 8,5% en 2013 et 8,9% en 2014, dépassant la moyenne des pays de l'Afrique Subsaharienne ; la croissance est tirée par le secteur minier qui s'est accru de 10,5% en moyenne en 2010-2013, et qui bénéficie des partenariats entre des firmes étrangères et des sociétés Congolaises (Banque Mondiale 2014). Le

commerce a connu, une expansion de 7% en 2011. Sa contribution à la croissance est passée à 1,4 point, contre 0,99 en 2010. Il a tiré du bon comportement du secteur minier et de l'amélioration des infrastructures routières. Le secteur des transports et des communications a faiblement contribué à la croissance (0,4 point contre 0,3 point en 2010).

En définitif, la croissance en 2011 a profité du dynamisme de la demande. La consommation (privée et publique) a contribué à 3,3 point (OCDE, 2012). Dans l'économie Hattienne, par exemple, l'agriculture régresse et est dépassée par la branche « commerce, restaurant et hôtels ». Le secteur industriel reste modeste et peu dynamique (www.brh.net/index.html).

De toutes ces études, les secteurs économiques dans plusieurs pays influencent la croissance économique durant les décennies. Cependant, le choix d'un secteur à la merci d'autre secteur engendre des coûts. Il y aura d'une part, les gagnants et les perdants, d'autre part comme le montrent Krugman P. & al. (2017) : « le commerce international a souvent des effets importants sur la distribution des revenus au sein d'un pays. Il fait donc des perdants et des gagnants. La répartition des revenus entre les agents évolue pour deux raisons : les facteurs de production ne peuvent pas se déplacer d'un secteur à l'autre instantanément et sans aucun coût, et le mouvement de spécialisation résultant de l'ouverture commerciale n'a pas les mêmes conséquences sur la demande des différents facteurs de production ».

Devant un contexte imposé par la Covid-19, « le développement d'une collaboration gagant-gagant accompagnée d'une maîtrise des risques contribuent à améliorer le niveau d'agilité et de performance de la chaîne d'approvisionnement » (Abrighach & al. 2019) entre les pays mais ceux-ci ont opté pour les fermetures des frontières et très loin aux confinements entre les villes.

Sans moindre attention d'information sur les facteurs de production d'ordre général, qui peuvent se déplacer entre les secteurs, et des facteurs spécifiques qui ne peuvent être employés que dans les secteurs précis, cet article se limitera à voir en RDC le secteur qui pourra bénéficier de l'économie d'échelle pour contourner les aléas de la Covid-19.

Cependant, l'analyse de cette variable pourra compléter cette étude pour permettre la RDC de bien contrôler son économie comme insistent Mssassi & al. (2018) sur les contributions de la théorie de la contingence selon lesquelles une organisation qui surveille son environnement est d'autant mieux informée dans la mesure où elle dispose d'informations de qualité suffisantes ou encore qui sont essentielles sur leur environnement. La richesse d'informations ancre bien une richesse de quantité et de qualité.

2. Demarche Methodologique

La démarche méthodologique est axée sur l'approche économétrique qui consiste à analyser plusieurs variables (secteurs : primaire, secondaire et tertiaire) tout en comparant les variances. Il sera question d'identifier le secteur à encourager avec le crédit bancaire en vue de faire face aux aléas de la Covid-19. Le rapport de la Banque Centrale du Congo servira de source des données :

Tableau 1 : Contributions de différents secteurs au Produit Intérieur Brut (En millions de CDF courant)

Branches d'activité	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Secteur primaire	4 931 751,2	7 575 356,4	9 760 200,4	10 696 781,2	11 861 980,1	13 493 927,4	13 628 921,6	14 232 480,4	21 071 943,5	29 744 921,7
Agriculture, Sylviculture, Chasse et Pêche	3 575 155,9	4 186 415,1	4 969 776,9	5 509 797,3	5 804 886,4	6 167 208,6	6 450 068,6	6 978 142,6	10 969 692,2	14 657 898,9
Agriculture	3 439 312,3	4 010 066,3	4 760 973,2	5 283 886,5	5 572 388,4	5 873 449,0	6 203 304,2	6 702 671,5	10 544 749,2	14 108 549,8
Vivrière	3 390 132,3	3 952 786,7	4 693 058,9	5 208 943,7	5 494 122,5	5 785 871,2	6 115 548,7	6 605 460,6	10 391 392,0	13 903 270,2
Rente	49 180,1	57 279,6	67 914,3	74 942,8	78 265,8	87 577,7	87 755,4	97 210,9	153 357,2	205 279,7
Sylviculture	129 593,3	169 112,6	200 295,2	216 462,1	222 678,1	283 418,2	235 524,0	263 336,9	405 608,8	523 290,0
Élevage, pêche et chasse	6 250,2	7 236,2	8 508,5	9 448,7	9 819,9	10 341,4	11 240,4	12 134,2	19 334,2	26 059,1
Industrie extractive	1 356 595,3	3 388 941,3	4 790 423,5	5 186 983,9	6 057 093,6	7 326 718,8	7 178 853,0	7 254 337,8	10 102 251,3	15 087 022,7
Secteur secondaire	3 629 200,1	4 169 632,9	4 937 335,4	5 663 507,3	6 349 940,3	6 952 900,9	7 464 236,0	8 188 339,2	13 388 447,9	18 822 655,8
Industries manufacturières	2 850 452,2	3 169 171,1	3 649 184,5	4 140 583,5	4 623 444,0	5 167 796,5	6 014 081,6	6 852 323,8	10 849 621,5	13 648 333,6
Agro industrielles	2 232 737,8	2 541 111,5	2 843 741,9	3 364 043,8	3 883 780,6	4 459 077,8	5 177 956,2	5 932 477,8	9 307 232,0	11 551 328,0
Autres industries manufacturières	617 714,4	628 059,6	805 442,6	776 539,7	739 663,4	708 718,8	836 125,4	919 846,0	1 542 389,5	2 097 005,6
Bâtiments et Travaux publics	165 381,2	788 880,5	1 055 675,0	1 264 563,2	1 448 504,5	1 485 564,5	1 163 849,6	980 965,9	1 993 879,7	4 651 735,9
Électricité, gaz et eau	613 366,7	211 581,3	232 475,9	258 360,6	277 991,7	299 539,9	286 304,9	355 049,6	544 946,7	522 586,4
Secteur tertiaire	5 646 184,1	6 740 687,6	7 673 851,3	8 730 280,5	9 513 006,7	10 296 062,1	11 364 783,1	12 399 597,8	18 328 996,3	24 332 550,3
Commerce de gros et de détail	1 708 909,5	2 080 030,0	2 391 107,6	2 842 133,3	3 110 794,7	3 304 903,4	3 703 175,8	4 129 905,8	6 693 143,4	8 914 351,3
Transports et communications	1 795 066,9	2 092 046,8	2 360 802,2	2 701 538,0	2 985 169,9	3 208 974,4	3 582 392,0	3 859 941,4	4 766 172,0	6 238 320,1
Services marchands	1 183 699,6	1 487 205,1	1 697 812,7	1 889 868,8	2 027 802,5	2 279 221,3	2 514 884,1	2 716 312,2	4 287 753,1	5 884 120,1
Services non marchands	1 104 123,0	1 252 290,6	1 418 022,8	1 510 537,8	1 592 494,0	1 739 391,0	1 822 899,9	1 985 013,0	3 043 776,0	3 966 763,2
SIFIM	-145 615,0	-170 885,0	-193 894,0	-213 797,5	-203 254,4	-236 428,1	-258 568,8	-291 574,6	-461 848,2	-671 004,5
PIB au coût des facteurs	14 207 135,5	18 485 676,9	22 371 387,1	25 090 569,1	27 724 927,0	30 742 890,4	32 457 940,7	34 820 417,4	52 789 387,8	72 900 127,7
Droits et Taxes sur les produits	894 052,4	1 051 000,0	1 388 037,5	1 863 987,9	2 326 252,4	2 481 098,07	2 653 285,3	2 696 975,0	2 886 705,4	3 789 144,3
PIB aux prix du marché	15 101 187,9	19 536 676,9	23 759 424,6	26 954 556,9	30 051 179,4	33 223 988,5	35 111 226,0	37 517 392,4	55 676 093,1	76 689 272,0

Source : Rapport de la Banque Centrale du Congo 2018.

La comparaison des variances sera faite à partir du test F de Fisher (ou Fisher-Snedecor), n'est pas à confondre avec test exact de Fisher qui est un test de rapport de variances avec des degrés de libertés (Nicolas, 2011).

Tableau 2 : Rapport détaillé des paramètres de tendance centrale

Groupes	Nombre d'échantillons	Somme	Moyenne	Variance
Colonne 1	10	136998263,9	13699826,39	50492135989341,30
Colonne 2	10	79566195,8	7956619,58	22100308384497,90
Colonne 3	10	115025999	11502599,9	32973734709053,10

Source : Généré par Ms Excel à partir de nos estimations.

Le secteur primaire a participé à une grande part dans le PIB et suivi par le secteur tertiaire durant la dernière décennie. Le tableau ci-dessous

montre la participation de différents secteurs durant toutes les années sous étude avant de tester statistiquement :

Tableau 3 : Participation de secteurs dans le PIB

Années %	Secteur Primaire	Secteur secondaire	Secteur tertiaire	PIB au coût du marché
2009	4 931 751,20	3 629 200,10	5 646 184,10	14 207 135,40
%	34,71	25,54	39,74	100,00
2010	7575356,40	4169632,90	6740687,60	18485676,9 0
%	40,98	22,56	36,46	100,00
2011	9760200,40	4937335,40	7673851,30	22371387,1 0
%	43,63	22,07	34,30	100,00
2012	10696781,20	5663507,30	8730280,50	25090569,0 0
%	42,63	22,57	34,80	100,00
2013	11861980,10	6349940,30	9513006,70	27724927,1 0
%	42,78	22,90	34,31	100,00
2014	13493927,40	6952900,90	10296062,10	30742890,4 0
%	43,89	22,62	33,49	100,00
2015	13628921,60	7464236,00	11364783,10	32457940,7 0
%	41,99	23,00	35,01	100,00
2016	14232480,40	8188339,20	12399597,00	34820416,6 0
%	40,87	23,52	35,61	100,00
2017	21071943,50	13388447,90	18328996,30	52789387,7 0
%	39,92	25,36	34,72	100,00
2018	29744921,70	18822655,80	24332550,30	72900127,8 0
%	40,80	25,82	33,38	100,00
TOTAL	124491156,30	71767362,80	102639127,30	298897646, 40
Moyennes	12449115,63	7176736,28	10263912,73	29889764,6 4
%	41,65	24,01	34,34	100,00

Source : Synthétisé à partir le rapport de BCC 2018

Sauf l'année 2009 où le secteur tertiaire a devancé d'autres secteurs, le reste d'années le secteur primaire a participé à une grande part, ce résultat rejoint celui de Bonkena B.P. & al. (2000) selon lequel le manioc est la culture dominante et relativement importante (90% des fermes du collidor Monkoto).

Les moyennes d'année s'élèvent respectivement à une hauteur de 41,65% pour le secteur primaire, le tertiaire quant à lui à 34,34% et que le

secondaire à 24,01%. Les moyennes arithmétiques garantissent comme prouvé ci-haut la différence de moyennes entre les secteurs.

La comparaison de moyennes de secteurs à partir Fisher-Snedecor teste statistiquement ce résultat. L'article passe par les conditions suivantes :

- $H_0 : M_1=M_2=M_3$: pas de différences de moyennes, ce qui veut dire que les secteurs économiques contribuent au même niveau dans la production du pays ;
- $H_1 : M_1 \neq M_2 \neq M_3$: les moyennes diffèrent : les secteurs économiques contribuent différemment dans la production du pays.

On rejettera ici H_0 si $F_{cal} > F_{tab}$. Dans ce cas, le résultat fera étant d'une contribution différente des secteurs autrement dit un secteur contribue significativement que les autres et celui qui contribue plus pourra automatiquement profiter de cette économie d'échelle.

A partir des paramètres de tendance centrale et les littératures empiriques, on prévoit la différence des moyennes de secteurs et que le secteur primaire participe à une grande part que d'autres secteurs.

3. DISCUSSION ET IMPLICATIONS MANAGERIALES

Tableau 4 : Analyse de variances (Fisher Snedecor)

Source des variations	Somme des carrés	ddl	Moyenne des carrés	F	Probabilité
Entre Groupes	167954017135385,00	2	83977008567692,30	2,386474796	0,11107955
A l'intérieur des groupes	950095611746031,00	27	35188726360964,10		
Total	1118049628881420,00	29			

Source : Généré par Ms Excel à partir de nos calculs.

Avec une marge d'erreur de 0,05 et 2, 27 de ddl, le Fisher critique est 3,34 ; une valeur largement supérieure à 2,386474796. On accepte ici, l'hypothèse nulle selon laquelle il n'y a pas de différences de moyennes entre les secteurs économiques de la RDC avec la chance de se tromper jusqu'à un niveau supérieur de 0,11. Dans ce cas, aucun secteur ne contribue pas plus que les autres statiquement. Les autorités pourront opter pour n'importe lequel dans l'application de l'économie d'échelle.

Plusieurs études qui ont fait l'objet de la littérature empirique ont montré que les secteurs économiques primaires et tertiaires contribuent plus dans les économies des pays. Quant à la RDC, la croissance est tirée par le secteur minier qui s'est accru de 10,5% en moyenne entre 2010 et 2013 (Banque Mondiale 2014). Du secteur tertiaire, l'économie congolaise a affiché une croissance de 6,5% en 2011 contre 7,2% en 2010, tirée par l'agriculture, les industries extraverties et le commerce (OCDE, 2012). Ces résultats sont corroborés par ceux obtenus dans cet article. Ainsi, les secteurs ont contribué, en moyenne, dans la production du pays à hauteur de 41,65% pour le secteur primaire, 34,34% pour le secteur tertiaire et à 24,01% pour le secteur secondaire (Tableau 3).

Les résultats de cette étude montrent qu'en moyenne arithmétique, le secteur primaire contribue plus suivi du secteur tertiaire. On est d'avis avec Pierre & Anna (2005) qui démontrent l'importance du capital humain ou physique à long terme. L'offre (capital, terre) a une importance par rapport aux facteurs relatifs à la demande (prix modélisés par les politiques internes et externes). L'exploitation de la terre relève du secteur primaire et celle du capital humain du secteur tertiaire. Le commerce a connu une expansion de 7% en 2011. Sa contribution à la croissance est passée à 1,4 point contre 0,99 en 2010. Il a tiré du bon comportement du secteur minier et de l'amélioration des infrastructures routières (OCDE, 2012). Cet article n'a pas pris en compte l'aspect de coût que va engendrer l'application d'une économie d'échelle tel que soulevé par Krugman & al (2017) : « le commerce international a souvent des effets importants sur la distribution des revenus au sein d'un pays. Il fait donc des perdants et des gagnants.

Cependant, la volonté politique pose problème dans la croissance économique. Il a été vu d'ailleurs que les institutions faibles du pays ont échoué à bâtir les fondations d'une économie résiliente et à absorber les chocs externes, exposant ainsi la société à des cycles de violence et d'appauvrissement (Banque Mondiale, 2018). La prise en compte d'implication du capital humain dans le secteur serait l'élément important dans ce cas de mutation de secteur.

Dans le cadre de la RDC, cet article suggère de bien adhérer aux conclusions telles qu'une croissance stable ou équilibrée exige à la fois le plein emploi et l'équilibre entre l'épargne et l'investissement (fil de rasoir). Elle nécessite aussi une combinaison optimale des facteurs travail et capital considérés complémentaires (Harrod, 1939) et (Domar, 1946).

Et surtout lorsqu'on tient compte de R. Solow et T. Swan (1956), qui ont parlé de modèle de Solow-Swan et considéré que les marchés sont en équilibre, les facteurs de production sont substituables et ont chacun un rendement marginal décroissant, mais la production a des rendements d'échelle constants.

Les résultats de ce travail ont pu démontrer le cas de la RDC où il y a absence de différences de moyennes entre les secteurs économiques avec une marge d'erreur supérieur de 0,11. Avec une marge d'erreur de 0,05 et 2, 27 de ddl, la valeur de Fisher critique est 3,34. Autrement dit, aucun secteur n'a contribué significativement que les autres. On peut donc appliquer une économie d'échelle dans un secteur de choix mais une attention particulière doit être prise en compte d'autant plus l'analyse n'a pas intégré d'information sur les facteurs de production d'ordre général et des facteurs spécifiques comme démontrent Krugman & al. (2017) et Massassi & al. (2018) que la richesse d'informations ancre bien une richesse de quantité et de qualité.

Si on se contentait des paramètres de tendance centrale (moyennes arithmétiques) et de modèle Solow-Swan, on pouvait conseiller les autorités bancaires et politiques à exploiter plus le secteur primaire (Agricole et minier) accompagné de secteur tertiaire, ce qui rejoint la recommandation de la Banque Mondiale (2014) qui rappelle qu'investir dans ce secteur est essentiel pour faire reculer la pauvreté. Cette recommandation demande l'accompagnement de développement d'une collaboration gagnant-gagnant accompagnée d'une maîtrise de risques entre les secteurs primaires et tertiaires qui doivent travailler en étroite collaboration dans ce temps, si les collaborations entre pays telles qu'évoquées par Abrighach & al. (2019) souffrent d'application.

Conclusion

Dans une situation de l'autarcie forcée par l'avènement de la Covid-19, les pays font face à des perturbations de leurs prévisions et sont soumis à des études approfondies pour s'adapter à une nouvelle configuration économique naturelle. Cet article a déterminé dans quel secteur économique la République Démocratique du Congo doit-il se spécialiser pour profiter de l'économie d'échelle interne. La méthode quantitative dans son approche statistique a permis de faire le test de comparaison des moyennes à travers la loi de F-Snedecor.

Les résultats font état de l'absence de différence de moyennes de secteurs économiques, ce qui dit qu'aucun secteur ne contribue significativement à la production du pays. Pratiquement, les résultats invitent les autorités politiques et opérateurs économiques l'application de l'économie d'échelle dans un secteur de choix. Mais, si on se contentait des paramètres de tendance centrale (moyennes arithmétiques) et de modèle Solow-Swan, il serait conseillé aux autorités bancaires et politiques à beaucoup exploiter le secteur primaire (Agricole et minier) accompagné du secteur tertiaire. Cela permettra de faire reculer la pauvreté.

A travers la présente recherche, on peut noter la présence d'une limite sur la détermination des facteurs de production d'ordre général qui peuvent se déplacer entre les secteurs et des facteurs spécifiques. Ainsi, les prochaines étapes de notre recherche consisteront à déterminer le coût de la mutation d'un service à l'autre pour comparer le coût qui serait approprié pour la RDC dans la prise d'une décision relative à l'application d'une économie d'échelle pendant cette période de Covid-19, cela reste un pas qui permettra à répondre au besoin du moment.

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Assessment of Perception and Perspective of Video Games on the Children: A Case Study of Tirana, Albania

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p224](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p224)

Submitted: 01 December 2020

Accepted: 21 March 2021

Published: 30 April 2021

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Cite As:

Satka, E., and Pranvera, T. (2021). Assessment of Perception and Perspective of Video Games on the Children: A Case Study of Tirana, Albania. *European Scientific Journal*, ESJ, 17(12), 224. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p224>

Abstract

Internet is a communication tool used in entertainment worldwide. The Internet is no longer a novelty for children and young people, but a necessity for them. For many children, today the distinction between online and daily activities is becoming smaller. Gradually, the computer game industry has become a lucrative business, increasing its production every day. The recent technology, depending on “PlayStation” slots, has begun to make significant impacts by creating a problem that needs to be addressed. On the other hand, there is little evidence that shows how social professionals are responding to new child protection challenges while navigating online. This paper focuses on describing, identifying, and assessing the perception and perspective of children aged 7-14 who are involved in playing computer games at PlayStation centers in Tirana. The method used in the study is qualitative research, which is specifically a case study research. The main instrument for data collection is the semi-structured interview with 20 children who are users of video games at PlayStation centers in the New Tirana neighborhood. The data analysis showed that children has a high attendance and dependence on computer games at PlayStation centers,

leading to children's positive perceptions and attitudes towards electronic games. Children's attitudes towards playgrounds indicate the importance of these games in entertainment, leisure time, communication, and relationships with peers. It is important that everyone - parents and caretakers, teachers, institutions and government structures - should work together to create a safe environment for children regardless of where they are; at home, at school, or in public places such as internet centers.

Keywords: Children, PlayStation centers, computer games, perceptions, attitudes, perspectives

1. Introduction

1.1 Presentation of the Study Issue

In recent years, computer games have had a huge impact on how people spend their free time (Cesarone, 2014). "Computer games, e-mail, the Internet, mobile phones and messaging are an integral part of our lives" (Prensky, 2001). The latest official figures from the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) show that out of 2.7 billion people, almost 40% of the world's population is online. At the end of 2011, 45% of the world, i.e., more than 2.3 billion of internet users, were under the age of 25 (twenty-five) years old. The technology is changing the way individuals socialize, study, work, and spend their free time (DiNicola, 2004).

New technologies have led to a new form of social interaction in the digital world between children and adolescents. Peer communication is one of the most popular uses of technology (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008). Therefore, technology has become an important tool for connecting adolescents with one another, but it has also influenced other activities that include leisure time for children and adolescents, as well as relationships with families. It is becoming increasingly clear that, in addition to family, peers and school, we must consider the digital world as another social context in adolescent development. Also, it is important to consider the implications caused by the proliferation and inclusion of young people in the digital world. The explosion of the video game industry in the last decade and its consequences are an open debate. The main concerns are the brutality and violent acts within games. The newest generation of gaming is so realistic that the line between "simulations" and video games has been largely blurred. They are so realistic that the United States government has even launched a game called the US Army to help the next generation of military specialists (Vargas, 2006).

In 2008, the study of the World Internet Project (WIP), a global international study on the impact of the internet on individuals and society, conducted in 13 countries, presented the percentages of internet users to the target group of pre-teens ages 12-14 years. The findings showed that these

percentages were much higher than expected. In the UK, 100% of 12-14 years old used the internet, 98% in Israel, 96% in the Czech Republic, 95% in Canada, 88% in the US, and so on (Lebo et al., 2009). Gradually, the computer game industry has become a profitable business, which is becoming bigger through media advertising.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Evaluation of children's perceptions and perspectives of computer games has received little attention in studies and research literature. Technology development has made children grow up in a virtual environment by educating themselves on all the uncontrolled information technology provides. "The child should be given what he needs, not what he wants"- this is a very accurate phrase in today's reality where children are increasingly becoming part of the virtual world. The way of life, and also our environment, has changed a lot in the last decade. The increased road traffic and construction densities have made the physical and mental activity of children almost lukewarm.

Subsequently, the recent technology has made many children to become addicted to computer games by moving away from the other nature games or normal sports. Addiction to slots, especially the PlayStation, is beginning to have a significant impact on children, thereby creating a problem that needs to be addressed.

In our country lacks the scientific studies that have focused on the perception and perspective of children, aged 7-14 years on the PlayStation computer games in Tirana. This problem has not been receiving attention by researchers in our country before, so it is very necessary to explore it. This study will represent an attempt to make scientific contributions in this field.

1.3 The Purpose and Objectives of the Study

Purpose of the Study

This study aims to describe, identify, and evaluate the perception, attitudes, and perspectives of children aged 7-14 who are involved in computer games at PlayStation centers in Tirana.

Specifically, the objectives of the study are:

To identify the attendance and involvement of children in computer games at PlayStation centers.

To understand children's perceptions, attitudes, and perspectives towards computer games.

To describe and recognize the perceived positive and negative impact of computer games on children.

Research Questions of the Study

What is the frequency of inclusion and use of computer games by children in PlayStation centers?

What are the perception, attitude, and perspective of children towards computer games. How informed and aware are children about the effects of computer games? What is the perceived impact of computer games on children?

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Method

The research method used in the study is the qualitative method of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), qualitative research can be described as an effective model in the social environment. This method provides a thorough and detailed understanding of subject exploration, as the study is interested in the frequency, perspective, and effects of computer games on children, according to their perceptions and descriptions (Gary & Mahoney, 2012). The use of the case study method helped to build a deeper view of the specific issues taken into consideration, which is based on the relatively small number of subjects included in the study.

2.2 The Population of the Study and the Selected Sample

The group of subjects selected for this study consists of children aged 7-14 years in the 9-year school cycle attending PlayStation internet centers in the New Tirana, Astiri area. The study relied on a sample of 15 children, who conducted detailed semi-structured interviews at three PlayStation centers. This center is considered to be the most suitable places to find and choose the children to be included in the study. The selection of subjects was carried out in such a way as to satisfy the conditions set out in advance by myself as a researcher.

2.3 The Sampling

The sample of this study consists of 15 children aged 7-14 years, which coincides with the 9-year school cycle in Tirana. The sample was selected in a non-probability manner and it is a purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling is a response to the practical limitations of a researcher's time and to the subjects' approach that limits the ability to use a large random sample.

Children selected to be part of the search had to meet certain conditions:

- To be attendees and players at PlayStation centers in the New Tirana area.
- To be children in the age gap 7-14 years.

To record the interview sessions, we used a recording from phone (mobile) that allows us to concentrate on the search in the direction of the discussion and not to keep note continuously. This ensured the accurate recording of the interview sessions, including every aspect of the conversation excluding anything. These transcripts were coded and later used in the data analysis.

In fact, the reason for choosing this age group was because they have direct contact with technological innovations and at the same time cannot understand the problems caused by the use of electronic games. On the other hand, the frequent use creates a great dependency on these games. Consequently, the demographic data of the selected sample included in the study showed that:

- Sample interviewed consisted of 15 male.
- The age of the sample taken in the study varied from 7-14 years.
- Regarding the class in which they study is: three are 14 years old, two are 13, one is 12, two are 11 years old, two are 10 years old, two are 9 years old, one is 8 years, and two 7 years old.
- Based on the attendance level, the number of times a day they go to the Playstation centers starts from 1 time a day and more than 3 times a day.
- How many hours a day they play starts from 1-3 hours a day to more than 5 hours a day.

Despite the number of subjects being only 15, theoretical satiety was achieved because children's perception and viewpoints on electronic games were similar. Thus, no further interviewing was necessary.

2.4 Design of Research Instrument

Semi-Structured Interviews

Its drafting was made possible based on the research questions of the study and the literature. Designing the interview with the clearest questions has been very important. For this reason, we tried to use simple and specific terms relevant to the field of video games and for children of this age, and not complicated terms which could be very difficult to understand and give answer.

To group the information based on the function of the study, interviews were designed with different questions, divided into two sections, which sought information about: demographic data and specific questions on the purpose of the study.

Data collection process has taken a period of one month. Data collection, as mentioned above, was done using in-depth semi-structured interviews face-to-face with interviewees.

Data analysis in qualitative research is the most important component and is challenging at the same time. However, this should be carefully thought out. For this reason and in order to be more accurate, data analysis is not

carried out with specific software programs, but the analysis is carried out in a completely manual way.

3.0 Discussion

This study uses a semi-structured interview to gather information. The interview contained 24 questions divided into two sections, seeking information about: Demographic data which seek to provide general information about participants and demographic data about them such as age, gender, and the class in which they study.

Specific questions on the purpose of the study were also considered, specifically in relation to children's perceptions, attitudes, and perceptions regarding computer games. Based on the data, 8 codes were created with the categories for each code with a total of 24 thematic categories.

In the last decade, the impact of technology has become inevitable. New technologies are not only seen as an important tool to connect teens with their friends (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008), but their impact is reflected in the way of development and behavior. The results of this study show that the attendance of PlayStation centers is increasing by children (answered 100%). The way of life and our environment has changed a lot in the last decade. The development of technology has made children to grow up in a virtual environment by taking as an educational basis all the uncontrolled information that technology provides (Tumbokon, 2014). From the results, the computer game centers were frequented by male gender (all the participants in the study were boys). The boys were the ones that were playing in these centers. Tumbokan (2014) stated that the world of computer games centers is generally dominated by men. Computer games have had a huge impact on the way people spend their free time (Cesarone, 2014). The proportion important in the study was that subjects spent a lot of time in computer games. They spent 2-5 hours at Play Station centers with a frequency of several times a day.

On the other hand, researchers have found that computer games that train the brain can improve children's grades within a few weeks (Cummings & Vandewater, 2007). This fact is shown by the results of the study, where 67% of the children perceive games as an aid to greater concentration in school.

4.0 Conclusions

In summary, some of the main findings of the study are:

- The attendance of PlayStation centers by the children was very high. This is indicated by the frequency, the number of hours of the stay per day (over 3 hours), as well as the attendance of video game centers several times a day. Description of attendance showed that children had created dependency on computer games. Even when they do not go to PlayStation centers, children will be playing at home. The children's perception and perspective of electronic games had positive

attitudes and relevance to them. They consider these games as a way to entertain themselves during their leisure time.

- Parents cannot control their children when it comes to computer games. They allowed the children to spend at least 2 hours a day.
- According to the results of the study, the presence of aggression, violent situations, and severe visual images were not a concern for children and these aspects had no impact on their behavior in everyday life.
- All children were able to pay the fee for computer games. Most of them were saving their school money or asking their parents for it. What pushed the kids towards computer games were the presence of peers in these centers as well as the feeling of fighting to be always first in the race with friends.
- At school, there were no textbooks to address the issue of electronic games. Hence, teachers and parents advise them regularly to avoid sitting in front of computers, television, and computer games.
- Finally, children's desire to quit video games was low. No one agreed not to play one day.

5.0 Recommendations

- Publishing articles, brochures and textbooks about the impact and effects of computer games and their adverse effects.
- Increasing parental control over children.
- Control of media and internet information.
- Direct conversations and contacts with children.
- Other studies of this nature should be conducted, which might include other aspects that were not the focus of this study.
- In the future, other studies with a larger sample should be carried out. The case may be not only children but also parents and school teachers in Tirana, as well as in other cities. Therefore, this will bring more complete data, inclusive of the attendance levels, and effects that these games bring to younger ages and the comparison between them.
- To implement the new law on electronic games, stimulating children under the age of 14 will not be permitted in the internet centers.

To avoid, limit or eliminate the negative effects of prolonged and uncontrolled use of computer games, the researchers recommend a number of measures:

- Learn about the types of video games your child plays.
- Do not allow video games to be installed in the child's room.
- Set limits on how long and how often your child should play.
- Monitor all content used by them for video games, TV, internet, etc.
- Supervise the use of online games.
- Take the time to discuss with the children about the games that they play and the programs they attend.

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The Interplay of Entrepreneurial Innovation, Government Regulation and Performance: any Lessons for The SMEs. A Theoretical Review

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p235](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p235)

Submitted: 16 March 2021
Accepted: 8 April 2021
Published: 30 April 2021

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Cite As:

Dushime, E., Muathe, S., and Kavindah, I. (2021). The Interplay of Entrepreneurial Innovation, Government Regulation and Performance: any Lessons for The SMEs. A Theoretical Review. European Scientific Journal, ESJ, 17(12), 235. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n12p235>

Abstract

Entrepreneurial innovation is acknowledged as a key driver for improving the productivity of small and medium-sized enterprises. The effect of innovation on performance has been extensively researched, but many have overlooked small and medium-sized enterprises and government regulations. This paper provides a study of the current theoretical and empirical literature on entrepreneurial innovation constructs, government regulations and small and medium enterprise performance. The study's specific objectives have been to discuss the main concepts of entrepreneurial innovation, government regulation and performance related to small and medium-size firms. It also aims to establish theories that link entrepreneurial innovation and government regulations; to recommend a conceptual and methodological framework to guide future studies on the identified knowledge gaps. The study was anchored by a resource based view theory supported by dynamic capability theory, Schumpeter's innovation theory. The study was a review of previous research on entrepreneurial innovation and firm performance. These studies seem to have centered on a direct link between innovation and performance, according to the results. Thus, it is

recommended that further research incorporate the small and medium enterprise context to highlight how entrepreneurial innovation affects these enterprises and the moderating variable of government regulations.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Innovation, Dynamic capability, Government Regulation, Small and Medium Enterprises, Performance, Resource Based View

1. Introduction

Small and medium enterprises are major actors in the economic performance and growth of economies (UNCTAD, 2002), such as in Bangladesh, Kenya, and Burundi, among others, and are therefore considered to be at the core of innovation activities. Despite their contribution, they have faced challenges such as rapid global competition (Mensah & Acquah, 2015). Unfavorable government regulations that prevail, limited access to sources of financing, rapid technological development, among others. Such challenges all limit their performance.

Various studies have revealed that one of the main ways to combat these challenges is through innovation, which is strongly linked to entrepreneurship and the performance of small and medium enterprises. Kiraka, Kobia and Katwalo (2013) and Maldonado-Guzman and Valdez-Gonzalez (2020) have agreed that entrepreneurial innovation enables the creation of new resources, products, processes, supply of raw materials, new markets, among others, and that these elements are essential to improve the performance of small and medium enterprises. Rosil and Sidek (2013) established that for a company to be successful, it must innovate products and processes. Kiveu, Namusonge and Muathe (2019) found that the ability of small and medium enterprises to innovate for change and meet the market demands of their customers is considered a good competitive advantage.

Worldwide, it is estimated that small and medium enterprises account for more than 95% and provide more than 60% of private sector employment opportunities. In developed economies, this sector contributes about 64% of GDP and 62% of employment (Muathe & Muraguri-Makau, 2020) but they are rarely innovative and yet they are better placed to innovate because of their structure compared to large firms (Kiss, 2011).

In Burundi, researchers show that small and medium enterprises face many challenges such as saturated and overcrowded markets and strict legal regulations: competition from large firms, limited access to finance, and technological backwardness, among others, have prevented them from realizing their full potential, thus hindering their contribution to Burundi's socio-economic development (Bizimungu, 2016).

As the reviewed literature shows the importance of innovation to businesses, most of the studies concentrated on innovation and performance and overlooked entrepreneurial innovation, government regulations and performance of SMEs. This study will discuss the main concepts of entrepreneurial innovation, government regulation and performance related to small and medium-size firms; to establish theories that link entrepreneurial innovation, government regulation and performance related to small and medium-size firms; to recommend a conceptual framework to guide future studies on the identified knowledge gaps; and to recommend a methodological framework for future studies.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Muathe (2010) and Muathe, Wawire and Ofafa (2013) posit that Small and Medium Enterprises play a very important role in the economy in terms of wealth creation and provision of employment opportunities. For example, in Burundi, SMEs are to contribute 70-80% of the GDP for the period of 2014-2020. Despite the expected contribution of SMEs to GDP, their performance has not realized its full potential, thus hindering contribution to socio-economic development of most African countries (Martine, 2020). These enterprises have been experiencing a lot of challenges, such as: the competition from established large companies and multinationals, restricted financial resources, lagging technology, saturated markets, and stringent legal regulations, among others (Bizimungu, 2016).

One of the key ways to combat these challenges is through innovation and it is highly linked to entrepreneurship and performance of SMEs. SMEs should implement innovative activities in their businesses. According to Nazlina, Nor, and Rushami (2016), in order to achieve performance within an organization, organizational innovation must be implemented. Kiveu, Namusonge and Muathe (2019) noted that for manufacturing firms in Kenya to be competitive, they have to come up with process, marketing and organizational innovation.

Another study by Rosil and Sidek (2013) established that for a firm to perform, it has to innovate products and processes. And Maldonado-Guzman and Valdez-Gonzalez (2020) found that key ways for firms to be competitive is to come up with marketing, process, and product and management innovation.

The reviewed literature shows the importance of innovation to businesses, but most of the studies concentrated on innovation and performance of SMEs and overlooked entrepreneurial innovation, government regulations and performance of SMEs. It is therefore important to do more research to illustrate the link between entrepreneurial innovation

and the performance of SMEs to bridge the gap by including government regulations as a moderator.

1.2 Objectives of the study

- i. To discuss the key constructs of entrepreneurial innovation, government regulations and performance of SMEs
- ii. To establish theories that link entrepreneurial innovation, government regulations and performance of SMEs.
- iii. To recommend a conceptual framework that guides future studies on the highlighted knowledge gaps.
- iv. To recommend a methodological framework for future study.

2. Literature review

2.1 Theoretical review

The study is anchored on three theories: Resource Based View (RBV), Dynamic capability theory, and Schumpeter's Theory of Innovation. The theories bring out the effect of entrepreneurial innovation and government regulations on the performance of small and medium enterprises.

2.1.1 Resource Based View

This theory came out by Edith Penrose (1959) and proposes that resources and capabilities are fundamental within a firm. Capabilities are skills used by a firm in organizing and placing resources into productive use. For example, the firm's structure, operations, which show how decisions are carried out. In the RBV theory, for the growth or the performance of any firm, resources have to be guided so that they can be altered into the strengths or weaknesses of a firm. The theory is mainly based on four assumptions and these include heterogeneous, immobile, inimitable and non-substitutable. Heterogeneous is concerned with how different organizations have different skills, capabilities and other resources.

According to Barney (1991), there are various types of resources, such as organizational capital, intellectual capital, financial capital, physical capital, technological capital, and human capital that enable firms to create unique values for their customers. Jones and Hill (2009) suggested that resources are either tangible or intangible and tangible resources can be touched, for example, land, raw materials among others and they are the source of origin of intangible resources.

If a firm has specific and valuable resources, but with no needed capabilities to utilize these resources effectively, then performance may not be realized by the firm (Jones & Hill, 2009). Rumelt (1987) noted that RBV

is an outstanding theory in innovation and competition because it improves performance. Entrepreneurial innovation is a capability that enables firms to create as well as combine resources to bring on board new heterogeneous resources. Product quality can evolve with innovation, which then leads to performance and competitive advantage for companies. Entrepreneurial innovation takes different forms. For example, process, product, organizational and market innovation among others, and these forms can enable a firm to outplay its rivals when properly used.

Innovation offers means to higher performance of the firm through producing outputs which have Valuable, Rare, Inimitable and Non-substitutable (VRIN) characteristics (OECD, 2009). Financial resources are critical to a firm because they support innovation activities such as research and development and human capital, which are major determinants of the firm's performance and competition. Knowledge based resources are also important in the firm because they aid in coming up with ideas and utilizing chances for innovation. Therefore, knowledge is important when it comes to manipulating, changing and developing other resources for competitiveness (Lee & Sukuco, 2007). In this study, the RBV will be used in anchoring product innovation, process innovation, organizational innovation and market innovation as there are firm resources and capabilities which affect the performance of enterprises.

2.1.2 Dynamic Capability Theory

Teece, Pisano and Shuen, (1997) initiated the theory and observed the way firms achieve sustained competitiveness or higher performance in the changing and volatile environment and this theory emerged due to the limitations of the resource based theory. This theory takes up entrepreneurship, innovation, organizational learning, knowledge and change management (Teece, 2010). Dynamic capabilities simply refer to capabilities of the firm which enable it to come up with innovative products and processes that meet changing market conditions (Teece & Pisano, 1997). There are various examples of dynamic capabilities that can be used to promote value within a firm. There are: skills, procedures, organizational structures.

These capabilities can come from the changing routines, product developments which aid the firm to position its resources and competences in the dynamic business environment (Teece, 2007). Within a rapid changing environment when a firm needs to perform and sustain, the dynamic capabilities help the firm to use its resources efficiently and innovation is among those critical capabilities (Teece, 2009; Albaladejo & Romjin, 2000; Teece, 2007; Teece, 2009, Muitya & Muathe, 2020).

Innovation capability enables firms to employ the available resources in order to bring new resources, products, processes and systems in the changing environment so as to secure a competitive advantage (Teece & Pisano, 1997). Innovative capacity can be fostered by training, mentoring, research and development, and processes, among others. Dynamic capabilities also show the capacity of the firm in solving market issues to obtain a new and innovative way to gain competitive advantage (Teece, 2007). The theory puts more emphasis on the capacity of a firm to merge as well as and rearrange resources to fit the market changes and also establish new markets through innovation (Teece & Pisano, 1997; Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000).

As innovation is critical for achieving performance or competitive advantage in a dynamic, volatile environment, the theory shows how firms that work in dynamic environments should increase the chances for survival as well as growth. They must enhance their dynamic capabilities (Teece & Pisano, 1997). The DCs theory is useful for this study because it supports the RBV theory and goes beyond the idea of sustainable competitive advantage, which is all about VRIN resources that businesses must acquire. It also gives a broad view of how SMEs can create value in the changing environment to enhance their survival and growth.

2.1.3 Schumpeter's Theory of Innovation

Schumpeter's theory of innovation was originated and promoted by Joseph Schumpeter (1911) and explains the importance of Entrepreneurship and Innovation in economic growth. This theory suggests variations in the markets as well as economies are continuous or ongoing processes. In a changing economy, there exists a force which is behind that change as well as growth and that's an entrepreneur. According to Joseph Schumpeter, an entrepreneur is both an agent of innovation and a pivot of change (Schumpeter, 1934). The role of entrepreneurs is to develop new combinations of production factors, thus enabling discontinuity and transformation and this is the basis of economic development. Entrepreneurship is about innovation.

Schumpeter established different innovation aspects which promote economic development and these include; "establishing new or changing existing products; the use of new production methods, the development of different market approaches and the setting up of a different industrial design" (Schumpeter, 1934). One of the approaches for businesses that can result in a change in the economy is innovation, as he called creative destruction. Schumpeter also suggested that innovation helps in the development of economies and the process of innovation is done by the entrepreneur

(innovator). The role of the entrepreneur is placing the available resources into new applications and creating new combinations.

Schumpeter suggested that entrepreneurship is a key factor in production since it supports and brings economic change and entrepreneurs change the techniques of production through utilizing new sources of raw material or reorganizing an industry (Schumpeter, 1939). Creative destruction establishes wealth by destructing existing firms through bringing new products or services and shifting resources from existing to new companies, thus allowing new companies to grow (Schumpeter, 1942, Muathe, 2010). Therefore, innovation is a unique instrument entrepreneurs utilize in order to bring up opportunities for different products or services. The theory explains the importance of innovation and the main importance is of establishing new products which gives entrepreneurs a good competitive edge compared to their rivals.

Schumpeter (1942) demonstrated that the reason for improved performance in terms of profits and investments is innovation, and the theory backs this up by demonstrating that business profits can be obtained through entrepreneurial innovation. That's why innovation is a vital factor for growing the economy and the gain of a competitive advantage for businesses.

In this study, the theory indicates the effect of entrepreneurial innovation on improving firm performance and economic development. In order to achieve economic development, more innovation by entrepreneurs should take place so as to enable creative destruction that creates value. This theory anchors the independent variable of entrepreneurial innovation and the dependent variable of performance and supports the two main theories. Entrepreneurial innovation leads to the performance and sustainability of economic growth. The theory also establishes the various types of innovation which can be utilized to create value (Schumpeter, 1934).

2.2 Conceptual Review

This study is anchored on different constructs like performance, entrepreneurial innovation, government regulations and small and medium enterprises. Therefore, this section is detailed with a review of the conceptual literature which provides an accurate explanation of each the construct.

2.2.1 Performance

Entrepreneurs within the SME sector open up businesses when they have goals or objectives that they want to achieve at a given time interval (Waheed, Abbas, & Malik, 2018). And so, performance is vital since it shows them their positions in a given time frame (Yusuf, Gunasegaram & Dan 2007). There are two different measures of performance, for example,

financial or non-financial measures that entrepreneurs can use to measure and find out the position of entrepreneurial ventures (Tudose, 2012). For instance, the financial measures are profits, return on capital employed, return on investment and return on sales among others (Smith, Bracker, & Miner 1987; Duchesneau & Gartner 1990) and non-financial measures are number of employees, market share, employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction among others.

SMEs usually measure their performance using financial measures, yet this has some short comings. To solve the problems related to the use of measures Chong (2008) argues that SMEs should adjust to the application of both measures, financial and non-financial. Furthermore, in their adaptation to this hybrid approach, entrepreneurs should also use a time-axis approach in measuring performance. This is because time-axis brings out the time period, whether short or long term period.

Birley and Westhead (1990) noted that short-term and long term measures indicate different aspects. For example, short-term measures are majorly financial and they are good at examining or evaluating enterprises that last for twelve months. Long term measures are mainly non-financial and are good at measuring or evaluating enterprises that will last for more than twelve months. Even though long term non-financial measures like number of employees, market share clearly predict the long term while bringing the existence and survival of the firm, short-term financial measures like profitability, on the other hand, show the current firm performance (Barney 1997; Haber & Reichel 2005).

According to Brush and Vanderwerf (1992), financial measures have a number of advantages, including the fact that they are objective, easy to understand, and simple to compute. However, they have some drawbacks, including the fact that they are historical, inaccessible, inaccurate, and profits can be easily manipulated as well as misinterpreted. On that financial measures should be employed by SMEs to supplement the financial measures because combining the two enables entrepreneurs to have a good view of their business performance both in short and long term aspects (Covin & Slevin 1989; Kunkel & Hofer 1993).

2.2.2 Entrepreneurial Innovation

Sheu (2007) and Kiraka, Kobia and Katwalo (2013) agreed that entrepreneurial innovation enables creation of new resources, products, processes, supply of raw materials, new markets among others and these enhance the performance of the firm. Entrepreneurial innovation is widely recognized as a critical driver of improving the productivity, the performance and the survival of businesses in a globalized and changing climate. Porter (1996) remarked that for an enterprise to be competitive with other

enterprises, it has to produce specific and sustainable factors that are different and innovation is a pathway by which enterprises can create these different factors. Entrepreneurial innovation takes different forms, for example, product, process, organization, market, market innovation among others.

Schumpeter (1934) explained that product innovation involves bringing new goods that are unfamiliar with consumers and have better quality. Forker et al. (1996), Camison and Lopez (2010) and Garvin (1987) observed entrepreneurial innovation is key when improving the performance of firms. And according to Hult, Hurley and Knight (2004), product innovation protects the firm from competition and market threats and it also has a good positive relationship with organizational performance.

Generally, process innovation involves a process of improving the internal functioning of the firm and it takes various forms, such as the development or creation of techniques and systems. Like technology innovation, expertise, methods, equipment and techniques that are used in the transformation process or in the process of producing a product (Gopalakrishnan & Damanpour, 1997; Wan, Ong, & Lee 2005; Oke, Burke & Myers, 2007).

OECD (2005) found that organizational innovation implies employing new organizational methods in the daily business operations of a firm that can enhance their performance. Such methods are the introduction of methods of organizing work and practices, new ways of assigning tasks, new management design, and the development of new methods of building relationships with other firms.

Johne (1999) observed that market innovation is the improvement or creation of a marketing approach. A firm needs to carry out market innovation on a daily basis because it is through this direction that a firm can reach its potential customers. For example, the use of the internet enables firms to reach customers globally at a low cost and greater speed. Rodriguez-Cano (2004) and Appiah-Adu and Satyendra (1998) noted that for firms to fulfil the needs of the market, they have to come up with market innovation.

2.2.3 Government Regulation

The government develops different regulations by which it controls the activities of firms (King & Levine, 1993). According to Quartey (2001), regulations pertaining to SMEs take various forms, such as regulations on the formation of firms, labor regulations practices, taxation, and foreign trade. James and Diana (2017) have found that harsh regulations in many countries deter entrepreneurship and innovation of firms. Government policies and regulations are viable, particularly with regard to the fostering of

entrepreneurship, and also determine the success of businesses on a national scale (Obaji & Olugu, 2014).

Towards this, many governments, as arbiters on the margins of the market, have proposed legislative initiatives and policies to facilitate the SME sector, but within the limits of tight national budgets and other considerations (Okeke & Eme, 2014). France and Russia established a political structure that has led them to entrepreneurial growth (Ricketts, 2006). In the Doing Business Report (2020), they ranked the countries out of the 190 economies surveyed in terms of favorable regulations for starting a business, obtaining credit, trading across borders, ease of doing business, paying taxes, and so on. They showed how New Zealand is the best regulated country and that there is still work to be done in improving the business environment.

As countries with lower levels of regulation for accessing licenses develop at a higher rate and thus benefit from increased production compared to those with higher levels of regulation (Djankov 2002). Most studies have shown that the business climate strongly impacts SME performance like Lumpkin and Dess (1996) and Dethier and Effenberg (2012) have identified regulations as the major hindrance to the performance of firms but that SMEs are the most affected. Bouazza *et al.* (2015) assert that SMEs in Algeria don't perform due to different external factors such as inaccessibility to finance, inequality of the tax system, harsh laws, policies, and regulations among others.

Due to different government regulatory requirements, such as the expense and the time for getting a license and permit, Algerian SMEs have been facing various challenges when establishing administrative and operational procedures. Those challenges limit SMEs in Algeria from performing and expanding their business. Most SMEs don't register due to the fear of being visible. Being visible to the government means that the cost of operation increases. Most of the government restrictions and regulations affect more SMEs than large enterprises due to financial weakness that most of them experience (Bouazza *et al.*, 2015).

2.2.4 Small and Medium Enterprises

The significance of SMEs towards the economy has been noted by different studies like the study of Shahjahan (2017). He asserts that enterprises that have less than 20 employees have increased job creation in the USA within the period of 1969 and Muathe, Wawire and Ofafa (2013) noted that the critical drivers for most of the economies are SMEs and entrepreneurial enterprises. SMEs are major players in the competition and growth of economies (UNCTAD, 2002), therefore they are considered as the core of innovation activities.

Worldwide, SMEs are estimated to be more than 95% and offer over 60% of employment opportunities in the private sector. In developed economies, this sector accounts for approximately 64% of GDP and 62% of employment (Muathe & Muraguri-Makau, 2020), whereas in Bangladesh, it provided 1.5 million jobs from 2009 to June 2014 (Rahman, 2015). In Eastern countries like Kenya, 80% of companies are SMEs and contribute approximately 40% of GDP (KNBS, 2016).

Despite the expected contribution of SMEs to GDP, their performance has not realized full potential, thus, hindering contribution to socio-economic development (Martine, 2020). These enterprises have been experiencing a lot of challenges, such as: the competition from established large companies and multinationals, restricted financial resources, lagging technology, saturated markets, and stringent legal regulations, among others (Bizimungu, 2016). Those challenges come with a changing environment in terms of consumer needs, technological change, and high standards requirements, among others (Kiraka, 2009; KAM, 2012).

2.2.5 Entrepreneurial Innovation and Performance

Entrepreneurial Innovation is widely accepted as one of the key ways to combat challenges and as a major factor in promoting firm performance as well as survival and growth (Kasevu, 2017). It is highly linked to entrepreneurship and the performance of SMEs. SMEs should implement innovative activities in their businesses. The capability of SMEs to innovate for change and satisfy the demands of their customers' markets is considered as a good competitive advantage (Kiveu, Namusonge and Muathe, 2019).

Due to that, entrepreneurial innovation is perceived as a source of strategic change where firms can achieve greater performance. It is therefore recommended that for SMEs to improve, they need to carry out innovation by adopting an appropriate process and that results in a competitive advantage (Gunday, *et al.*, 2008). Mensah and Acquah (2015) point out that the performance of enterprises gets higher as innovation increases. The importance of innovation SME is shown by the way it offers opportunities to alleviate external threats (Murphy & Ledwith, 2007) and it is easy to carry out because SMEs have a horizontal management structure with few levels of management and bureaucracy compared to larger enterprises (Kiraka, Kobia & Katwalo, 2013).

According to Nazlina, Nor, and Rushami (2016), in order to achieve performance within an organization, organizational innovation must be implemented. Kiveu, Namusonge, and Muathe (2019) discovered that in order for manufacturing firms in Kenya to be competitive, they must implement process, marketing, and organizational innovation; however, the study discovered that product innovation was not significant. Rosil and Sidek

(2013) established that for a firm to perform, it has to innovate product and process and Maldonado-Guzman and Valdez-Gonzalez (2020) found that key ways for firms to be competitive is to come up with marketing, process, product and management innovation.

2.2.6 Entrepreneurial Innovation, Government Regulation and Performance

Government regulations are reshaping the business climate by affecting profits, production costs and risks of various value chains in different countries (Dethier & Effenberg, 2012). In the Doing Business Report (2020), they ranked the countries out of the 190 economies surveyed in terms of favorable regulations for starting a business, obtaining credit, trading across borders, ease of doing business, paying taxes, and so on. They showed how New Zealand is the best regulated country and that there is still work to be done in improving the business environment.

Lumpkin and Dess (1996) demonstrated that the business climate is heavily influenced by government regulations and policies. Countries with lower levels of regulation for accessing licenses develop at a higher rate and thus benefit from increased production compared to those with higher levels of regulation (Djankov 2002). Harsh regulations deter entrepreneurship and innovation of firms (James & Diana, 2017). SMEs in Algeria are limited from performing and expanding their business due to different government regulatory requirements, such as the expense and the time for getting a license and permit.

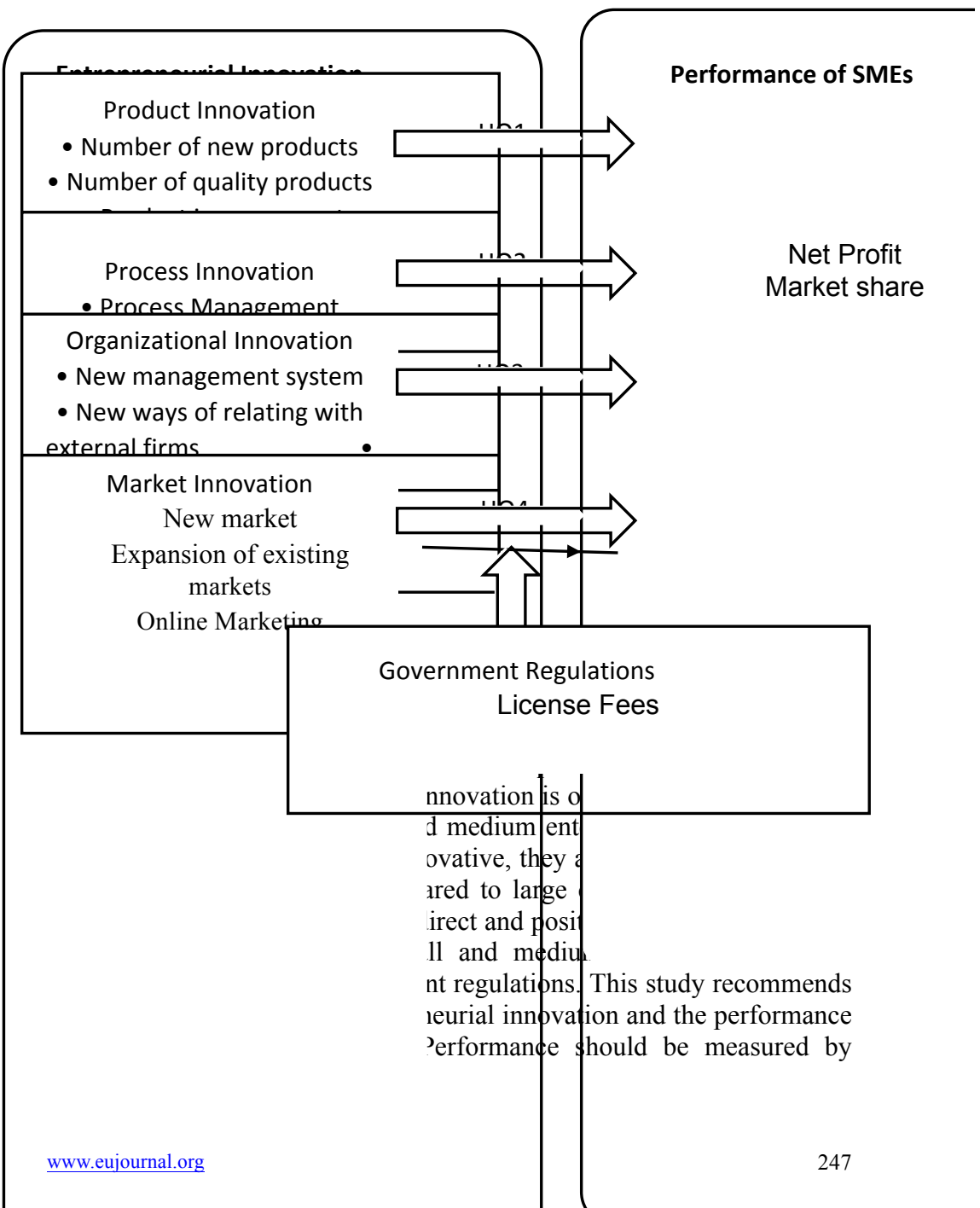
Government regulations and entrepreneurial innovation have an effect on the performance of firms. In the study of Jiang, Wang and Li (2018) conducted in China, they found that regional regulations that rely on the government have a positive impact on innovation as harsh local regulations restrict the production and R & D efficiency of enterprises. And Eniola and Entebang (2015) in the study done in Nigeria found that regulations limit SMEs from performing and that they impact their competitiveness. In addition, Mwasiaji (2019) carried out in Kenya and found that manufacturing enterprises face challenges brought about by harsh regulations and concluded that governmental policies are important in providing an environment that is conducive to business development. In this study, government regulations are introduced as a moderating variable between entrepreneurial innovation and performance. Future studies should be carried out to bring out this relationship more, especially in the context of small and medium enterprises.

The study further proposes a schematic structure that illustrates a correlation between entrepreneurial innovation, government regulations and

the performance of small and medium enterprises that are the constructs of the study.

Independent Variables
Variables

Dependent



employing both financial and non-financial measures and this is called a hybrid approach which overcomes the shortcomings of using one measure. The study should include government regulation as a moderating variable and the purpose of this moderating variable is to establish the strength of the correlation or association between entrepreneurial innovation and performance of small and medium enterprises. Most of the studies in the reviewed literature relied on one research design, either descriptive or explanatory, and these have limitations, for example, descriptive does not reveal the relationship between variables, while explanatory does not explain the behavior of variables in the study.

3.1 Propositions

The proposed conceptual framework represents the investigation of the relationship between the constructs of entrepreneurial innovation and the performance of small and medium-sized businesses, with government regulations acting as a moderating variable. Entrepreneurial innovation is an independent variable while performance is a dependent variable. The following hypotheses can be drawn from the conceptual framework:

H₀₁: Entrepreneurial innovation has no significant effect on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises.

H₀₂: Government regulations have no significant moderating effect on the relationship between entrepreneurial innovation and the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises.

4. Conclusions and direction for future research

Secondary Data Review (SDR) was used in this study to review entrepreneurial innovation constructs, government regulations, and performance related to small and medium enterprises because it involves comparing different types of data, synthesis, and analysis based on different desk studies containing all important, valid, and accurate information found from various sources such as the government, non-government organizations, and academia.

Based on the results of earlier studies, the study noted that these studies have focused on a direct relationship between entrepreneurial innovation and performance and that there is an effect of entrepreneurial innovation on the performance of small and medium enterprises, which means that small and medium enterprises need to focus more on innovation in order to improve their performance and be competitive.

Consequently, future research should establish how entrepreneurial innovation can help small and medium enterprises strengthen their competitive advantage and thus their performance and additional research

can be carried out taking into account the primary data in order to build additional documentation on the secondary data already available.

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