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Editorial

Emmanuel Jean-Francois
Ohio University

We are delighted to release this new issue of the Journal of Comparative Studies and International Education (JCSIE) in an unprecedented time characterized by the tyranny of COVID-19. Such a global pandemic has put on their knees almost every political, economic and cultural systems, some more significantly than others. With the experience of COVID-19, the debates about the value and meaningfulness of comparative studies and international education have been definitely put to rest. Next topic?

Whether we want to admit it or not, COVID-19 has shown that the world is a global village of local contexts, which is shaped by the diverse realities of glocal dynamics that can no longer be ignored. Such glocal dynamics show that change is not a fictitious thing, but it can be real, it can happen, and it can happen fast. Intentional glocal understanding and perspectives can help channel the changes that have been imposed upon us as a force for positive transformation of societies and communities with a conscience and that are more inclusive, fair, equitable, tolerant, peaceful, loving, sustainable, and vacuum for increasing quality of life. While the articles in this issue do not focus on COVID-19, they carry findings, reflections, discussion, and analytical tools that can be helpful to scholars and practitioners in this challenging time.

The first article involves a collaboration between scholars from China and Ghana and is a *"**Comparative Review of Educational Reforms, Policies, and Systems: A Case of China and Ghana".*** The authors assert that for four consecutive years Ghana has ranked first among the African countries who send international students to China. In other words, there are some significant connections between Ghana and China. Therefore, it is understandable why the authors are from Ghana and China and collaborated to provide comprehensive information on education in the two countries. This article analyzes the driving forces which have wrought the outcomes and inputs of the educational systems of Ghana and China, but also offers a clear direction on impending needs and obstacles that both nations faced in their educational journey. The article concludes with highlights on "the essence for Chinese and Ghanaian administrative governments to take charge of strengthening and refining their present educational policies and not altering and introducing new policies that may be irrelevant in the development of education".

The next article is ***"Comparing Diversity and Inclusion in the Education of North American Countries: A Critical Perspective on the U.S. and Canada***". As the title implies, this article compares and contrasts policies and practices related to diversity and inclusion in the education systems of the U.S. and Canada. The article that follows is *"**Correlation Between Diversity and Type of Skills for Innovation Management: A Theoretical Model***" introduces a conceptual framework that may be useful to scholars interested in issues of diversity both at the societal and organizational levels. Such article approaches diversity across six demographic verticals: gender, age, race & ethnicity, sexual orientation of employees, religion & beliefs, and disability. The main purpose of the study involving this

article was to uncover the underlying relation between diversity and type of skill set required for management of innovation. The article found that some diversity skill sets in selected sectors are correlated to age and gender. The author did not find any correlation to other diversity attributes like race & ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion & beliefs, and disability.

Further, the issue includes another comparative article ***"Comparative Language and Education for Development Policies Between the Gambia and Ghana: Advocacy for Change".*** This article compares the similarities and differences between The Gambia's and Ghana's educational systems with respect to language and education as a roadmap to socio-economic development. The study used the Globe dimensions of national cultures as a conceptual framework to analyze these countries language and education for development policies. The author found that "Ghana is more assertive than the Gambia in its policies on language in early childhood education and education for national development".

This issue also features *"**The State of Instructional Technology in Pre-colonial, Colonial and Post-colonial Africa: A Survey of Literature"*,** which examines the evolution of instructional technology in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial Africa's educational system through a survey of existing literature. The article explains how the emergence of the computer and the accompanying internet connectivity have influenced instructional technology in many educational settings across the African continent. The last article in this issue is titled ***"The Opportunities and Challenges of Online Instruction in Transnational Education and Learning".*** This study reports on the opportunities and challenges of online instruction in transnational education and learning. The author argues that "the quest to make more strategic gains from online education programs comes with challenges to both learners and instructors as teaching/learning are likely to suffer in the online instruction mode".

The issue concludes with a book review of ***"The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children by Gloria Ladson-Billings".*** The author of the book review emphasizes on issues and topics related to diversity, inclusion, and culturally competent teaching environment.

I would like to seize the opportunity offered by the release of this new issue to welcome our Associate Editor, Dr. Charles Lowery. Dr. Lowery is a Dewey scholar with a rich credential on issues related to critical pedagogy and leadership, as well as international education. I am very happy that he accepted to join us. I also welcome Dr. Chetanath Gautam, Delaware State University (Dover, US), and Dr. Yenni M. Djajalaksana, Maranatha Christian University, (Bandung, Indonesia) as two new additions to our Editorial Advisory Board. I would like to renew my gratitude to all of you, members of the Editorial Advisory Board, for your valuable support. This issue would not have been possible without the submissions of our scholars, especially the one whose articles are featured in this issue. So, thank you very much for your contribution! Finally, my thanks go to our unconditional readers who continue to share their feedback. I hope you find the articles in this issue useful! Be safe and be well!

Emmanuel Jean-Francois, PhD
Editor-in-Chief

Comparative Review of Educational Reforms, Policies, and Systems: A Case of China and Ghana

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Abstract
In contemporary times, there is a greater movement of learners not merely moving from one nation to the other but also from a continent to another, and each single national education system profits from each other. A classic case is the movement of students from Ghana to China, with the number of students studying in China reaching up to 6,500 and Ghana ranking first (in student migration to China) among African countries for four consecutive years. Ghana's bond with China, however, goes beyond education to social and economic connections. The over-arching aim of the review is to provide readers with comprehensive information on education in the two countries. This review is not an attempt to evaluate or judge the quality of education in either China or Ghana, but to provide valuable understandings of the driving forces, which have wrought the outcomes and inputs of their educational system, and to offer a clear direction on impending needs and obstacles that both nations faced in their educational journey. The review comparably highlights the educational flight of both nations emphasizing the educational reforms, policies, and structures. In conclusion, this paper highlights the essence for Chinese and Ghanaian administrative governments to take charge of strengthening and refining their present educational policies and not altering and introducing new policies that may be irrelevant in the development of education.

Keywords: China, Ghana, educational reforms, educational policies, educational systems, educational development

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Introduction

Education is a very potent weapon used in the world's transformation (Duncan, 2013). There is no doubt that education is amongst the greatest of all human events and ensures the building of the harmonious structure of the nation (Gu, Li, & Wang, 2009). Education is, therefore, a key in the economic development and growth of nations like Ghana and China. For this to be possible, there is a need for education to satisfy the aspirations and needs of the persons who patronize (Olejurulo, 2018). According to Green and Hannon (2007), education is an act of transporting information in the form of ideas, customs, experiences, values, and skills from one party to the other or from one generation to another. Supporting the view of Green and Hannon (2007), Arnett (1998) strongly indicated that education is all about culture and this might differ from one group of people to another. Arnett (1998) further reiterated that because education is all about culture, different cultural cohorts have their educational systems, and thus, the benchmark for judging the quality of education differs from one culture to the other (Arnett, 1998). Up to this point, it is not out of place to believe that education in China and Ghana might differ in most regards due to differences in way of life of their citizens. But is this true in reality? Are the Ghanaian educational reforms, policies, and systems similar to that of China?

Owing to globalization, there is a greater movement of learners not merely migrating from one nation to the other but again from continent to continents, and thus, every single education system profits from each other (Altbach & Teichler, 2001). Altbach (2007) noted that the governmental plots in Africa and Asian are continuously shifting and this is impacting the educational structures and credentials provided to prospective students. In a typical case of China and Ghana, China has supported Ghana predominantly in the field of vocational, technical, and technology training, which is central to creating an experienced workforce. Notwithstanding this, the number of students studying in China reached 6,500 and Ghana ranking first among African countries for four consecutive years (Wang, 2019).

The bond between Ghana and China regarding education has reached greater heights, principally under the administration of President Xi Jinping, with the Chinese government providing nearly 7000 chances to study (undergraduate and post-graduate levels) to Ghanaian students in recent times. The two countries, in 2018, endorsed eight Cooperation Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding in diverse regions of their economies to aid expand their mutual relationships. These agreements were endorsed when President Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo visited China. Both presidents held two-sided conversations before endorsing such agreements on Saturday, September 1, 2018. One of the notable contracts which are the focus of this write up is education (GhanaWeb, 2018).

This paper comparatively reviews the educational reforms, policies, and systems in China and Ghana. The over-arching aim of the review is to provide readers with comprehensive information on education in the two countries. We believe that this review will provide valuable understandings of the driving forces which have wrought the outcomes and inputs of their educational system and offer a clear direction on impending needs and obstacles that both nations faced in their educational journey. This review is, however, not an attempt to evaluate or judge the quality of education in either China or Ghana but rather to unravel their educational journey. In subsequent sections of this paper, the conceptual framework and the review methodology are discussed. The remaining sections shed light on Ghana's cooperation with China and brief historical antecedents of education in both

countries. The paper further highlights and discusses the educational reforms, policies, and systems in China and Ghana. The paper ends with conclusion on the emerging trends found in the review.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this paper took a narrative form. Three key concepts underlying this review were educational reforms, policies, and systems. According to Armstrong (2015), reforms in education signify a renovative movement and plan aimed at yielding a systematic transformation in educational practice and theory at all levels of education within a society/community/nation. Ordinarily, educational reforms automatically necessitate the formulation of policies which later drives the educational system (Armstrong, 2015). In the views of Xu and Mei (2009), educational policy comprises plans, regulations, rules, and principles in the field of education which directs the set-ups of the education system. For the education system, it is the structure of schooling that includes all the phases of education (Yang, 2009). In a very rare situation, educational policies can be made without necessarily having a reform but whenever there is a reform, policy emerges naturally. Both educational reforms and policies shape the educational system. The review clearly showed that education policies are often embedded in educational reforms. Thus, the paper did not have a delineated theme for only educational policy but has rather been implicitly discussed under educational reforms. Review on such concepts is very essential since these concepts interact and drive education in any country and this is a major reason why this review focused on these three key concepts.

Methodology

A laid-out plan was used from an information search to synthesize the data from various sources. First, we searched for information from various databases such as Web of Science, Scopus, ERIC, Science hub, and other open-access databases. The search was guided by some keywords/phrases like *education in Ghana/China, educational reforms in Ghana/China, Ghanaian/Chinese educational system, educational policies in Ghana/China, and history of education in Ghana/China,* among others. Secondary sources of information were first fetched, and a further search was conducted to fish out primary literature sources. Other books like that of Yang (2009) titled *Educational System in China*, and *Education: Society and Development in Ghana* authored by Antwi (1992) were retrieved from the library. After the internet and manual searches, a large chunk of literature was amassed. Two criteria were used to include or exclude papers and books: (1) the information should be well referenced, documented and the source should be credible, (2) the information should be focused on the history, educational reforms, policies, and systems in any or both countries. This was because some unrelated papers, for instance, focused on issues like school enrolment and retention rates at all levels of education in Ghana/China. Although such information highlights issues in education this was not the focus of this paper. Using index cards and highlighting techniques, each paper was read, and summaries of each paper were written upon which pairing was done based on content similarity. With this, the synthesis of

the literature was carried out. It must be noted that all the authors were involved in this process. An a priori approach of theme creation was utilized such that themes were already formulated before in-depth text reading was done, and adjustments were later made based on the content of the literature retrieved. The themes which emerged were: (1) Ghana cooperation with China, (2) Historical antecedent of Ghanaian/Chinese education, (3) Educational reforms in Ghana/China, and (4) Educational system of Ghana/China.

Ghana's Cooperation with China

In 1960, The People's Republic of China and The Republic of Ghana established an authorized political bond. From then, the link between the two nations has been heightened through robust dealings from the era of Kwame Nkrumah (First Prime Minister and President of Ghana) and Zhou Enlai (First Premier of the People's Republic of China), and by high-elite planned visitations, comprising of President John Kufuor visit to China in 2002 and President Hu's trip to Ghana in 2003. In 2007, the Second leg of Premier Wen Jiabao toured Africa and visited Ghana as part. Both Ghana and China endorsed a mutual communication on a solidification collaboration in telecommunications, culture, infrastructure, trade, health, and education. By extension, the Chinese premier's tour to Ghana ended-up endorsing about six agreements comprising of the construction of a basic school, malaria center, and a loan facility of 66 US dollars to extend the telecommunication networks in Ghana. It is not surprising that for some period now Ghana has offered critical diplomatic assistance to China (Idun-Arkhurst, 2008).

During the 2000s, the size of Chinese investment and trade in the Ghanaian spaced has greatly increased. From a sheer 4.4 million USD in Chinese ventures enumerated by the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre in 2000, China's registered tides had amplified to 1.6 billion USD in 2014 alone. Notwithstanding the manufacturing sector regaining its top spot as a retainer of Chinese investments in 2014, the General Trade sector has acknowledged a large receipt of a stable movement of Chinese investments particularly since 2004. Consequently, the Chinese influence largely detected in the trading zone. Up until 2015, nevertheless, Building and Construction zones of Ghana's economy had appeared as the principal receiver of Chinese investment tides shadowed by Manufacturing and General Trade. In 2006, the Services segment also appeared as a substantial beneficiary of Chinese investments from 2006. In 2009, the Cooperation sector which failed to attract any Chinese investment from 2000-2008 started attracting investments (Dankwah & Marko, 2019).

Currently, China is the second highest exporter in Ghana. In 2005, 433.74 million USD rate of importations from China landed in Ghana, with Ghana exporting 0.1 USD worth of exports. This reproduced a strident increase in bilateral trade between the two nations from 93.13 million USD in 2000 to 433.74 million USD in 2005. The majority of China's external direct investment in Ghana is concentrated around construction, trading, service zone, tourism, and manufacturing with a full investment value of 75.8 million USD in 2008. Out of 283 projects invested in, by the Chinese national, 48 were in tourism, 15 in construction, 44 in services, 59 in trading, and 97 were in manufacturing (Idun-Arkhurst, 2008). By 2014, the overall Chinese investments in Ghana had moved up by 1.6 billion USD. While the overall Chinese investment in Ghana for the period of 2000-2007 was 199 million USD, cumulative investments for the period of 2008-2015 were 2.2 billion USD (Dankwah & Marko, 2019).

Concerning education, Ghana has established bonds with China in the area of Century Careering Training Institute, the completion of phase two of University of Allied Sciences, Confucius Institute, Human Resource, and Capacity Building, Higher Education Research Cooperation, and Chinese Language Training School, to promote the Chinese and Ghanaian culture, landscape and innovations.

Historical Antecedent of Chinese Education

The historical antecedent of education in China is linked far-off to the 16th century BC. All through this era, only the elite was privileged to access education. The Confucianism pieces of training within the Autumn and Spring and Warring States eras, the core curriculum, were principally grounded on *The Four Books and The Five Classics*. These books were the accredited courses of the Confucian philosophy in the medieval culture in prehistoric China. The first book highlighted *Confucian Analects, The Doctrine of the Mean, The Works of Mencius, and The Great Learning.* The second book comprised *The Book of Poetry (*also known as *The Book of Odes or Songs), The Book of History, The Spring and Autumn Annals, The Book of Changes, and The Book of Rites.* Confucianism possibly is the leading driver in China's education throughout history. Earlier in Han Dynasty, a system of the public education structure was developed (Lee, 2000).

Commonly, primeval Chinese education was categorized into public school and private school education. These complemented one another in training talents for the governing classes. Olden government school education was supported by local and central governments of feudal and slave societies. It targeted nurturing abilities of numerous forms for the reigning classes, whose fall and rise were associated with political and social growths in primordial China. Referring to historic brochures, nevertheless, principal public school education was merely introduced in the Western Han empire (206 BC-9 AD), and it was polished and moderated throughout the Wei (220-265), Jin (265-420), and Northern and Southern (420-589) reigns, due to modifications in the political condition. It was not until the Tang reign (618-907) that the principal public school education touched its highest under the sponsorship and inspiration of the governing party. Public school education was managed from the era of the Northern Song Empire (960-1127), and throughout the Qing rule (1644-1911) were in name merely as a mechanism of the nation-wide examination structure (Gu, Li, & Wang, 2009).

While public school education was on the decline, private school education thrived throughout the reigns of Wei (220-265), Jin (265-420), and Northern and Southern (420-589). Private education transformed the style of traditional Confucianism, and it furthermore comprised technology, Taoism, Buddhism, and metaphysics. Private schools were present all over urban and rural settings throughout the Tang Empire (618-907), and Confucian rulers were embodied by Kong Yingda (574-648) and Yan Shigu (581-645). The private schools were categorized into two in the Song (960-1279), the Yuan (1271-1368), the Ming (1368-1644) and the Qing (1644-1911) reigns; academies supported by state noblemen and sishu (successors of existing private basic schools) managed by academics. *Approaches to Teaching Kids* authored by Yi Jun (1783-1854) from the Qing Reign (1644-1911) was a book providing a comprehensive outline of the approaches to developmental education (Lee, 2008).

The Qing Rule, in 1911, was dethroned by rebellion, and a pro-republic nature of administration was created. During this time, the government restrained the traditional mode of education. Novel educational replicas from Japanese, American, and European were established in China. According to Zarrow (2006), the implementation of the reform/policy and the inauguration to the external universe in 1978, resulted in education crossing into an innovative growth age. The Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, in 1985, noted the *Decision on the Reform of the educational Structure*, emphasizing the standard that local administrations should be accountable for education. The novel policy was a motivation for indigenous governments, particularly those of the townships and nations. The National People's Congress in 1986 propagated the *Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China*, therefore enlisting education in the nation on a stable lawful foundation. China began an educational system of 9-year compulsory schooling (Guan & Meng, 2007).

Historical Antecedent of Ghanaian Education

The entire progression of foreign education in the Gold Coast (now Ghana) started due to the British pursuit to control their industry with raw materials. The purpose of foreign education was to offer an impulse to the economy in various homes. Throughout the 19th century, Christian Missionaries were documented as trainers to the populaces. The British believed that local education should be supervised by the colonial government. British bureaucrats were present in the Gold Coast days as far as 1821 (Djamila & Yasmina, 2011). In his book *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the 19th and 20th Century*, Adu Boahen contended that the Europeans traveled to the Gold Coast from the 1470s as their mission was to propagate the gospel of Jesus Christ. He additionally highlighted the several efforts by the evangelists to launch schools to train the local populace; for instance, Jacabus Elisa Johannes Capitein of Ivory Coast ancestry begun the set-up of two schools in Elmina in 1742 which included one for the mullato kids and another for Africans in general. Both schools, nevertheless, were dissolved in 1747 after his death. Similarly, Philip Quacoe established a school in 1766, until it collapsed after his death.

Citing Akyeampong (2010), Ghana at independence had developed strategies on how schooling was to be made effective in supporting the determinations to becoming a wealthy nation. Akyeampong (2010) further noted that Dr. Kwame Nkrumah outlined his administrations' vision with education as the pivot to the old Parliamentary Assembly. Nkrumah's education growth was to realize three objectives: first, to be employed as a strategy to produce a methodically well-educated populace. Furthermore, to resolve the ecological reasons for low output; and thirdly, for constructing knowledge to improve the economic potentialities of Ghana. Nkrumah was well-known to be strongminded to roll-out educational strategies that were valuable for economic development. He particularly focused on technical education since he understood that technical training was indispensable to Ghana's path for hastening economic and technological development (Akyeampong, 2010).

Antwi (1992) underscored that from 1952-1957, primary and middle school amplified and there was an enhancement in the arena of technical training. Likewise, there were several challenges related to the availability of classrooms and the prerequisite skills of instructors. Yet, under Nkrumah's government, the Seventh Standard School Leaving Certificate Examination was substituted by the Middle Form 4 examination (Antwi, 1992). In 1958, an Educational Trust which provided funding to the secondary school, in terms of infrastructure,

in the country was established and several schools benefited and still benefiting from the fund. Currently, Ghana has many public and private secondary schools with higher enrolment rates. The growth of teacher training led to the formation of the National Teacher Training Council in 1958 to project the teachers' interest. Throughout Nkrumah's government, two university colleges (i.e., University College of the Gold Coast and the Kumasi College of Arts, Science, and Technology) made significant strides (Boahen, 2000).

Educational Reforms in China

In the previous five decades, educational expansion in China has been branded by brave changes, key modifications, and setbacks (Tsang, 2000). In the initial 15 years, the young Socialist administration tried to convey basic education to the grassroots and concurrently organized a *leading elite* throughout tertiary education. In 1966, these aspiring strategies, conversely, were quickly terminated when the Great Cultural Revolution exploded. College education was terminated, and the organizing of corps with Socialist ethics became the principal objective of schooling at every stage of education. Merely the reign of Deng Xiaoping as a national leader saw the initiation of reforms in 1978 for China to start a number of developments in education (Tsang, 2000).

During the 1950s, the newly instituted Chinese administration dedicated the utmost of its educational energies toward reformation. All-inclusive institutions of higher education were separated into several specialist polytechnic universities and colleges. Due to this, both the number of higher institutions and college learners experienced swift development (Tsang, 2000). Primary education initially saw prompt development, however, went into a lasting degenerative opening in 1958, due to the financial disaster that led to the huge expansion. When China disconnected its links with the Soviet Union at the end of the 1950s, the ruling administration drifted from the Soviet prototypical to a two-tiered scheme with stability among a modern, a traditional, and Confucian Western form of schooling (Goldman, Kumar, & Liu, 2008).

With the demise of Mao and the upswing of Deng Xiaoping, educational plans relapsed to those introduced during the early part of the 1960s. Academic values were re-established. Whereas the focus before the Cultural Revolution was on accessibility, quality instead of quantity was now stressed. To strip off anxieties about superiority, the mandatory nine-year education programme was inaugurated in the year 1985 and strengthened in the year 1993 (Tsang, 2000). The fiscal thriving of the 1980s empowered China to develop and adapt its education structure grounded on the reforms that imitate the social standards of the nation, and economic and political realities. Because China had attached grave significance to the education quality, energies focused on protecting and maintaining the educational privileges of the underprivileged cohort. Two worth noting instances include the development of western zones and supporting underprivileged students (Xu & Mei, 2009).

In May 1985, the verdict on Reform of Educational System was announced by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and in 1993, Programme of China's Educational Reform and Development was instituted by the Central Committee of the CCP and the State Council (Yang, 2009). The reforms aimed to augment nationwide effectiveness and offer better and extra workforce adjusting to the transformation of the collectivist market-oriented political and economic system, and the technological and scientific expansion (Yang, 2009). From 1978, all over the era of opening up and reform,

China instigated a mandatory education scheme, a graduate education scheme, an academic degree structure, and improvement in adult schooling. Since the institutionalization of mandatory education in China in 1986 and the establishment of monitoring education growth in 1993, there was a huge improvement in access to education before the end of the 20th century (Wang, 2009).

In 1995, a vast determination to increase entry rates in pre-tertiary and tertiary education was announced. The restructuring had numerous purposes: to simplify mandatory education for nine years; reduce illiteracy rates; advance continuing, adult and technical education; increase girl-child accessibility to education, and of nationwide minorities in deprived regions; construct and renovate buildings for teaching and research to expand school's capacity to accommodate a large number of students. The mandatory schooling and literacy education by 2007 had achieved a 98% coverage rate (Ministry of Education [MoE] China, 2007). The Chinese State Council in 1999 announced a decision on developing educational reform and encouraging education quality in a multifaceted manner and an equitably comprehensive contemporary curriculum structure operated in China during the latter part of the 20th century (Xu & Mei, 2009). China, in 1995, passed the Education Law and expanded the policies defined in the 1985 policy, with an assurance to both world-wide education to train skillful workers and for higher education to focus on training scientists and scholars.

From 1978, China's educational policy is seen largely in four phases: the reconstruction and recovery of the educational order (1978-1984); the complete start-up of educational structure reform (1985-1992); the amendment of educational policy faced during the reform of the market fiscal structure (1993-2002) and the new growth of the educational policy under the supervision of Scientific Outlook on Development (Xu & Mei, 2009) (Figure 1). Virtually all the phases of educational policy flourished intending to refine the educational structure. Xu and Mei (2009) recounted that the swift expansion of the economy and the establishment of mandatory education have offered an adequate groundwork for the additional education reform in this century. The Chinese government continues to roll-out several reforms to improve the current system. These reforms have highlighted on teacher education, continuing education, pre-school education, and international education. China's education system has, thus, progressively thrived from primary, secondary, and tertiary education (Wenjing & Li, 2007).

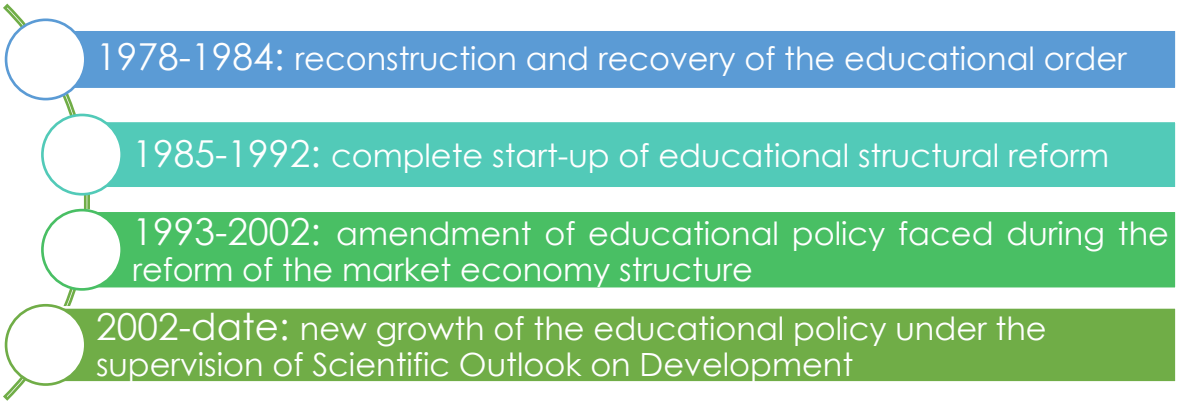

Figure 1: Reforms in Educational Policy in China from 1978 to date (Xu & Mei, 2009)

Educational Reforms in Ghana

The education system of Ghana had formerly been considered as among the greatly effective and advanced in West Africa. During the 1980s, Ghana's education system closely broke down and was regarded as not functional in terms of the aspiration and goals of the nation. From March 6, 1957, when Ghana achieved independence from British foreign rule, education has been the main concern on the consecutive governments' agenda. This explains the reason why the country's education has gone through several changes directed towards the search for a well fit, quality, and expected quality education (Department of History and Political Studies, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), 2015). Numerous educational reforms have been introduced over the ages targeted at discovering long-lasting resolutions to challenges regarding education in Ghana. For instance, the duration students spend in pre-tertiary education has not been consistent. Throughout the National Redemption Council (1974) under the headship of Ignatius Kutu Acheampong, the second cycle education was four years. Though, the Provisional National Defense Council (1987) reformed this duration to three years instead of four (Department of History and Political Studies, KNUST, 2015).

The Accelerated Development Plan of 1951 and Education Act of 1961 were the initial reforms introduced under the headship of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. The Accelerated plan offered support for the development of secondary education. The central administration roughly constructed 15 new second cycle institutions in several neighborhoods (Adu-Gyamfi, Donkoh, & Addo, 2016). Technical institutions were set up in Kumasi, Tarkwa, Sekondi-Takoradi, and Accra to improve the Vocational/Technical education to produce a skillful workforce. In 1962, the second stage of expansion in the education sector started. The seven-year plan for national development and reconstruction for elementary education begun, and the growth of teacher training was also paramount. The strategy also announced a comprehensive structural procedure which covered 6 years of primary education (Adu-Gyamfi, Donkoh, & Addo, 2016).

In 1966, the National Liberation Council (NLC), headed by General E. K. Kotoka and Major A. A. Afrifa, inaugurated a new Education Review Committee to embark on a complete appraisal of the whole formal educational structure. The current administration, conversely, was swift to scrap off the Seven-Year Development Plan introduced by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah (Awaisu, 2014). The nature of the education structure under the NLC was such that the ten-year basic education by Nkrumah was re-designed to eight years rudimentary course to equip students for further entry to second cycle education and an additional two years of course protraction to middle school. The elementary condition of admission into secondary school education was dependent on the Common Entrance Examination by final year students. The secondary education took up to five years to train students for School Certificate of the West African Examinations and four years for university education (Awaisu, 2014).

The 1973 Dzobo Report resulted in the reportage of the New Structure and Content of Education (NSCE) in 1974, which saw the introduction of Junior Secondary School (JSS) and the Senior Secondary School (SSS). The 'NSCE' abridged the length of schooling in secondary education from seventeen to thirteen years (Stanislaus, 2004). It is important to emphasize that the six years of primary education did not change; the four years of middle

school equal to JSS was shortened to three years. Furthermore, the five years of senior secondary education were shortened to four years (Stanislaus, 2004).

Flight Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings inaugurated a commission to evaluate the current educational structure under the headship of Evans Anfom in 1987. The major key policies highlighted were a nine-year basic education and a three-year senior secondary school (Adu-Gyamfi, Donkoh, & Addo, 2016). Nonetheless, the reforms suggested the upgrading of polytechnics into technical institutions. Considerably, the National Council for Tertiary Education supported the construction of the University for Development Studies (Tamale) and the University College of Education (Winneba) (Adu-Gyamfi, Donkoh, & Addo, 2016). The John Agyekum Kuffour managed government established a new education structure, appraising the content of the structure and also stretching the completion period for Senior High School (SHS) from three to four years (Awaisu, 2014).

Suggestions proposed by the Anamuah-Mensah report were not dissimilar from that of the 1987 reforms by Evans Anfom. A single disparity was the enclosure of two years Kindergarten into the Universal Basic Education hereafter totaling to eleven years of Universal Basic Education (Anamuah Mensah Committee Report, 2007). The Universal Basic Education was designed into two years of Kindergarten, six years of (Upper and Lower) Primary Education, three years of JHS. In 2008, a new party (i.e., National Democratic Congress, NDC) reversed the earlier government's decision of a four-year SHS just in a year of assuming office (Anum, 2007). Presently, Ghana runs a free education system from the basic level through to the SHS level, led by President Nana Addo Danquah Akuffo-Addo.

Educational System in China

Peoples' Republic of China's education has a government-managed system of education monitored by the Education Ministry. Throughout the 1979–1983, the administration approved the "9-3-4" system (i.e., 9 years basic education, 3 years second cycle education and 4 years of higher education. It was noted that basic education should be mandatory and tuition-free and that schools should be located in convenient places for easy accessibility. Guardians or parents were, however, required to take care of book expenses together with food and transportation where necessary. This resulted in a high level of enrolment in schools (Ikechukwu, 2015). After the completion of mandatory education, students were at liberty to select a programme of their choice in any second cycle institution which took three years to complete. China has five types of second cycle schooling: crafts schools, vocational secondary, general senior secondary, adult secondary, and technical or specialized secondary. Apart from the general senior secondary, the rest of the four are collectively called secondary vocational schools. Eligible students take public assessment tasks called Zhongkao before being admitted to the senior secondary schools, and of course, ones' score determines his/her admission assurance and which programme to pursue (Hu, 2002).

For tertiary education, four years is required as the study duration. For Bachelor's degree, a four-year duration is required to complete and about two to three years is required for a master's degree depending on the programme. Three to five years is used to attain a doctoral degree. Moreover, some institutions also run professional higher education which usually takes three years. Scores of students on the college entrance examination (*gaokao*) determine students' admission to undergraduate programmes in the university. An

uncommon and unique situation may arise for a candidate to be eligible even without taking the examination. Similarly, entrance exams are also organized for candidates who may be eligible for a postgraduate degree. Nonetheless, some students are enrolled based on endorsements from reputable professors (Muthanna & Sang, 2015).

Educational System in Ghana

In Ghana, the present system of education consists of a nine-year free basic education (6 years primary education comprising 3 years each for lower and upper primary and 3 years JHS), three years of free SHS and three or four years of tertiary education (9-3-3/4). The length of years in primary school has been constant till now. As earlier indicated, the primary stage of education has a 3-year duration lower primary and a 3-year upper primary education. These phases of the primary education provide a scaffold to the child's development of basic skill and attitude in problem-solving and gratifying his/her curiosity (Anamuah Mensah Committee Report, 2007). The JSS, now JHS, is a three-year education after primary schooling. It is the intermediate between primary and secondary education. JHS stage of education aims at introducing learners to fundamental technical and scientific skills and knowledge and makes learners ready to advance academic studies and gaining of vocational/technical abilities at the SHS level. It is worth noting that final year pupils in JHSs in Ghana take a general examination (called BECE) which is used for certification and placement into SHS (Adu-Gyamfi, Donkoh, & Addo, 2016).

The SHS registers eligible students for further education to build upon the developed competencies attained in JHS. The duration for SHS education has not been stable even though it has been largely three years. Some citizens, however, attended SHS for 4 years although not many (Awaisu, 2014). Until 2005, SHS final year students took a final examination called the Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE). This was changed to another similar examination, called WASSCE, also taken by final year students in SHS. The WASSCE, as is currently called, is written in May/June each year and results are normally released in October (Adu-Gyamfi, Donkoh, & Addo, 2016). The establishment of Tertiary Education in Ghana, inaugurated in 1948, was a pronounced programme by the British. By the endorsements of the Royal Commission on Cambridge and Oxford universities, there was the formation of University College of Gold Coast. Tertiary institutes in Ghana enrolled learners for certificate, diploma, undergraduate, and graduate studies (Adu-Gyamfi, Donkoh, & Addo, 2016).

Table 1: Comparison of the Educational System of China and Ghana

GHANA				CHINA			
Education	**School level**	**Years**	**Comments**	**Education**	**School level**	**Years**	**Comments**
Primary	Primary School	6	Basic education comprising of lower and upper primary	Elementary /Basic	Primary school	6	This runs usually for 5-6 years for 6-12 children.
Middle	Junior High School	3	Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) at the end of JHS	High School	Junior (Lower) Secondary School	3	This system is called chuzhong (初中) in China
Secondary	Senior High School (SHS)	3	The entrance to SHS is competing. WASSCE (SSCE up till 2005; WASSCE starting in 2006) at the end of SHS education. Nationwide examinations are conducted in May/June every year.	Senior high/ Secondary	Senior (Upper) Secondary/ Vocational Senior (Upper) Secondary	3	This follows the effective achievement of the middle-lower school. Learners have to make two selections to either apply to the general senior (gaozhong 高中) or vocational (zhongzhuan 中专). The vocational system is up to 3/4 years whereas the general high school is for 3 years.
Post-Secondary	Professional Health Sciences	6	Dentistry and Medicine certifications.	Post-secondary	Undergraduate Level - Bachelor's Degree	4	Certificates are granted after completing 4 to 5 years programmes demanding 4 to 5 years is known as (xueshi xuewei 学士学位) in China.
Tertiary	First level diplomas/ certificates	2	Certificates and Diplomas degree	Post-secondary	Graduate Level - Master's Degree	2	Certificates are granted for the completion of a master's degree (known as shuoshi xuewei 硕士学位, 2 to 3 years of education) depending on the study area. In China, applicants above 35 years may be unable to apply for a

							master's degree.
Tertiary	Higher National Diploma	3	Higher National Diploma, Teacher/Nursing Training	Post-secondary	Graduate Level - Doctoral Degree	3	Doctoral degree programme for 3 to 5 years after completing a master's degree programme. In some exceptional instances, it probable to syndicate a master's/doctoral degree programme. This combined programme is called shuobo liandu 硕博 连读. After completion, the student will be granted a doctoral degree instead of two certificates: master's and a doctoral degree.
Tertiary	Bachelors	4	Several public universities and private institutions are also accredited by the National Accreditation Board to award Bachelor's degrees.				
Tertiary	Master's	1-2	Master's degree (1-2 years)				
Tertiary	P.H.D	3-4	P.H.D (3-4 years)				

Source: Scholaro International (2019)

Discussions

China and Ghana have for the past years developed a comprehensive education system that suited a planned economy formally abandoning the long-established system of education. These two countries have mutual significant structures in their corresponding expeditions toward a contemporary nation-wide education system. As such, respective governments in both nations have extensively professed education as fundamental to their economic growth. Taking Ghana, for example, the first president, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah modernized education to satisfy the country's ambitions and needs of constructing a democracy with a government-led economy. A parallel standard was supported by Chinese Deng Xiaoping in his well-known "three faces of orientation": We agree with these leaders that education indeed needs to be concerned with the transformation of the universe and impending demands of the future.

Within the 1950s, China and Ghana began stressing higher education. The Soviet Union's developmental model deeply influenced both nations in the adaptation of curriculum-based science and technology. This planned choice led to an enormous group of abilities in the area of science and technology. It appears, however, the paths of these nations diverged in the late 1970s. In China, the outburst of the Great Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) histrionically disturbed the previous advancement on pre-tertiary and higher education, but accidentally lengthened accessibility to primary education (Goldman, Kumar, & Liu, 2008). This change, and the certainly democratic viewpoint of socialism, successfully addressed the challenge of mass illiteracy. The ending of 1970 saw a huge reform in economic and land in China, almost half of its populace was educated to the basic education level. In disparity, the higher education concentration in Ghana continued to be unrestricted by riot. This resulted in Ghana building one of the biggest higher education structures in West Africa.

China and Ghana have embraced numerous rules, administrative regulations, and laws that established the rudimentary framework of the educational system of both countries. The objective of reforming the educational system of the two nations was originally to create a system of education similar to the socialist market economy system, the political structure, and the technological structure. In China, the financial booming around the 1980s empowered them to develop and adapt its education structure grounded on changes that reflected their political, economic, and social realism. It must be admitted, in the case of Ghana, that since 1960, educational reforms reflected shared aspiration to create an educational system that aims to meet the economic, social, and political needs of the entire population. Studying the preceding educational reforms of China and Ghana, it is obvious that reforms introduced by both nations included reforms that permeate the entire regions of the nation deprived of any prejudices; for instance, in Ghana, the FCUBE was implemented nationwide following some specified laws, which required all children of school-going age together with all adolescents to access free mandatory, universal and free education. A similar free mandatory basic education was also introduced in China.

Again, major reforms in both China and Ghana affected the curriculum because of its critical role in the educational system. The reforms in the curriculum were a fruitful aspect of the education quality in both countries and greatly contributed to the cultural, economic, and political development. The major purpose of China's curriculum was to cultivate the essence of collectivism, democratic and socialist awareness, patriotism, awareness to national cultural tradition, and respect for community morals and national acts, the refinement of good attitudes

and values of the learners in life and towards the world, and as well to increase the flexibility of school curriculum (MoE China, 2001). Thus, the 1999 curriculum reform considered individual growth and supported the development of inclusive practical accomplishments centered on direct experiences of learners, assimilating hypothetical understanding in societal life. In Ghana, on the other hand, the fundamental notion behind the curriculum changes was to empower students to cultivate abilities to help them functional and employable regardless of the time of completion. The curriculum enactment started on a tentative foundation where new courses like Automobile, Tailoring, Catering, Woodwork, Technical Drawing Masonry Dressmaking, and Metalwork, were mounted. This curriculum reforms, conversely, did attain the purpose envisioned such that its impact could not be overlooked.

The analysis of the educational systems of China and Ghana has revealed that both countries have a similar educational system, thus the "9-3-4" system indicating 9 years primary to junior secondary (basic education), 3 years senior secondary, and 4 years tertiary education. The entry stage of both nations was the same with 5-6 years of primary education and 12-15 years of junior secondary education. The management education structure in both nations is handled by the ruling government through the Ministry of Education, although, in China, the local authority provides huge input to education development at the local communal level. However, despite these similarities there exist remarkable differences between the educational systems of the two countries. Whereas in Ghana, education is free (including feeding, and school textbooks) from primary level to senior high in government-owned school, primary education to junior secondary education in public schools in China are also accessible at no cost except that transport expenses, feeding charges, heating levies, and uniform fees are taken care of by the guardians/parents. It appears therefore that the Ghanaian free education covers more expenses than the Chinese free education. The junior secondary in China is popularly called the middle school but in Ghana, it is known as JHS. The management and development of basic schools in Ghana is largely the responsibility of the ruling government with other relevant institutions having little control and input. In China, there is administrative decentralization of schools giving local administration more command in the development of the basic education system.

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, gigantic energies have been shown by the Chinese and Ghanaian governments for years to raise the level of education. The educational system of both nations is similar. Perhaps, this may be one of the reasons why students migrate to China to study. Although education has seen some development in both countries, there are yet some hitches in the educational administration and management. While China is far advanced, there still challenges facing its education system just like Ghana. These hindrances are common to both countries like discrimination of underprivileged persons, inadequate funds, and high education cost for the deprived; these issues are real in both nations' education system. These concerns breed unfairness and bias to access to education concerning gender, social class, and ability. For

Ghana, in particular, challenges go beyond inequality to the limited supply of teaching and learning material at various education levels which questions education quality. Faced with novel socio-economic concerns that necessitate globalization, China and Ghana should largely invest in their education systems to satisfy the dynamic and growing needs of their populace. Additionally, it is indispensable to follow-up the assessment and the monitoring of compulsory education to guarantee that all categories of persons are catered for.

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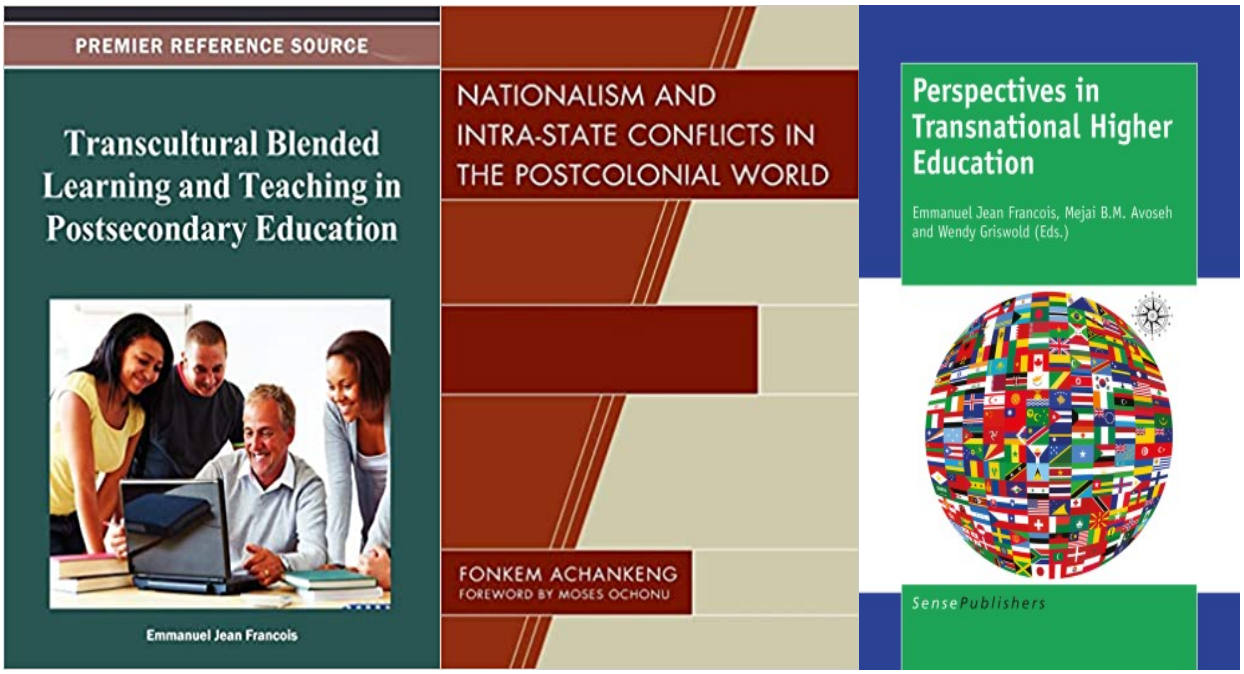

Comparing Diversity and Inclusion in the Education of North American Countries: A Critical Perspective on the U.S. and Canada

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Abstract
The educational systems of Canada and the U.S. of America (U.S.) have been a subject of focus over the years within the larger context of global comparison of educational systems. The study of educational operations in both countries has generated patterns of comparison based on similarities of colonialism, landmass, multi-ethnicity, culture, diversity, and numerous traditions related to the settlement of different immigrants within these two countries. This study compares the U.S. and Canada through the dynamics of diversity and inclusion within the educational policies and practices of both countries. More specifically, this study analyzes the similarities and differences in ways that diversity and inclusion influence education in the U.S. and Canada.

Keywords: colonialism, multi-ethnicity, indicators, comparative

Introduction

Education constitutes a significant factor in developing the individual and society (Kubow & Fossum, 2007). Education, as a discipline, includes among other fields, comparative education, which is devoted to the full or partial comparison of facets of education systems between countries (Kubow & Fossum, 2007). As globalization continues to contribute to the intensification of worldwide social reforms (Arnove, Torres, & Franz, 2013), it is not possible to separate education from culture when conducting comparative studies. Obviously, education is a product of the culture of a society, the same way the culture of a society is a reflect of its education system (Murtako, 2015; Tilaar, 2005). Education seeks to transform cultural values to achieve both individual and community progress. In implementing a culture-based character, education highlights the significance of exemplary fundamentals. In this study, perspectives of comparative culture and education systems in the U.S. and Canada will be discussed for a better understanding of how these two countries manage diversity and inclusion in their educational policies and practices. The following research questions guided the study:

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1. What is the influence of diversity and inclusion on education in the U.S. and Canada?
2. What are the similarities and differences in ways that diversity and inclusion influence education in the U.S. and Canada?

Justification of the Comparison

This study aims to critically compare the influence of diversity and inclusion on education in the U.S. and Canada. As Figure 1 illustrates, these two countries are neighbors and share a significant border. Both countries were colonized by the British before they became independent. Both countries have populations that include a variety of racial and ethnic groups. The relationship between the two selected countries is very interesting in terms of economic and immigration ties, landmass, local and national educational development and citizen literacy, international education, cultural incorporation, and continuous interest in diversity. According to Wells, Fox, and Cordova-Cobo (2016), low-income students do not benefit as middle and upper-class students in diverse classrooms. Students learn better and navigate into adulthood with ease in a progressively diverse society, and this is a skill valued by employers if students attend diverse schools. It is clear from existing literature that diversity has strengthened colleges and universities' commitment to racially diverse student bodies and educational settings in which students learn from each other across cultural boundaries (Gilfoyle, 2015; Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002). Lamparello and Swann (2016) argue that affirmative action policies in higher education should be based on overcoming personalities of individuals, not traits that cannot be changed, and there should be a reflection on proper and genuine meaning of diversity. This study is important in finding a connection between culture and education systems within these two countries with respect to diversity and inclusion. Furthermore, the results of this study may provide educators and policy makers of these two American countries with information that can potentially be used to address challenges in their cultural and educational systems and inspire further research studies.

Figure 1: Map of Canada and the U.S. of America
Source: Adapted from Perry Castaneda Library Map Collection (2019)

Units of Comparison: Profiles of U.S. and Canada

According to the U.S. country profile (2020), the United States of America (U.S.) is a country that comprises fifty (50) states situated in the central part of North America. The country is surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean in the east and the Pacific Ocean in the west. It shares borders with Canada in the north and Mexico in the south, with a huge *border wall* or series of vertical barriers. Also, it shares maritime borders with Cuba, the Bahamas, and Russia. It occupies an area of 9,833,516 km² and is the third-largest country in the world with a population of 326 million people as of (2019). Washington D.C. is the capital city, while New York city is the largest city in the country. English is the most commonly used language, and Christianity is the dominant religion. The country is the world's leading economic and military power, with massive universal interests and an unparalleled global reach (BBC News, 2012).

Canada is the world's second-largest country by surface or land but comparatively not as big as the U.S. in terms of population (BBC News, 2012). It occupies approximately the northern two-fifths of the North American sub-continent continent. The country has created what is considered a standard multicultural society that embraces immigrant populations from all other parts of the world (Morton, Nicholson, Hall, Bercuson, & Krueger, 2020). It shares a 5,525-mile (8,890km) lengthy border with the U.S., which is the lengthiest border in the world not guarded by military forces. Whereby, most of its population resides within 185 miles (300 km) of the international boundary. As a prominent member of the Commonwealth, it has performed a leading role in the organization of French-speaking nations (i.e., *La Francophonie*). Canada was a founding and active member of the United Nations and has been involved in several major United Nations' agencies and other worldwide operations.

Background and Conceptual Framework

Definition of Education

According to Patrick, Anderman, Bruening, and Duffin (2011), education is a way of facilitating and simplifying learning to gain knowledge, skills, appreciate values, understand beliefs, and acquire good habits. Muskan (2017) provides a definition of education in more simpler terms by stating, "Education means inculcating moral values, positive thinking, the attitude of helping, the attitude of giving to society and ethical values" (para. 3), and noted that students educated as such will "bring changes in society" (para. 3). Muskan (2017) also argues that educated individuals will develop as good citizens of their country and essentially be good human beings, able to learn something new and eventually become successful in life. Jean-Francois (2015) asserted that the purpose of education is to raise responsible citizens (social purpose), train productive workers (economic purpose), and develop leaders (political purpose) to sustain a nation.

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (2014) gave a broad view of what education means. The term *education* is a very shared and popular word that is expressed by a lot of people but with less understanding of its right perspective. In a wider sense, education goes beyond the classroom or the school. Education encompasses endless skills and practices that are long-lasting and includes an attainment of understanding at diverse phases of one's lifetime in an informal or formal manner. Looking at a wider scope, it could be said that education is the action and performance of skills in a developmental way that impacts individual character. In addition, considered across and beyond social change, education could be perceived as an avenue to invest and develop a nation (National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2014, p.5).

Definition of Culture

According to Spencer-Oakley (2012), defining culture is extremely complex. Its definition and nature are still not fully accomplished despite endless efforts placed for several decades. Nevertheless, before analyzing the culture of a specific or precise group there is a need to differentiate three important levels of culture: (a) observable artifacts, (b) values, and (c) basic underlying assumptions. Therefore, culture could be defined as a derivative (copied or imitative) of individual experience, something learned or created by individuals themselves or transferred to them socially by contemporaries or ancestors.

Spencer-Oakley (2012) presentes some characteristics of culture which will serve as guided elements for this study. Culture is manifested at different layers of depth; it affects behavior and interpretations of behavior. It can be differentiated from both universal human nature and unique individual personality. Culture influences biological processes and it is associated with social groups. It is both an individual construct and a social construct and has both universal (etic) and distinctive (emic) elements. Culture is subject to gradual change; culture is learned, and its elements are inter-related.

According to Belfield (2012), culture represents those essentials that shape us, our identity and influence or inspire our behavior. Culture is referring to the following: our shared language, beliefs, values, norms, behaviors, and material objects that are transferred to us from one generation down to the other. In connection, we look at cultural diversity as a concept of multiculturalism even though cultural diversity is often used interchangeably within the selected countries. Therefore, cultural diversity is referred to a structured opinion, views and behaviors that identify and appreciate the existence of various diverse groups within a society. It further recognizes and values the socio-cultural changes and appreciates their inputs continually and empowers everyone within a comprehensive cultural setting (Belfield, 2012).

Rayner (2009) expresses that cultural attributes, which reflect agency are represented in a first plate comprising objects or expressions of the social psychology characterizing community identity and membership (e.g., assents, affiliation, and artifacts). The social processes were mentioned as the second and indicate an effort to structure social cohesion (e.g., assimilation, accommodation, and acculturation). Each of these elements is connected with uneasy

(uncomfortable) tension that shapes and holds altogether the whole process and structure of an inclusive community.

Relatively, seven significant actions are associated with cultural diversity and these are noted by Rosado (2010, para 1) as (1) recognition of the endless diversity of cultures; (2) reverence for cultural differences; (3) admitting the rationality of different culture in the way they express and contribute; (4) appreciating other culture provisions; (5) encouraging the influence of varied groups; (6) draw strength by empowering other people to attain their maximum possibility through personal criticism of individual biases, and (7) triumphing instead of enduring differences to convey unity by diversity.

Diversity and Inclusion Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is centered around the concepts of diversity and inclusion in education. According to Volckmann (2012) and Mayo and Lowe (2013), *diversity* is a concept directed towards disparities and the proportions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical skills, religion, and political views and other human disparities. As Figure 2 shows, the diversity inclusive program model below presents the relationship of multicultural education, culturally responsive teaching, and inclusion, which are surrounded by inclusive classroom culture, inclusive educational culture, and connecting all students within a program (LaVergne, 2008).

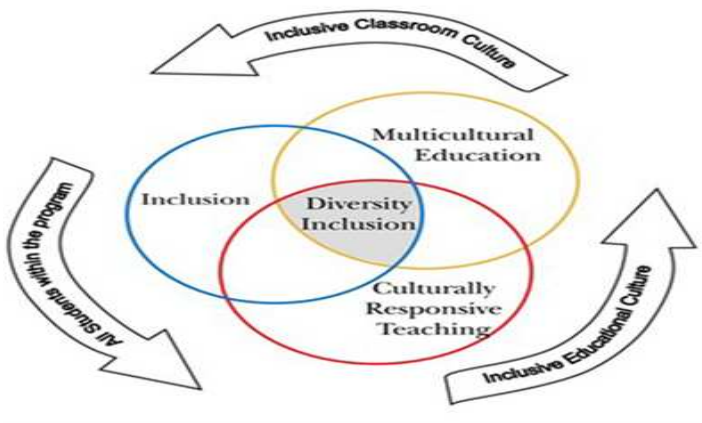

Figure 2. The Diversity Inclusive Program Model (LaVergne, 2008)

This study adopted the conceptual framework of LaVergne's (2008), which was based upon the moral values of Salend's (2008) inclusion principles, Bank's (2008) multicultural education

proportions, and Gay's culturally responsive teaching theory (Gay, 2000). The use of LaVergne's (2008) model within the framework was also inducted in this study stating diversity inclusion as an educational philosophy that embraces all learners (i.e., irrespective of their cultural background, ethnicity or exceptionality) by making sure they participate enthusiastically in educational programs. The LaVergne (2008)'s model (Figure 1) expresses specializations and agendas that occur within the diversity-inclusive zone, such as manifesting optimistic approaches to diversity inclusion due to historical insights and observations, pre-current difficulties that could be motives for specific groups not being well represented, and lastly, be conscious of likely solutions to upsurge the participation of groups that are well represented.

Diversity-Inclusion

La Vergne (2013) argues that professionals open to diversity-inclusive programs are supporters to those that understand the success of such programs, which are determined by the level of preparedness of the workforce in working with youth of color and youth with disabilities. The main goal of the model is to articulate an inclusive educational and classroom culture and make sure that all students are included in the programs (La Vergne, 2008). This model was chosen due to its association with critical philosophical foundations that incorporate the changing of demographics shift among youth in the U.S. The framework also postulates a requirement of creative reasoning that indicates the readiness of an organization to fully engage in accepting, embracing, and promoting diversity-inclusion at the county, state, and national levels.

Multicultural Education

Gorski (2000) refers to multicultural education as a gradual process that transforms education and focuses on current inadequacies, deficiencies, and inequitable practices in education. It is justified in the principles based on social justice, equitable education, and a commitment to enabling educational practices that will support every student to attain their maximum ability and informed as effective individuals at all levels. Multicultural education recognizes the importance of schools as a transformational foundation for society and a means to eliminating oppression and injustice (Gorski, 2000). Multicultural Education is supposed to contribute to: (a) increase student academic achievement, (b) help students develop the ability to realize economic self-sufficiency, and (c) develop citizenship skills based on a realistic and thorough understanding of the political system (Shujaa, 1995; Greens & Edwards-Underwood, 2015). As a fundamental goal, multicultural education should affect social change. The pathway toward this goal incorporates three strands of transformation, encompassing transformation of self, transformation of schools and schooling, and transformation of society (Gorski, 2000). However, the positive transformation of schools should also promote a positive school environment.

Mitchell and Bradshaw (2013) argue that utilizing positive behavior supports has been emphasized and encouraged above exclusionary discipline strategies to indorse a positive classroom environment. Also, schools are obligated to deliver a safe, supportive, and

accommodating environment for learning (Epstein et al., 2008; Mitchell & Bradshaw, 2013). However, the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT)-Iowa University (2019) state that teaching-learning procedure is an integrally social act; therefore, instructors should be mindful of the quality of the social and emotional dynamics imbibed in their course, for the reason that they influence learning and performance. Strategies instructors can apply or utilize to create a productive and inclusive climate in their classrooms include examining assumptions, using students names, modeling inclusive language, using multiple and diverse examples, establishing ground rules for interaction, examining their curriculum, striving to be fair, being mindful of low ability cues, providing accommodation for students with low disabilities, not asking students to speak for an entire group, and practicing inclusive classroom behavior (CELT, 2019; Hall & Sandler, 1982).

Mitchell and Bradshaw (2013) assert that there is a growing interest in factors (i.e., issues) "associated with positive school climate and conditions for learning" (p. 599). Koth, Bradshaw, and Leaf (2008) explain that the classroom environment is the main factor that has been demonstrated to influence students' perceptions of school climate. Meanwhile, Finn, Pannozzo, and Achilles (2003) have noted that considerable attention was only been paid to structural features or elements of the classroom environment, such as student-teacher proportion, whereas other features of the classroom context might similarly influence the students' perception of their learning environment.

Inclusion

Ainscow and Sandhill (2010) state that involving all children in education has been the main challenge the educational system is undergoing all over the world (i.e., both developing and developed countries). Meanwhile, the 2030 Education Framework for Action, recently adopted by the global education community, stresses the need to address all forms of exclusion and marginalization (UNESCO, 2017). It was positioned that education systems should cater to all learners, specifically focusing on learners traditionally excluded from educational opportunities, such as leaners from disadvantaged families, cultural and language subgroups, indigenous individuals, and disabled people (Ainscow & Messiou, 2018). Also, Ainscow et al. (2006) suggest that inclusion in education should involve a developmental process, concentrate on identifying and removing barriers, focus on present concerns, involve the participation of all learner's, and provide targeted support to learners at risk of underachievement, marginalization or exclusion.

Culturally Responsive Education

Numerous scholars have asserted that culturally responsive education is one of the highly effective methods of meeting culturally different students learning needs (Harmon, 2012; Gay, 2010; Ford, 2010; Harmon, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2010). Several scholars report findings from qualitative and observational studies that African American students frequently learn better in a

relational and personal environment that produces high expectations, has responsibility for self and others, and is comparable to current occurrences in an extended family (Harmon, 2012; Boykin, Albury, Tyler, Hurley, Bailey, & Miller, 2005; Perry & Delpit, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 2010; Willis, 2003).

According to Harmon (2012), a culturally responsive syllabus offers opportunities for learners to perceive problems from various perspectives. Moreover, learners are opportune to think about topics from a vital viewpoint, involved in genuine problem-solving, and focused on matters that have to do with social justice. The model can be utilized in teacher preparation programs and for K-12 students' settings, to enable and improve educators in developing a multicultural curriculum (Ford, 2010).

Harmon (2012) also states that making use of asset-based instruction and integrating and incorporating asset-based instruction into the curriculum is a direct pathway to engage students, expecting learning to take place through culturally responsive teaching. Gay (2010) additionally points out the importance of culturally responsive teaching that aligns with culturally responsive education and further states that it is not enough on its own to solve the main challenges confronting minority students. Gay (2010) further argues that one cannot stress enough the significance of reforming and transforming all facets of the educational enterprise, such as funding, policymaking, and administration for a culturally responsive atmosphere.

Teachers are neither primarily nor necessarily culturally responsive; and sometimes they lack access to culturally responsive teacher training curricula (Gay, 2010; C. Hayes & Juarez, 2012; Sleeter, 2001). Culturally responsive teacher education preparation, either school-based professional development or a university preparation program, is a necessity, irrespective of teachers emanating from the same cultural, racial, and socioeconomic context of students (Gay, 2010; Irvine, 2002; Ware, 2006). Relatively, Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom (2004) explain that instructional leadership should be used to support the advancement of effective teaching through administering the instructional program. However, Khalifa, Gooden and Davis (2016) contend that educational leaders need to perform a foremost role in maintaining cultural responsiveness in their institutions.

Inclusive Classroom Culture

According to Ford, Stuart, and Vakil (2014), public schools are confronting the problems of fulfilling the needs of an ever-increasing population of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students with uniqueness in inclusive classrooms due to the variation of the U.S. population growth, which has become more varied. Particularly, this is apparent in the urban inclusive teaching spaces (i.e., classrooms). Also, it is important to understand that there is a robust connection between culture and learning. Furthermore, the teacher has a substantial role in improving all learners' perception by educating them for the 21st-century global life expectancy. The use of culturally responsive pedagogy for CLD students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms will help teachers support maximum learning. Finally, teachers can change their

pedagogy with a high-level of expectations, contextual learning, culturally facilitated instruction, and productive family/community commitment.

Inclusive Educational Culture

Ainscow and Sandhill's (2010) claim that the vital component in driving education systems in the direction of inclusive values and bringing about sustainable change is through leadership practice. However, Goransson and Nilholm (2014) consider inclusion as a notion regarding what school systems, classrooms, and schools ought to achieve, which is expected to be a manifestation of educational philosophy. They argue for different understandings of inclusive education, such as the inclusive placement of learners with disabilities in normal classrooms, accomplishing the social and academic needs of all learners, and community formations in an inclusive format.

According to the Council of Minister of Education of Canada (2008), Canadian educators, for example, experience numerous encounters in their classrooms, in addition to increasing class sizes, extensive working hours, decrease of funds to support learning initiatives, and administration demands coupled with parents exceeding curricular demands. McCrimmon (2015) state that inclusive education (IE) in Canada has been applied to make available the needs of several students. Some scholars see IE as the method that educates disable children in the normal education settings within their communities, the same schools they will attend if they are not disabled yet offering such children the essential and required facilities and provision (Rafferty, Boettcher, & Griffin, 2001).

Eliminating discrimination could also be another way to establish a better IE. McCrimmon (2015) particularly asserts that the decrease of discriminatory mindsets is an opportunity for the social and behavioral development of students with diverse intense special needs. The challenges from the implementation of inclusion into Canadian classrooms after years of disconnected education has affected teachers' competencies and capabilities to accomplish the learning requirements of a wider student population (McCrimmon, 2015). At Present, a specialized program is only found provided in one Canadian university in the form of postgraduate certificate programs. It incorporates programs that are specifically designed to improve teacher expertise concerning the education of children with special education needs within an IE classroom.

Methodology

This study used a qualitative approach to analyze data and findings reported by other scholars and institutions, with respect to diversity and inclusion in the U.S. and Canada. The study concerns only the U.S. and Canada and does not intend to cover another part of the North American region. Furthermore, the study used secondary data through previous studies only (i.e., the researcher did not collect primary data). The author used databases to collect secondary data

and documents available online to compare the similarities and differences in the educational systems of the U.S. and Canada and analyze the level of diversity and inclusion in their educational systems. The analytical procedure was informed by Maxwell (2012) who advises to look at the important links or relationships between the concepts in a study. In this regard, a review of previous research was conducted alongside a current theoretical framework related to diversity and inclusion in education.

Findings, Analysis, and Discussions

Diversity in the U.S. and Canada Educational Systems

According to Moody (2019), the number of degrees granting postsecondary institutions in the U.S. totals 4,298 institutes, colleges and universities. Although, the U.S. Department of Education scores more than 4,000 colleges and universities, the U.S. News and World Report ranks only around 1,400 schools. Part of the reasons is that the U.S. News and World Report uses a standard for ranking best colleges. One of the eligibility criteria is that a school must be accredited regionally and offer four-year undergraduate degree programs. Colleges that offer only associate degrees are not ranked, neither are schools that have a student body lesser than 200 students. As illustrated in Figure 3, the breakdown of the 4,298 institutions listed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) was as follows: 1,626 public colleges, 1,687 private nonprofit schools, and 985 for-profit schools as in fall 2017.

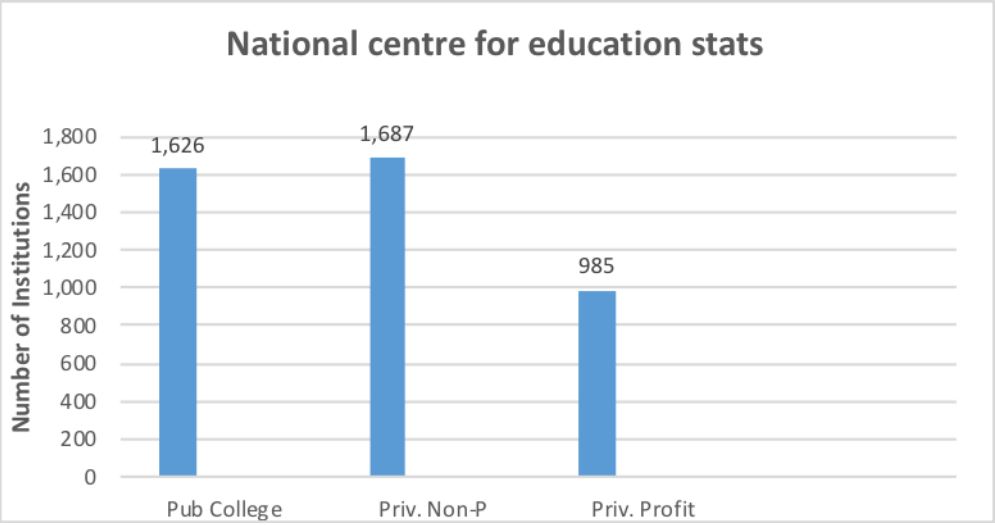

Figure 3: Categories and Number of Institutions Listed by National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), as of 2017

Source: Adapted from Moody (2019) data for post-secondary Institutions from NCES

Note: Pub College = Public College, Priv. Non-P = Private non-profit, Priv. Profit = Private profit).

According to The Education Writers Association (EWA, 2019), in 2001-2014, U.S. public schools for poor students of color (Hispanic and Black students) went up from 9% to 16%. By 2023, the Hispanic and non-white population of K-12 students in primary schools will be 55%. With respect to higher education, data published by the NCES revealed that 17.3 million undergraduate students were enrolled in U.S colleges and universities in fall 2014, including 7.7 million students of color. In 2014, Hispanic undergraduate students doubled over a period of 14 years, from 1.4 million to 3 million, which represents an increase of 57%. Blacks and Latino were behind their Whites and Asian peers. Also, 15% of Hispanics and 22% of Blacks ages 25-29 earned their bachelor's or higher degree. Meanwhile, 41% of Whites and 63% of Asians in the same age group had a bachelor's degree.

According to Chen (2017), in 2010- 2011, the number of elementary and secondary students enrolled in Canada's public schools was 4,708,548. This is a decrease of 7% from 2001 due to a total drop in birth rates. In Ontario and Quebec, Canada's largest provinces, enrollments at the upper-secondary school level stood at 1.53 million in 2013. Roughly, 90% of Canadian adults aged 25 to 64 completed high school in 2015, considerably above the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) average of 78% (Chen, 2017).

Canada has fair and inclusive policies that contribute to an equitable education system. About 8% of 15-year-old students reported having repeated at least one grade" (Education Policy Outlook, 2015, p. 6). Chen (2017) also shared that the number of international students studying in Canada have been raised by 92% from 2008 to 2015, from 184,155 to 353,000 students. This has definitely contributed to increase diversity in the Canadian education system.

Table 3 presents the estimated numbers of individuals aged 25 to 64 with a university degree by immigration status from 2001 to 2016 in Canada. The quantity of university-educated individuals in Canada increased rapidly over 15 years. From 2001 to 2016, the total of individuals aged 25 to 64 with a university degree improved by 66.1% for all groups combined, as compared to a 3.2% increase in the population that have no university degree amongst the same age range. About 47.5% of the increase in the number of university-educated individuals was driven by immigrants, while the other 52.5% was by the Canadian-born citizens.

Table 3: Estimated Numbers of Individuals Aged 25 to 64 with a University Degree by Immigration Status from 2001 to 2016 in Canada

	Total	Recent Immigrants	Long-term Immigrants	Canadian-born Aged 25-34	Canadian-born Aged 35-64
Population with a university degree					
2001	3,131,700	414,300	505,500	722,100	1,489,800
2006	3,883,100	597,300	664,900	800,900	1,820,000
2011	4,622,800	662,900	907,300	933,800	2,118,800
2016	5,201,300	795,600	1,107,900	1,015,800	2,282,000

			Percent		
Growth from 2001 to 2016	66.1	92.0	119.2	40.7	53.2
Individuals with a university degree within each population group					
2001	19.5	33.8	21.5	22.8	15.9
2006	22.7	46.6	24.5	25.7	18.2
2011	25.5	49.0	29.6	28.3	20.4
2016	28.0	49.9	34.2	29.9	22.1

Note: The estimated population numbers are rounded to the nearest 100
Sources: adapted from Hou, Lu, and Schimmele (2019) and Statistics Canada, 2001, 2006 and 2016 censuses and 2011 National Household Survey.

While the growth of university-educated adults far outperformed the growth of their less-educated peers, the segment of university-educated individuals in the adult population increased for each population group. Actuality, 49.9% of current immigrants possess at minimum a bachelor's degree in 2016, compared to 33.8% of recent immigrants in 2001. The university-educated individuals' segment also improved from 22.9% in 2001 to 29.9% in 2016 among Canadian-born youth, and from 15.9% in 2001 to 22.1% in 2016 among the Canadian-born aged 35 to 64. While current immigrants appear highly educated than the Canadian-borns throughout the study period, the educational accomplishment among the Canadian-borns has also improved substantially (Hou, Lu, & Schimmele, 2019).

Michalski, Cunningham, and Henry (2017) expounded that in considering the unstable demographics of societies like the U.S. and Canada, access to higher education offers a diversity of challenges to ensure that universities can meet the challenges connected or linked with augmented student diversity on campus. Developing, nurturing, and promoting additional or more systematic and supportive inclusive policies is conceivable, thinkable, and essential for creating the conditions for further genuinely inclusive educational practices. The challenge is that a lack of attention to issues of inclusion in policy settings reveals the ways more neoliberal conditions have also influenced and prejudiced policy production processes (Hardy & Woodcock, 2015).

Gaps in college opportunities have impacted and resulted to reduced social mobility within the U.S., and in turn, manipulated by inequalities in students' experiences before graduating from high school (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development and Office of the Under Secretary, 2016; Dudley-Marling & Burns, 2014). The involvement of underrepresented students of color declines across institutions of higher education, with respect to application, admission, enrollment, persistence, and completion. However, a lesser proportion of Black or Hispanic high school graduates enroll in college than White graduates and over 80% of Hispanic, Black, and Asian students have financial needs, grants, and scholarships, as compared to 71% of White undergraduate students (U.S. Department

of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development and Office of the Under Secretary, 2016).

Diversity and Inclusion in the U.S. Educational System

The U.S. Congress Senate (2012) presented the history of how the U.S. government started to get involved in the education of the Indians after the Civil War. The senate report shares that the U.S. government commenced the establishment of the federal Indian school system, funded, constructed, and operated by the federal bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) with dominant policies and oversight. In 1869, the board of Indian Commissioners recommended the establishment of government schools and teachers. This board equally controls the disbursement of certain funds for the Indians.

Every students' have the right to an education that is free from discrimination. However, there are factors that are linked to student learning successes, which are easily measurable and effective through community services. The ABC of education in the U.S. is stated to be attendance, behavior, course performance, and college access. The U.S. Secretary of Education during the Obama Administration disclosed that education is the most valuable responsibility above everything, and it is a dedication, of which the president, parents, and every citizen of America understood (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

Several scholars found that Hmong students in the U.S. succeeded in higher education due to cultural values and practices (Xionga & Lam, 2013; Lor, 2008; Supple et al., 2010; Yang, 2008, 2011). Further, some studies show that the financial support from parents (Lor, 2008; McClain-Reulle & Xiong, 2005), childcare, encouragement and spiritual support, having role modeling and inspiration from older siblings, and support from spouse were factors that made it possible for women to continue and complete their education (Lee, 1997: Lor 2008). Positive impacts from classmates and friends (i.e., support and motivation) were also a contributory factor to inclusiveness (Lor, 2008). The participation of Hmong students in extracurricular and scholarly activities coupled with support from academic staff and counselors contribute to a motivating, encouraging, empowering, and comfortable classroom atmosphere and overall academic learning environment (McClain-Reulle & Xiong, 2005). Furthermore, support services (e.g., counseling, academic services, co-curricular activities, and educational conferences and workshops) provided opportunities for Hmong students to develop leadership skills, utilize academic programs and services, and persevere in college. Also, financial aid was given to relieve Hmong students from financial challenges to focus on academic coursework.

Despite all these achievements, many people believe that the education system of the U.S. is still not doing as expected or what is supposed to be doing on education for greater equitable success for all. There is still an ongoing discussion revolving on whether the Canadian education system is doing better than the U.S. and there might be a need for the U.S. to learn part of what constitutes to be Canadian success in education. Perhaps there are good lessons that both countries can learn from one another. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Common Core

States Standards (CCSS) were meant to provide funds and set standards with minimum direction (a deficiency) (Anderson, 2016). However, both policies failed to meet their expectations.

The U.S. Department of Education affirmed that the federal government is not in the position to develop the curricula or content standards for academics or professional subjects. Irrespective of this, the federal government has used federal funds to inspire or encourage education in all the states and this, of course, has positive effects, for example, in determining broad state standards that task every child with a target to reach (Anderson, 2016). Ryan (2010) argues that the reasons school reform failed for half of the decade and that the promise of equal educational opportunity never become a reality is because of the way educational policies are enacted and implemented. Educational policies need to connect the poor and wealthy children through diverse schools. This will help implement educational reforms that are more successful in decreasing disparities in educational chance.

Diversity and Inclusion in the Canadian Educational System

According to Anderson (2016), the Canadian government has been noted for the successful role played in supporting and encouraging the provincial education and collaboration and creative methods of teaching. The federal government's role in Canada encourages and practices collaboration amongst the provinces. However, Canada discussed and created policies for connections between schools and the unequal access to adequate housing, health care, income, and educational resources. The Canadian educational reform at which the federal government role and learn 2020 was notified in funding and administration to be very similar to the U.S but the goals and implementation of their policy are much different. This has reflected in numerous achievements of the country for decades, as well as the anti-discrimination and inclusion policy and style of the educational system. The Canadian education system inclusive education policy generously permitted education to be centered around the best interest of the students, promoting social cohesion, belonging, active participation for learning, and equal opportunity for success. (Anderson, 2016).

The Canadian education is similar to that of the U.S. in the sense that the Canadian government's role in education is in some way separated whereby the provinces were given higher influence in reform and policies. The Canadian educational system emphasizes more on the community and provincial power. Canadian policies on welfare and health care also represent why education is viewed differently in Canada (Anderson, 2016). Each province has its Ministry of education and its policies are developed by them and are administered by each provincial minister of education.

Besides, the individual ministry is opportune to set their standards, curricula, and funding for each of their schools whereby locally elected school boards in the provinces work with the provincial government. The provincial government has more power than the local board, which permits funding equality and improves consistency in curriculum and testing scores. The provincial council of Ministers of Education (CMEC) works with the Federal Ministry of

Education on a cooperative level. The local communities make choices for their children because they believe they know them better (Anderson, 2016).

The Canadian education promotes and implements support program in representation for minority language and second language education, through international and national representation to implement learning. For example, Ontario is one of the most successful provinces, and is noted to be the most diverse population. The province solely educates approximately forty percent of Canada's student population of five million. The programs in Ontario help immigrant parents to vigorously participate in their children's education. Canada's success is attributed to its proactive immigration policies and settlement groups in each province that give support to the entire family within and outside of school. Despite all the success of the Canada's education system, it is noted that it's still not perfect because of the slow implementation of policy and provincial collaboration (Anderson, 2016).

According to Hermann-Shores' (2017) study on situated learning, learning is basically social and is not just what takes place in the learner's head. Situated learning is perceived to take place as termed by Wenger (1998) and Lave and Wenger (1999) a "community of practice" (p. 25). Recently, it was defined as relationships between individuals that involve actions universally connected with other peripheral and overlying communities of practice. The study of Hermann-Shores (2017) discussed issues on pedagogy and andragogy for 21st-century sign language users and learners. Topics mentioned include concepts involved in enabling andragogy and pedagogy, a literature review of the effects of native sign language on majority language acquisition commissioned by the Ontario Ministry of Education in Canada, and three types of generic competencies.

Hermann-Shores (2017) discovered Bruner's (1999) culturalism, which posits that the ideas of learning and thoughtfulness are continuously located in a cultural setting and constantly reliant on the use of cultural possessions. The Ontario Ministry of Education commissioned a literature review on the effects of native sign language on majority language acquisition (Israelite, Ewoldt, & Hoffmeister cited in Kommesaroff, 2008). The authors identified four characteristics of bilingual programs for deaf children. Guibernau (2007) defined national identity as "a collective sentiment based upon the belief of belonging to the same nation and of sharing most of the attributes that make it distinct from other nations" (p.11).

Teaching and Diversity in the Educational System in the U.S.

According to Grant & Gibson (2011), the intersection of diversity and education in the U.S. has been a basis of study for years. The reason has been that the entrance of several immigrants into different schools and classrooms has manifested and reflected a changed diverse atmosphere of the American society. Also, with the world globalizing independently, questions arose on whether American education including teacher's education should address student diversity. Addressing educational diversity in the U.S. is a careful and varied situation such that there are questions on who can handle or teach students of mixed colors or can a Black teacher teach

White students, or can White teachers teach Black students or can either Black teach both White and Black students (i.e., mix class) successfully (Woodson, 2008; Sigerman, 2000; Ball & Tyson, 2011)? Then the question arose from Grant & Gibson (2011) that inquired, "Who should teach different groups of children and what are the implications of this demographic (mis)match?" (p.19).

Teachers in America are expected to create a social change in their classrooms and schools' settings, thus should possess the ability to handle issues of student diversity. Several questions continue to exhume in this direction of diversity and education on what the meaning of diversity is? What the role of diversity should be in American society and schools. Does diversity matter and why? Who and what qualification is expected to teach in a diverse school? What should a diverse school curriculum look like? How should the learners be taught? What level of knowledge and belief is expected from the teacher? (Ball & Tyson, 2011; Grant & Gibson, 2011). These are all questions posed and needed to be adequately and consistently answered.

Nevertheless, the teaching of marginalized (relegated) student populations requires diverse disposition, beliefs and training, and practices traditionally conveyed in teacher education. This includes the necessity to address official or institutional factors, such as bureaucracy, time demand, class sizes, and emotional strain that frequently discourage teachers (Weiner, 2000; Villegas & Lucas, 2004, Villegas & Davis, 2008; Grant & Gibson, 2011).

Duncan-Andrade, Ball and Tyson's (2011) asserted that there is a need for schools to play a meaningfully diverse role in our societies, by redefining its significance. Besides, to create schools capable of preparing young leaners to face obstinate forms of inequity in our society, we need to really reconsider our approaches towards teacher's education. To assure diversity in the university classroom, it is expected that teachers should respond to disseminate effective practices in their schools, and teachers should also be aware and knowledgeable of the conditions within their schools (Duncan-Andrade, Ball, & Tyson, 2011).

Several research considerations claim that schools' social factors, representing high-quality relationship or association between principals and teachers, are predictors that are important for students' achievement and schools' effectiveness to maximize student achievement potential (Barnett & McCormick, 2004; Edgerson et al., 2006; Moye et al., 2004; Smith & Andrews, 1989; Walsh, 2005; Zeinabadi, 2012).

Teaching and Diversity in the Educational System in Canada

According to Hamm and Cormier (2015), the ethnically diverse population in Canada has led to numerous positive and thrilling implications for the nation's society. Also, so many needs were exposed, and part of these needs is the provision of an inclusive, safe, and hospitable school environment for every new student. Hamm and Doğurga (2014) state that to address or approach diversity issues in socially unbiassed ways in schools, leaders should employ numerous culturally responsive strategies jointly with their educational teams. Knight (2007) advise that

confronting the school and communities' heads-on should be one of the main strategies an educational leader should use to establish and sustain diversity in schools. Boothe (2000) and Hamm and Doğurga (2014) suggest that to accomplish this, educational leaders can do the following: Create, resuscitate, or perhaps revisit the school or school district's inclusive education or diversity plan to guarantee that all educators involved are working collaboratively toward more inclusive practices.

Canadian educational leaders are encouraged to learn about issues or challenges that are associated with rapid demographic change and diversity and pursuit for opportunities to promote and encourage social justice discourse, teamwork, and direct action within the schools' settings to invoke extensive understanding and appreciation of students and families that are new to Canada (Shields, 2004; Hamm & Cormier, 2015). Educational leaders are advised to build cultural leadership knowledge when supporting and working with teachers who are possibly deficient in teaching experience that is needed in diverse communities. To accomplish this, educational leaders in Canada were mandated to enable brave and problematic deliberations (Glanz, 2006; Schaffer, 2012).

Katz, Porath, Bendu, and Epp (2012) found that Canadian inclusive classrooms have exposed students to education alongside peers from diverse nations, cultures, races, family structures, and diverse socioeconomic classes. As a result, students frequently learn in multi-grade combinations, with peers of diverse languages, abilities, learning styles, and background experiences. Therefore, students are exposed to multiple belief systems, values, cognitive understandings, relationship styles, and social rules. Amid this rich difficulty, Canadian youths are endeavoring in mastering and understanding the curriculum and possessing the skills, to behave in socially acceptable and appropriate ways, and develop citizenship and social skills.

According to Guo and Chase (2011), the increasing enrolment of international graduates in Canadian institutions has been at a rapid pace due to globalization. Despite this, several international students were facing challenges and barriers during the integrating phase into the Canadian academic environments, and this includes unfriendliness, marginalization, isolation, and low self-esteem. These international students were able to overcome these challenges with the support of a program established in Canadian universities that assisted the international graduate students in adapting to a new and unfamiliar academic environment. The program was successful in generating a transnational learning space where international students were able to develop a sense of belonging, and increased cross-cultural understanding and awareness about global issues. Above all, it helped international students in navigating and integrating into a Canadian learning community.

Discussions

According to Robinson (2012) and Ryan (2010), the U.S. education setting reveals that most frequently students' backgrounds or circumstances where they reside determine the quality of educational opportunities they receive. Numerous school children of color in the U.S. attend

marginalized schools. More so, these schools provide these students with substandard education, discipline, and lower chances to succeed in comparison to affluent and popular white schools. The deficiency the policies created has revealed the inadequacies of education reform in the U.S. There is also a lack of connection between class and racial inequality and student achievement, which was noticed to be a larger problem within the school system and tagged as social structures of inequality (Anderson, 2016). According to Ryan (2010), the last half-century of education policy has been depended on dividing attachments instead of connecting and eradicating the limitations concerning urban and suburban schools.

The U.S. Department of Education (2017) stated that there is a need to take active steps and efforts to upsurge diversity and to connect all learners together irrespective of their backgrounds. This includes learners from diverse racial, cultural, and socioeconomic upbringings. The office of planning, evaluation and policy development of the U.S. Department of Education (2016) stated that U.S. States that are dedicated to advancing or promoting campus diversity and inclusion in higher education have the opportunity to contribute in numerous ways, by creating goals and providing support to Institutions of Education (IEs), and more diverse and inclusive campuses through collaborations between the State Boards of Education and IEs. For example, the Colorado's School Counselor Corps Grant Program (SCCGP) offered funding to school districts qualified to upsurge the obtainability of active school-based counseling. The goal was to advance the high school graduation rate and intensify the percentage of learners that are properly prepared, applied, and endured into postsecondary education. About 60% of students that were served contributed to the free and reduced-price lunch programs. Matriculation rates were increased by almost 13 percentage points due to the first year of funding and the increase was maintained for the next two years (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

According to Graham and Jahnukainen (2011), the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom states that education should be a right to every learner and none of the learners must be discriminated against with respect to race, national, origin, color, religion, sex, age, and physical disability. This concurred with the internationalization of the inclusive education movement in the 1980s, which gave new expectations for classroom teachers and the yielding of legal rights to augment access and participation for exceptional students.

According to Dobbie and Robinson (2008), over the past several decades, the higher education systems in Canada and the U.S. have been transformed. Skolnik and Jones (1992) purport that the U.S. prefers focusing on the wider parts of the world than Canada for inclusiveness reasons. The two important notified differences between Canada and U.S. education systems were noted to be the following: There were very few private universities in Canada and no church-affiliated universities were found, which is due to the act of the provincial legislature. These universities were not hierarchically differentiated like that of the U.S. whereas about half of the universities in the U.S. are private and out of them a quarter are church-affiliated (Skolnik & Jones, 1992).

The growth in global demand for international education positioned Canada to capitalize on the available window of opportunity with the value proposition of consistency in high-quality education at a reasonable cost. Canada's brand is based on consistently high quality and a

reputation for excellence across the entire education sector. Canadian universities are linked to the international community through active exchange agreements with university partners around the world. It was stated that the internationalization of Canada's education and research institutions through an international partnership is such substantial importance in supporting Canada's Science and Technology and innovation agenda (Canada's International Education Strategy, 2012).

De Wit (2001) argues that during the period between the two world wars, especially after the Second world war and through the Cold War, the U.S. strongly determined the developing and characterizing the international dimension of higher education, with the term *international education.* After the Cold War, Europe, and to a certain scope Australia and Canada, already took over the leading role in developing internationalization strategies for higher education. Surprisingly, in the twentieth century, American higher education became dominant with a sense of superiority in their higher education offerings.

Conclusion

The comparison of these two countries' educational systems and global intentions and accomplishments have shown some close similarities and differences at which they both strive to upgrade and market their educational systems to attract foreign international students to take part. Nevertheless, both countries consistently upgrade their educational systems to meet up with the top standards in the global contest. These two countries are known amongst the best educational systems in the world and their standards are maintained from time to time. However, both countries still have more work to do to improve the dynamics of diversity and inclusion in their educational systems.

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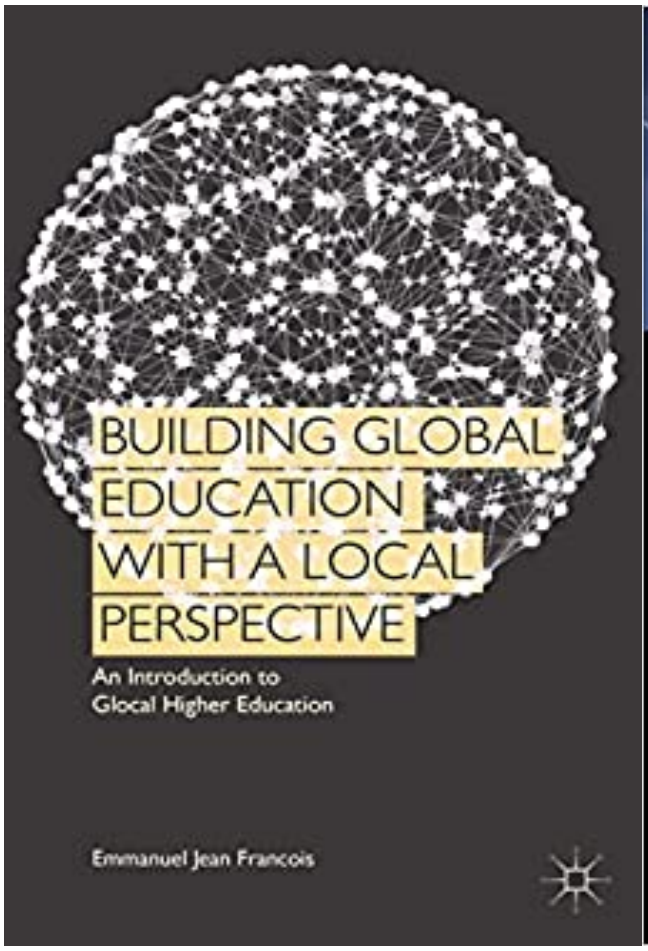

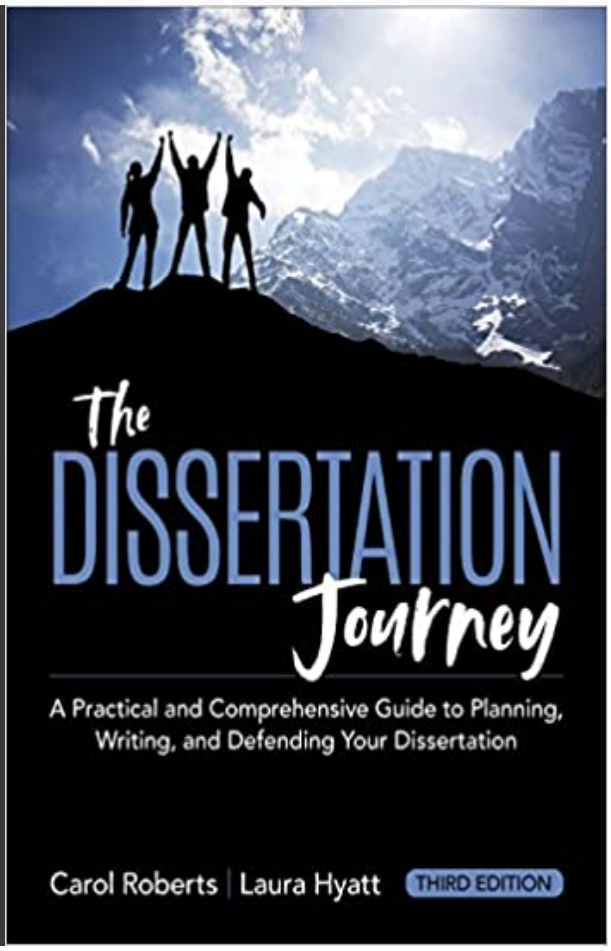

Correlation Between Diversity and Type of Skills for Innovation Management: A Theoretical Model

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Abstract
The right mix of diversity and skill sets can help a better management of innovation. The nature of diversity and innovation is multidimensional in terms of their applications in the business environment. In this paper, diversity is studied across six demographic verticals: gender, age, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation of employees, religion and beliefs, and disability. The paper is an attempt to uncover the underlying relation between diversity and type of skill sets required for the management of innovation. The research methodology includes a literature review and analysis of key publications relating diversity and type of skills required for management of innovation. Variables have been studied under (a) diversity attributes– demographic verticals: gender, age, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and beliefs, and disability and (b)skill set attributes – communication skills, technical knowledge, analytical skills, human relation skills, reading skills, and writing skills. In addition to the literature review, a few individual interviews, serving as personal communication, were conducted in three sectors: education (primary education), hospital (pediatrics) and information technology (software development) to conclude the study. The three selected sectors are knowledge intensive sectors. The result shows that there is correlation with respect to age, gender and skill sets in the selected sectors. No correlation was found in other diversity attributes like race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and beliefs, and disability.

Keywords: diversity, innovation, management, skill set, leadership

Introduction

Both diversity and innovation are multidimensional terms. Their application is varied and interrelated. Herring (2009) has defined diversity as a concept that is not limited by gender or race, as usually defined. But it also includes differences with respect to attributes like age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, among others. Diversity is explained across six demographic attributes: gender, age, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and beliefs,

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and disability. Innovation includes processes of creativity and new thinking. Management of innovation implies the search of new ideas that could generate positive outputs. There is an ongoing quest to find out better ways of managing innovation to serve diverse customers. Markets and businesses are becoming more diverse in terms of products, services, and customer preferences (The European Institute for the Management, IEGD, 2013). Organizations need to hire diverse set of employees with diverse skill set to manage diversity in markets. This calls for a study on diversity and types of skills for managing innovation. The present paper is an attempt to uncover the underlying relation between diversity and type of skill set required for management of innovation. Past research has shown positive relationship between diversity and innovation in business contexts. Hajro et al. (2015) found that teams with cooperative and assertive knowledge were more effective. It is more common in organizations with diverse climate focusing on engagement. In the past, there has been no study that correlates the two parameters. Also, it is important for organizations to hire employees with a particular skill set for better growth. Through this study, there is a scope to shed light on three variables (i.e., diversity, skill set, and innovation). Management of innovation depends on who manages innovation and how innovation is managed. The *Who* part is about individual with the given skill sets having diversified traits that help in management of innovation. The *How* part is about the different process or new process used by individuals to manage innovation. It is important to understand what skill sets are required and how skill set is related to diversity among individuals. The relation between performance and gender has been debated often, giving different versions to the relation.

Some researchers have claimed that the difference in individual biological and psychological characteristics influences research output. A study by Van der W. Inge et al. (2012) suggested that young female researchers tend to outperform young male researchers. But often it is observed at all levels of education that girls tend to outperform boys (Buchmann et al., 2008; Pekkarinen, 2008). The influence of age on management of innovation has been an old issue for employers. A general belief is that productivity decreases with age. However, in the consultancy business, more experience and wisdom may add to better performance. The study focuses on diversity attributes like race & ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion & beliefs, and disability. It relates them with the type of skill set for innovation management. The type of skill may be communication skills, technical knowledge, analytical skills, human relation skills, reading skills, and writing skills. Employees with diversified traits may possess all or some of these skills that enhance management of innovation in organizations. For example, females are better in handling and managing customer service or managing kids in primary schools. By and large, we find female nurses in the hospitals as they are better in taking patient care. Moreover, older employees are mostly contributing more knowledge and wisdom in an organization, even though researchers have claimed that productivity declines with age. If organizations employ such diverse set of employees, it may contribute towards better management of innovation. This may be true in certain cases but cannot be generalized as management of innovation depends on many factors like availability of skilled manpower, attitude of senior managers, the vision of a company, and conducive government policies. Cost cutting is one of the techniques for

managing innovation. So, organizations may hire a younger staff at a lower cost but may not get a skilled employee. The study is an attempt to explore the relationship between diversity attributes and skill set attributes in the three aforementioned selected sectors.

The importance of different skills may vary with respect to the sectors. For example, technical skills are more important in the information technology sector than in the education sector. On the other hand, skill sets like technical skills, analytical skills and communication skills are important in all three selected sectors.

The other attributes of diversity, like race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and beliefs, and disability may be linked with the different type of skill sets. This paper addresses the gaps that highlight the relationship between diversity attributes and skill attributes required for the management of innovation. The present study is an attempt to propose a theoretical model to correlate diversity and type of skills for management of innovation. Specifically, the paper will address the research lacunas to understand degree of correlation between diversity attributes (gender, age, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and beliefs, and disability) and skills attributes (skill set of employees – communication skills, technical knowledge, analytical skills, human relation skills, reading skills, and writing skills). The scope of innovation depends on the ability of employees to produce ideas and apply them. The Organization for Economic and Cooperative Development (OECD) countries are increasingly trying to understand the types of skills needed for innovation and the best ways to build them, although it is difficult to make explicit links between specific skills and innovation (OECD, 2011). This study attempted to understand the relationship between diversity and the required skills for innovation.

Clearly, there is a need to study the link between diversity attributes and skill set attributes that might result in better management of innovation. Often, technical skill set has more impact on management of innovation than non-technical skill set. The skill sets may vary on the basis of gender, race, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. The study proposes a theoretical model in which diversity is the *source*, skill set is the *mediator*, and the management of innovation is an *outcome*.

The article starts with a brief introduction about the topic. This is followed by the methodology. The next section of the paper is an analysis, which includes a literature review to address the issues in the study. This further helps in understanding the diversity and skills set attributes for management of innovation. Then, the findings are reported and analyzed in the light of diversity attributes and skill set that help in managing innovation.

Methodology

The research process started with an evaluation of the literature on the topic. The literature was reviewed to analyze diversity attributes and skill sets. The study involves three knowledge intensive sectors - education (primary education), pediatrics hospitals, and information technology (software development). The diversity attributes and skill sets are defined as (a) Diversity – demographic verticals: gender, age, race and ethnicity, sexual-orientation, religion

and beliefs, and disability and (b) Skill set of employees – communication skills, technical knowledge, analytical skills, human relation skills, reading skills, and writing skills. Several individual interviews (personal communications) were analyzed from sectors like education (primary education), pediatrics hospitals, and information technology (software development) to understand the relationship between diversity attributes and skill set attributes and how they influence the management of innovation.

As already mentioned, in this paper, the scope of the education sector includes primary education; the hospital sector includes pediatric hospitals, and the information technology sector encompasses software development companies. The scope is limited to these specific sectors due to the short duration of the study and the use of a convenient sampling. The three different sectors are considered to analyze the correlation across sectors. All three sectors are knowledge intensive sectors. Knowledge intensive sectors depend more on the talent pool within an organization. Grant (1996) has defined knowledge-based venture as the venture where knowledge is the firm's most valuable asset. He further proposes that firms create their competitive advantage by integrating knowledge held by individuals within the firm. Highly skilled employees contribute more to management of innovation. A key finding of a report by Toner (2011) provided evidence for strong causal inter-relation between the supply of higher levels of education, training and skills and increased demand for and supply of technical and organizational innovation. The market size of the respective sectors is given in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Sector and its Market Size (wrt India)

S. No.	Sector	Market Size
1.	Education (Primary)	US$ 91.7 billion in FY18 and is expected to reach US$ 101.1 billion in FY19.
2.	Hospitals (Pediatrics)	The healthcare market can increase threefold to Rs 8.6 trillion (US$ 133.44 billion) by 2022.
3.	Information Technology (Software Development)	US$ 181 billion in 2018-19, expected to expand to US$ 350 billion by 2025.

Source: India Brand Equity Foundation (ibef.org)

Table 2 presents the sector and the importance of respective skill sets. Among the given skill set attributes, communication skills, technical knowledge, analytical skills, human relation skills, reading skills, and writing skills are more important for the education sector (primary level). In the case of the information technology (software development) sector, programming skills are more important than communication skills. In hospitals, technical knowledge is more important than the race, religion and sexual orientation of an employee. In general, technical knowledge and analytical skills are more important in comparison to race, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation for the knowledge intensive sector.

Table 2: Sector and Skill Set Importance

S.No.	Sector	*Skill-Set Importance
1.	Education (Primary)	Communication skills, reading skills, and writing skills and human relation skills and analytical skills.
4.	Hospitals (Pediatrics)	Technical knowledge (Medicines and medical), analytical skills, reading skills, writing skills, human relation skills, and communication skills,
5.	Information Technology (Software Programming)	Technical knowledge (Coding, programming), analytical skills, reading skills, writing skills, human relation skills and communication skills.

Source: Author (2020) * Skills are mentioned from increasing to decreasing order.

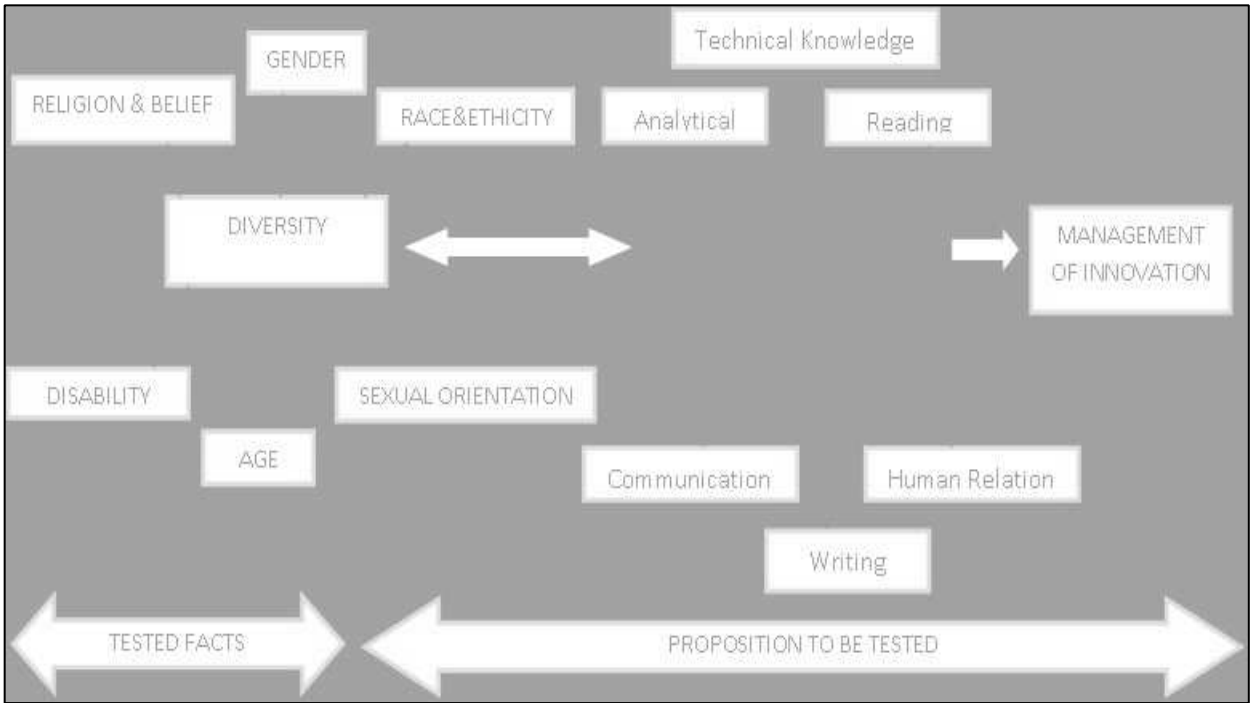

Figure 1 Correlation between Diversity Attributes and Skill Attributes

Figure 1 describes the model through correlation between diversity attributes and skill attributes. The **dependent variable** in the model is *Management of Innovation*. There are two **independent variables** in the proposed model: *diversity attributes* and *skill attributes*. The paper addresses the correlation between diversity attributes and skill attributes for better management of innovation. The subset of diversity attributes includes gender, age, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and beliefs, and disability. The subset of skill set includes communication

skills, technical knowledge, analytical skills, human relation skills, reading skills, and writing skills. The two attributes are studied to explore whether they result in better management of innovation or not. The diversity attributes have been tested by past research studies but there are research gaps with respect to study of the relationship between diversity and skill set attributes for management of innovation. The paper addresses the research gaps through literature review and sectoral data collected through personal communication from three sectors: education (primary education), pediatrics hospitals, and information technology (software development).

Existing literature suggests a relationship between gender and age with respect to performance. Researchers have tried to relate diversity with innovation and often debated that diversity contributes to innovation. But less research exists on the relationship between diversity attributes and skill sets. These concepts have not been studied with respect to management of innovation. Topics pertaining to the diversity attributes and skill set attributes are screened from the literature and their underlying relation with management of innovation has been reported. Dimensions of diversity (i.e., industry background, country of origin, career path, gender, academic path, and age) have been related to innovation, in terms of positive or negative relation (University of Munich and BCG, 2016). There are several studies that have linked innovation with the functional diversity of team members (Kreidler & Tilebein, 2013; Milliken & Martins, 1996). Diverse functional teams have a broad thinking, can react better in uncertain situations, and produce efficient decisions (Akgün et al., 2008; Blindenbach-Driessen, 2015; Gebert et al., 2006; Milliken & Martins, 1996; Pelled, 1996).

The time period of data collection and analysis for the research paper spans from 2015 to 2017. The author started working on the concept of correlation of diversity and skill set and its impact on management of innovation in 2015 in order to gain clarity and conceptual understanding on the topic. The reason to select these years is to cite the recent research related to the topic of the study. A conscious decision was made to analyze recent papers and have current research perspectives.

A total of twenty-one documents have been analyzed for the literature review. The number includes 11 research papers, 4 reports, 2 books, 2 research review papers, 1 working series paper by OECD, and 1 paper from conference proceedings. The diversity attributes and skill set attributes were identified from the literature and discussed. The selection of the research paper was based on the time period and topics analyzed in the paper. Topics ranging from 'gender differences in scientific productivity; workforce diversity and innovation; diversity management - a global approach; cultural diversity and R&D activity; skills for innovation and research. Table 3 summarizes the literature analyzed for the study.

Table 3: Summary of Literature Analyzed

Literature Type	Author/s (Date)	Title	Target population	Sector
Book	Akgün, A.E., Dayan, M., & Di	New product development team intelligence: Antecedents	U.S.-198, AUS-152	Media and IT

	Benedetto, A. (2008).	and consequences		
Research paper	Blindenbach-Driessen, F. (2015).	The (in)effectiveness of cross-functional innovation teams. the moderating role of organizational context	1200 firms	Project based firms
Research paper	Buchmann C, DiPrete T.A., & McDaniel, A. (2008).	Gender inequalities in education	Not defined	Education (Kindergarten, High school, college)
Research paper	Gebert, D., Boerner, S. an d Kearney, E. (2006).	Cross-functionality and innovation in new product development teams: A dilemmatic structure and its consequences for the management of diversity	Not defined	Sector not defined, cross functional teams
Research paper	Gonzales, J. A., & Denisi, A. S. (2009).	Cross level effects of demography and diversity climate on organizational attachment and firm effectiveness	26 units	Regional restaurant chain
Research paper	Hajro,A. , Gibson , B.C., & Pudelko, M. (2015).	Knowledge exchange processes in multicultural teams: Linking organizational diversity climates to teams' effectiveness,	11 companies, 48 teams, 143 in-depth interviews	Sector not defined
Research paper	Herring, C. (2009).	Does diversity pay? Race, gender, and the business case for diversity	Using data from the 1996 to 1997 National organizations survey.	A national sample of for-profit business organizations
Report	India Brand Equity Foundation (2019).	Sector wise report		Education, Healthcare, Information Technology
Conference paper	Kreidler, A., & Tilebein, M. (2013).	Diversity and innovativeness in new product development teams addressing dynamic aspects with system dynamics,	Not defined	Not defined
Report	OECD (2011).	Skills for innovation and research.	Not defined	Service and manufacturing sector
Report	Lorenzo, R., Voigt, N., Schetelig,	The mix that matters, Innovation through diversity	Not defined	Not defined

	K., Zawadzki, A., Welpe, I., & Brosi, P. (2017).			
Research paper	McCabe, D. (2002).	Waiting for dead men's shoes: Towards a cultural understanding of Management innovation	A case study of an insurance company.	Insurance sector
Research review paper	Milliken, F.J., & Martins, L.L. (1996).	Searching for common threads: Understanding the multiple effects of diversity in organizational groups	Not defined	Not defined
Research review paper	Mirbabayev, R. (2015).	Relationship between Innovation and Cultural Diversity: Review of concepts,	Not defined	Not defined
Research paper	Niebuhr, A. (2010).	Migration and innovation: Does cultural diversity matter for regional R&D activity?	Cross - section of German region	Not defined
Book	Ozbilgin, M., & Tatli, A. (2008).	Global diversity management: An evidence-based approach.		
Research paper	Pekkarinen, T. (2008).	Gender differences in educational attainment: Evidence on the role of tracking from a Finnish quasi-experiment	Not defined	Finnish education sector
Research paper	Pelled, L.H. (1996).	Demographic diversity, conflict, and work group outcomes: an intervening process theory	Not defined	Not defined
Report	The European Institute for the Management of Diversity (IEGD, 2013).	Diversity and Innovation- A business opportunity for all, Focus consultancy, 'for diversity against discrimination.	Five companies – two SMEs, two large companies, and one very large company.	manufacturing, real estate and renting, and wholesale/retail trade
Working paper series of OECD	Toner, P. (2011).	Workforce skills and innovation: An overview of major themes in the literature	Not defined	Manufacturing and service sector

Research paper	van Arensbergen, P., van der Weijden, I., & van den Besselaar, P. (2012).	Gender differences in scientific productivity: a persisting phenomenon?	852 Social scientists	Scientific research

Findings and Analysis

As previously indicated, the study is an attempt to explore the relationship between diversity and type of skills required for innovation management. This part has two sections, the first section presents the findings from the literature review on the topic and the second section presents the results from sectoral data collected through personal communications.

Findings from Literature Review

Researchers have indicated a positive correlation between diversity and performance enhancement (Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2008). This reflects that organizations prefer a diversified workforce for better work performance. The concept of diversity refers to individual differences on the basis of any personal attribute that reflects how individuals perceive each other (LiGonzales & Denisi, 2009). Niebuhr (2006) conducted a study related to diversity and found that higher levels of research & development and innovation in regions of Germany are related to higher levels of cultural diversity in comparison to regions with lower levels of diversity. In broad terms, Herring (2009) suggested that diversity enhances the outcomes of a firm when compared to a homogeneous environment. This is because innovation depends more on the diversity of the group rather than just on intelligence.

There are different contributions of diversity in the area of innovation. Diversity can result in a better decision-making and problem-solving capability with the help of diverse expertise and critical evaluation (Bassett-Jones, 2005). A diverse team is capable to reach out to the broader network of relationships. It can bring different resources in the innovation process. There is another study by Lorenzo, et al. (2017), which confirms that companies generate higher revenue due to their higher level of diversity. But there is a considerable gap in studying the relation between diversity and type of skill set required for the management of innovation.

Apart from these two main categories, other variables to be studied include the nature of the job, the business, educational qualifications, and the sector. The outcome of the study will suggest if there exists a correlation between diversity and type of skill sets of the employees. It will help in understanding the concept of diversity with respect to the skill gaps that exist among employees. Organizations can select the mix of diversity to match with the type of skill set required for managing innovation. The diversity among employees is required for performing different types of tasks within firms. It can result in firm productivity and generate spillovers. But there might also be a negative impact of diversity, as it may result in problems related to communication and behavior.

There has been an increase in heterogeneity among employees with respect to age, migration, women's increased labour participation and technological changes (Ilmakunnas & Ilmakunnas, 2011; Kurtulus, 2012; Parrotta et al., 2012a). Thus, there is a need to study heterogeneity among employees. Very few studies have examined the correlation between diversity and skill sets required for innovation of management. There is a paucity of research on correlation between diversity, skill sets required for the innovation management. However, there is a study by BCG and Technical University of Munich (2017) that used statistical methods such as correlation and regression analyses to identify the types of companies that get the biggest innovation boost from diversity, the steps that companies can take to increase diversity's power, and the types of diversity that matter the most. This was apart from showing a relationship between diversity and innovation.

Table 4: The Types of Diversity that Bolsters Innovation

Dimension of Diversity	Direction of Relationship	Relationship to Innovation
Industry Background	Positive	Very High
Country of Origin	Positive	Very High
Career Path	Positive	Very High
Gender	Positive	High
Academic Path	No Significant Relationship	None
Age	Negative	High

Source: (2016) Survey of German, Swiss and Austrian companies by BCG and University of Munich. **Note:** 1. Innovation = the percentage of revenue from new products or services in the recent three-year period. 2.Very high statistical significance p value <.01. 3. High. Statistical significance, p <0.05

Table 4 summarizes the core findings of the study. The study did not relate race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and beliefs, and disability to innovation. A study conducted by Gratton (2007) suggests that there is a positive correlation between innovation and equal gender ratio within work teams. With the unequal gender ratio, a negative correlation is observed. Niebuhr (2010) suggested that there are differences in knowledge and capabilities of workers. These differences exist for workers from diverse cultural backgrounds and it results in better Research & Development (R&D) performance. One of the most fundamental challenges in innovation management is to find ideas that are valuable for an organization. In order to implement these ideas, employees need to have the right set of skills with them. A broader range of basic skills is important to implement innovation. The basic skills are defined as academic skills (reading and writing), technical skills, soft skills, problem solving skills, as well as openness to different cultures and leadership (OECD, 2011).

Toner (2011) has studied major themes in the literature related to workforce skills and innovation. In his study, he stresses on the key workforce skills for "High Performance Work System" (HPWS). HPWS requires a commitment to innovate. This is required at all levels of an enterprise. A broad range of skills is required for implementing HPWS. In addition to technical, cognitive and behavioral attributes, there are some other skills like good social skills and communication skills, leadership, initiative taking skills, constant concerned and check on quality, teamwork and cooperation, flexibility, analytical skills, and problem-solving attitude. For the purpose of this study, we have considered- communication skills, technical knowledge, analytical skills, human relation skills, reading skills, and writing skills, as the different types of skills required in an organization. Hewlett Packard's Latex Printing Technology (Hewlett Packard, 2020) can serve as a good illustration in this context. This technology is driven by diversity. This innovation provides an alternative to print service providers. The output is durable and sharp. The images are vivid and there is less impact on the environment. The company made deliberate efforts to have a diverse team with 120 engineers across 4 different countries. They manage the diverse teams to bring out their full creative potential. Another organization, L'Oreal also relied on diversity to develop a range of skincare for Muslim women based on their expressed needs (IEGD, 2013). Edamura and Inui (2016) conducted a study and found that diversity results in increase in patent applications among researchers. A study by Mirbabayev (2015) showed the influence of cultural diversity on innovation. The study found that cultural diversity plays a significant role in increasing innovativeness among firms. This study did not relate different variables of diversity with the type of skills that are required for managing innovation in an enterprise. Management of innovation is a challenging task that requires the search of new ideas, which could result in positive outputs. The ideas have to be evaluated with respect to the right quality and feasibility. The diversity in ideas is the result of diversity in skill set possessed by employees.

Findings from Sectoral Data on Diversity and Skill Set

Data collected through personal communications from key informants in the three sectors_ education (primary education), pediatrics hospitals, and information technology (software development) _ are presented and analyzed in this section. The findings revealed a correlation of gender and age with the skill sets for management of innovation. The remaining diversity attributes (i.e., race & ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion & beliefs, and disability) were not found to be correlated with skill sets. The correlation was seen sector-wise. In the education sector (primary level education), it is observed that mostly female teachers are hired. This may be due to the female traits like better soft skills, caring attitude, and politeness. There is a preference of females in the teaching sector while males are preferred in administration jobs like security and maintenance. This is due to the fact that females are considered better in handling growing kids. They are generally polite and equipped with mother-like skills to manage kids. In hospitals, for clinical jobs, no diversity correlation is observed. Both females and males are employed for skills rather than for the gender. But often in the planning or designing of policies,

there is a mix of doctors, technicians and administrators. In information technology, mostly male employees are employed. This is because of more availability of male candidates with respect to experience, education, and mobility.

Another diversity attribute that is found to be correlated with skill set attribute is age. In the education sector (primary education), younger teachers are hired. This is due to the abundant supply and energy levels required to manage kids at the primary level. In the information technology sector, not much correlation is seen with respect to age. Both young and old employees are seen doing the same kind of job (i.e., coding, programming, or controlling). This is because of the dynamic nature of the sector where young entrepreneurs are seen working with older employees. In this sector, diversity is observed more in terms of area of knowledge rather than age or gender or other diversity attributes. The diverse teams are formed for different projects to have different perspectives. In the three sectors, we could not find any correlation in any of the sectors under study with respect to race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and beliefs, and disability. The result from 5 reports, one book, and 9 research papers has been summarized in the Table 5, 6, and 7 below:

Table 5: Diversity Attribute and Sector

S.No.	Diversity Attribute	Sector	Correlation
1	Gender	Education (Primary level), Hospitals, Information Technology	Sector wise correlation exists
2	Age	Consultancy Business, Education (Primary Level), Hospitals, Information Technology)	Sector-wise correlation exists
3	Race & ethnicity	Not Sector relevant	No Correlation found
4	Sexual orientation	Not Sector relevant	No Correlation found
5	Religion & beliefs	Not Sector relevant	No Correlation found
6	Disability	Not Sector relevant	No Correlation found

Table 6. Skill Attribute and Sector

S.No.	Skill Attribute	Sector	Correlation
1.	Communication skills	Education (Primary level), Hospitals, Information Technology	High
2.	Technical knowledge	Education (Primary level), Hospitals, Information Technology	High

3.	Analytical skills	Education (Primary level), Hospitals, Information Technology	High
4.	Human relation skills	Education (Primary level), Hospitals, Information Technology	High to Medium
5.	Reading skills	Education (Primary level), Hospitals, Information Technology	Medium
6.	Writing skills	Education (Primary level), Hospitals, Information Technology	Medium

Table 7: Correlation – Diversity and Skill Set Attribute

S.No.	Diversity Attribute	Skill-Set Attribute	Correlation
1.	Gender	Communication skills,	Sector wise Correlation
2.	Age	Technical knowledge,	Sector wise Correlation
3.	Race & ethnicity	Analytical skills ,	No Correlation
4.	Sexual orientation	Human relation skills,	No Correlation
5.	Religion & beliefs	Reading skills, Writing	No Correlation
6.	Disability	skills.	No Correlation

Discussion

The paper has attempted to find correlation between diversity attributes and skill set attributes – communication skills, technical knowledge, analytical skills, human relation skills, reading skills, and writing skills. The literature review and personal communications suggest that there is an element of diversity in the selected sectors for managing innovation. This heterogeneity forces groups to think out of the box, resulting in innovative solutions. In the case of primary level education, younger female staff brings in energy and enthusiasm to handle young kids. This is complemented by the senior staff (both male and female) to direct performance and show direction. In hospitals, often senior doctor is supported by a staff of nurses, doctors, technicians, all contributing their share of diversity with respect to gender, age, race, and knowledge. Diversity exists in the form of any difference among employees with respect to gender, age, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and beliefs, and disability.

The studies in the selected sectors (education, pediatrics hospitals and information technology) suggest that there is correlation for two diversity attributes (i.e., gender and age) with the skill set attributes. For example, in the education sector, at the primary education level,

it is seen that mostly females are hired as primary school teachers as compared to males. This may be due to the fact that females have attributes like better at handling kindergarten kids, soft spoken, polite, and caring. Similarly, in the hospitality industry, we see more of the females are working as customer service employees. In the case of hospitals, we mostly find females working as nurses. This indicates that organizations hire employees with certain attributes that match with the job expectation. This results in a better management of innovation. Regarding age, in-spite of a general belief that productivity decreases with age, organizations in the consultancy business prefer to hire older employees for different project. In the knowledge intensive sector, age is not a deterrent because even younger employees are hired for coding knowledge in the information technology sector. All the organizations from the selected sectors have one common practice, though the degree of its application varies. Most organizations prefer to work with teams of diverse employees, although such diversity might differ from one organization to another. And this helps in managing innovation as diverse teams bring new ideas to improve work and performance. This diversity is seen more in the case of hospitals and information technology. In the information technology sector, diversity is due more to technical knowledge than to age or gender. Often, in the case of the information technology sector, diverse set of employees work on different projects. The different nature of the different projects explains the presence of diversity in organizations. In the case of the education sector, there is a team of teachers and a coordinator. So, not much diversity is observed in this sector.

Conclusion

The study has proposed a theoretical model correlating diversity and type of skills required for management of innovation. Extensive literature was studied to identify the research gaps that justify the study. Previous studies did not address the correlation of diversity attributes and skill set attributes required for management of innovation. Several researchers have explored the relationship between diversity and high performance of an enterprise. There are also studies relating cultural diversity and innovation. The methodology of the paper includes analysis of three sectors, education (primary), hospitals, and information technology. These sectors were considered because they are growing sectors and have a better scope for the future. The sectoral data show that there is a correlation between diversity attributes and skill set attributes, but only for two diversity attributes: gender and age. Such correlation has resulted in a better management of innovation. Further, technical skills possessed by employees tend to have more impact on management of innovation as compared to non-technical skills. Enterprises with more technically qualified employees were more innovative, as they generate more innovative ideas, both in terms of product and process. Correlation of diversity attributes and skill set attributes on the basis of gender, religion, age, disability and sexual orientation was not observed in management of innovation. Organizations require a diverse set of employees in terms of gender, age and technical knowledge to be more innovative. This diversity within organizations will help in developing a different approach towards management, innovation, and performance. When

different minds work together, each one will have a different perspective towards a problem. For example, in hospitals, for emergency cases, senior doctor would want to know the perspectives of all the other doctors, nurses and technicians in order to arrive at the best possible solution for an emergency case. Similarly, for project in the information technology sector, there is a need for diverse employees with diverse skill sets in order to complete a project efficiently and on time. The study is limited by the volume of data that was used to analyze the correlation between diversity and type of skill set for management of innovation. More data would have probably produced better analysis of the correlation. The study did not perform statistical analysis, which can provide better support to the result. Future research can be undertaken using statistical methods like hierarchical regression and path analysis to find out the exact coefficients of diversity and skill set attributes that help in management of innovation. The research study can also be applied to other sectors.

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Comparative Language and Education for Development Policies Between The Gambia and Ghana: Advocacy for Change

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Abstract
This study adds to the scholarship of Achebe (1965) and Ngugi (1992) on the use of the English language in early childhood education. Secondly, it explores the use of education for development in the Gambia and Ghana. This is significant because both countries share a similar political history and education systems. The purpose of the review is to analyze the similarities and differences between the Gambia's and Ghana's educational systems with respect to language and education as a roadmap to socio-economic development. The study's conceptual framework is House (2004) GLOBE dimensions of culture, which was used to analyze these countries language and education for development policies. On its data collection, the inquiry uses secondary data and policy documents. The findings show that Ghana is more assertive than the Gambia in its policies on language in early childhood education and education for national development. Furthermore, Ghana's policymakers are more willing to roll out policies geared towards language and education for development. Consequently, the study enables policy borrowing since it identifies and offers recommendations for language policies and education for development in both countries.

Keywords: language, language policy, comparative education, language and development

Introduction

The Gambia and Ghana are both former British colonies and gain their independence in 1965 and 1957, respectively. Both countries inherited the British educational system and are members of the West African Examination Council. Additionally, both countries use the English language as the official language as well as the language of instruction in their educational system. The objective of the review is to identify each of these countries' strengths and weaknesses in their educational systems with a view of learning the best practices for adaptation wherever deem fit in any of these countries. The paper starts with a brief overview of the profiles of The Gambia and Ghana, then discusses the conceptual framework and methodology, presents the findings and

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critically analyzes both countries' education systems with respect to language and education for development policies.

According to The Gambia Country Watch (2018), the country's population in 2017 was 2,091,000 inhabitants with a projected annual growth rate of 2.77%. On the country's economic indicators or outlook, The Gambia is typically considered as a developing country with an annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate of 3.31% in 2017 coupled with an inflation and unemployment rates of 8.02% and 6.84% respectively in 2016. In a similar pattern in 2016, The Gambia Gross Domestic Product (US $Billions) was 0.886000 while it suffered a Trade balance to GDP (US$ Billion) which was -8.010062. Because of these economic performances in The Gambia, the country was ranked 151 out of 155 countries using the Human Development Index of 2018.

Comparatively, according to Ghana Country Watch Report (2018), the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate as of 2016 was 4.98%, which is higher than The Gambia's rate within the same year under consideration. In 2016, Ghana's annual inflation rate was 14.23%, which conversely was higher than The Gambia rate, implying that the cost of living is much higher in Ghana when compared to The Gambia. However, the Ghana unemployment rate was 5.4%, which manifests that Ghana is doing fairly well in availing its citizens employment opportunities in its public and private economic sectors when compared to The Gambia.

Ghana's GDP for 2017 stood at 58.92 billion USD. Thus, Ghana's size of its GDP showcases the huge size of its economic activities whereas in The Gambia net GDP was under a billion US Dollars. Ghana registered a net surplus on its trade balance surplus indicator in 2017, which was 0.9 Billion US Dollars whereas in The Gambia, it registered a trade surplus deficit in 2016, which to a great extent could be attributed to the country's political crises when the former dictator Yahya Jammeh refused to accept the election results that he lost. Lastly, Ghana was ranked higher in the Human Development Index than The Gambia in 2017 as it was ranked 140 out of 155 countries globally.

Overall, both countries' economies show great room for improvement especially in the area of inflation, which are significantly high, thus warranting the need for serious fiscal measures and sound economic policies to redress the trend. Without such measures, the average citizen's quality of life for citizens of Ghana and The Gambia will decrease as a result of rising cost of living, which could be detrimental for the long-term peace and stability of these countries as it could ignite agitation and political unrest. Similarly, both countries should initiate sound policies so that their productive base can be improved. These measures will revamp the economy for growth in all its sectors, which ultimately will increase the growth rate of the countries' GDPs. Ghana is remarkably doing well with respect to trade surplus indicators. Therefore, the country needs to solidify its gains in its export and external market penetration. The Gambia is netting a deficit, which signifies that the country needs to improve its production of goods and services as well embark on a massive export initiative so that it can improve its trade surplus for the years ahead. The purpose of this comparative paper is to analyze the similarities and differences between The Gambia's and Ghana's educational systems with respect to language

and education as a roadmap to socio-economic development. Thus, the study's research question is what are the language and education for development policies of The Gambia and Ghana?

Conceptual Framework

For this inquiry, I will use House's (2004) globe dimensions of national cultures as a conceptual framework to analyze the language and education for development similarities and differences between Ghana and The Gambia. The House (2004) framework is suitable for the study because three of its characteristics appears to holistically address the themes that emerges in the review. According to House (2004), the framework has the following nine axioms or dimensions: power distance, in-group collectivism, gender egalitarianism, uncertainty avoidance, institutional collectivism, assertiveness, performance orientation, humane orientation, and future orientation.

Holistically, the nine scope of House (2004) are explained as follows. Firstly, *power distance* assesses the degree of equal or unequal distribution of power between the elites or the masses of a society. This dimension is important because it demonstrates the manifestation of power and the way power is wielded in a society. The second axiom of the framework is about *in-group collectivism*. By this analogy, the author assesses the extent of selfhood or group association of members of a society. This segment of the framework is relevant in contemporary times where some people believe in individual or capitalist ideology or group or social orientation to the order of business. Thus, the framework can be used as a yardstick to measure how a society is organized with respect to individual or group sense of belonging. The third axiom of the conceptual framework is *gender egalitarianism*. This refers to the appeal of material success or concerns for others. Therefore, the conceptual framework evaluates the degree to which a society cares for material success or concerns for others as values and virtues of a society. The fourth aspect of the framework is *uncertainty avoidance*. This segment of the framework measures the extent to which a society affirms formal or informal order of business or in their daily life styles.

According to House (2004), the fifth section of the framework is about *institutional collectivism*. This segment of the framework examines the dichotomies of individual goal or societal driven. Similarly, as discussed under axiom two, this can be linked to capitalism or social ideology shaping how societies operate. The sixth axiom of the conceptual framework deals with the extent of *assertiveness* in the choices and decisions people make in a society. Therefore, two yardsticks are being considered in a society, whether people are assertive or submissive in their dealings and all walks of life. The seventh axiom relates to *performance orientation*. Essentially, this indicator test whether a society is adaptive to rewarding for meeting goals or otherwise. Therefore, the axiom is useful to gauge why people in a society care about meeting goals or not. The eight aspect of the conceptual framework is *human orientation* and that is being sensitive to others. This aspect of the framework is important since it concerns the urge and willingness to work as a team for collective success of all or collaborate, thereby enabling every team player to succeed and vice versa. The nine or the last aspect of the

framework's axiom is about *future orientation*. This is regarding being cognizant of long-term or short-term vision related to all people's activity in a society. This deals with beliefs, attitudes, and expectations. Some may invest and are patient for long term benefits, whereas other do not care about the future. Essentially, all what these categories of people do is for immediate results, benefits, and consumption.

Power distance, degree of assertiveness, and performance orientation will be applied to analyze the similarities and differences between the culture of The Gambia and Ghana, in relation to language and education for development.

Methodology

The study used secondary sources of data and policy documents from The Gambia and Ghana. The data gathered were organized using a thematic approach. The criteria for selection of articles involved the extent to which documents were related to language and education for development in Ghana or The Gambia. The identification of document was done using keyword such as language policy, language policy and development, language policy and education, education for development, Gambia language policy, and Ghana language policy, through the Ohio University's Alden library search engine and google scholar. The websites of relevant education institutions were also reviewed to inform the study. The study used House (2004) globe dimensions of national cultures to analyze language and education for development policies.

Findings

Gambia Language Policy

Content analysis of the language policies of The Gambia's educational system revealed that policy consideration for local languages in the country's education system were implemented in the lower basic education system in 2015. However, according to Daly, Mbenga and Camara (2016), there is a limited number of materials available for teaching and learning in Sub-Saharan Africa, including The Gambia. Further, Daly Mbenga and Camara (2016) and Molloy (2014) noted that resource constraints in the country's educational system were considered as a principal factor for the disappointments of results in its performances in the West African Examination Council exams at all levels. Molloy (2014) explained that The Gambia has nine languages, which indicates that its elites and policy makers needed to be conscious of this fact and incorporate them into the country's education system well before 2015. Thus, policy makers initiatives are significant for policy appropriation and consideration since language is considered as a career of culture and research has demonstrated that teaching in the mother tongue of children generate better cognitive learning and comprehension. Unfortunately, English language is still the

medium and subject of instruction in The Gambia's public education system for all stages except grades 1-3.

Similarly, using a stakeholder analysis helps understand The Gambia's late implementation of language policy in the country. Overall, the stakeholders in The Gambia public educational system includes the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, teachers, parents, students, and other community associations, such as parent teacher association. Some policy and governance issues in the educational system in the Gambia are addressed through a centralized system or top-bottom approach and a decentralized system or participatory approach. A common observation for both centralized and decentralized systems is the prevalence of *power distance* in decision making in all circumstances. According to Juffermans and Van Camp (2013), stakeholders, such as school children, teachers, parents, and other community stakeholders, make their concerns heard regarding education language policies.

Juffermans and Van Camp's (2013) findings indicate that stakeholders such as chief (District Head), parents, Alkalolu (Village Head), teachers, and interpreter, hold different perceptions and positions on education institutional and societal issues. This assertion is in conformity with the argument of a cross-cutting theme of educational institutions in society related to power distance that is observed in such gatherings. Precisely, Juffermans and Van Camp (2013) observed the following: first, some participants in this forum do not enjoy equal speaking rights at the community meeting when a meeting is hosted in the chief's compound because of the little role that women play in such meeting. Second, ethnic dimension and indigenous language dominance surface in such gathering. For example, as indicated in the study, one of the respondents mentioned that in their school, which is in the predominantly Jola region of the Jola ethnic group, the language of wider communication in and around the school is not Jola but Mandinka. But the participant's or respondent's preference infers that when forced to make a choice, they decide to speak in their own language as it denotes pride and ethnic identity.

Cultural Orientation: Education for Development

In The Gambia, the infusion of education as a cultural vehicle for change in its development agenda has little evidence. However, recently, it has been noted that authorities and policy makers have given it a higher priority. According to The Gambia's National Development Plan 2018-2020, education consideration is made to address its educational needs. Precisely, this policy document has education goals as a strategy to overcome inadequate skills and capacity in the entire public service. The goals include the following:

- Increase percentage of graduates as a proportion of total gross enrollment by post-secondary levels at the higher education level from 14% to 30% (national).
- Increase the number of master's and PhDs graduated in STEM, aggregated by gender from 0% to 140 (masters) and from 0% to 32% (PhD)
- Increase the number of master's and PhDs graduated in agriculture, aggregated by gender from 0% to 50 (masters) and from 0% to 10% (PhD)

- Increase the number of master's and PhDs graduated in Health, aggregated by
- Gender from 0% to 40 (master's) and from 0% to 10% (PhD)
- Increase percentages of accredited post-secondary institutions from 0% to 100% (The Gambia Government, 2018, p.34).

Ghana's Language Policy

According to Opoku-Amankwaa et al. (2015), Ghana has over thirty languages and eighty-one dialects. The author claimed that the country's political leaders and policymakers had not been consistent in their policy decisions regarding educational policy for languages. The author further asserts that this pattern could be traced back to precolonial Ghana. For example, Opoku-Amankwaa et al. (2015) state that during the precolonial period between 1859 and 1871, German missionaries were involved in education and the propagation of religion in the country, using the indigenous languages as medium of instructions in their schools and church systems. Similarly, the author explained that during the precolonial era, the British missionaries and, in particular, the "British Sir Guggisberg's vision in 1920 was to preserve the people of Ghana's national characteristics so that the education system did not disaffect the Ghanaian people. This implies the importance that the German and British missionaries placed on local languages as mediums of instruction while also maintaining their language as the subject of instruction in all disciplines of study.

However, during the post-colonial era in Ghana, inconsistencies in the policy choices regarding language were observed throughout the various government bodies that controlled the seat of power in the country. According to Opoku-Amankwaa et al. (2015), during 1957, at the dawn of Ghana's independence, its first President, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, advocated for a unitary government in which English was adopted as the official language and became the language used in the educational system at all stages. As a manifestation of the shift to independence, the second government that succeeded Nkrumah in 1966 recognized and sponsored some local languages in its education system as mediums of instruction during students' first years of education. Specifically, Quaicoe, Adams, Bersah and Baah (2015) identified these local languages as Akan, Dagaare-Alim Dagbani, Dangwe, Ewe, Ga, Gonja, Kasem and Nzema. Another shift in Ghana's language policies was observed in 1971-2002. Similar to Nkrumah's policies, there was a restoration of English as the language of instruction in all of Ghana's education and school systems. Despite these oscillations, Opoku-Amankwaa et al. (2015) indicate that, since 2009, the country has appeared to be on a stable path regarding language policy for subject and medium of instruction purposes. This is because its policymakers have adopted a bilingual literary program for school-going children at the Kindergarten level up to power primary. This policy adaptation was considered successful because of its quality materials and its effective instructional strategies. Opoku-Amankwaa et al. (2015) underscored the benefits of this policy in gaining the public's trust and support since it avails Ghanaian citizens to read and write in their mother tongue and in the English language as well. These policy changes signify that Ghana's policymakers maintain a significant power distance from their citizens

because these policymakers are able to implement policies based on their own conceptions alone. The evolution of language policies show that Ghana's policymakers alternate between both Ngugi's and Achebe's advocacy for the abandonment and retention of the English language as a medium of instruction.

A major observation that can be made is that Ghanaian leaders' intentions was to use education as a means of economic expansion as evidenced by language policies since the attainment of independence. According to Ntim (2014), in 1957, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah launched the Accelerated Development Plan, which sought to transform Ghana through the development of its education system, ultimately developing the country's human capital. This policy's initiatives were essential in that they aimed to endow the Ghanaian people with the knowledge and skills necessary to actualize the country's development plan. In addition, this transformative policy was critical to Ghana at that time because the country needed to steer its own affairs and build on its capacity for development through human resources. In contemporary discourses, McCarthy (2014) noted that this cultural assertiveness can be linked to appreciation theory because it showed that the country wanted to utilize its people and capacities as capital to transform its development.

Higher education plays a key role in a nation's development. According to Ntim (2014) and Bawa (2016), Ghana has used higher education as an instrument of public policy for development. These policy decisions exemplified the need to situate Ghana's development within a local context and in the knowledge within its higher education system, which led to the polarization of Ghana's higher education system in all regions of the country. One of the most profound examples of this is the Kwame Nkrumah's University of Science and Technology; the incorporation of this policy consideration into the policy stream signifies the political philosophy and ideology of development. This University has contributed immensely to the training of Ghanaians in technical skills and knowledge in the area of engineering, medicine, and other disciplines. Thus, the cultural orientation of the Gambians and the Ghanaians is seemingly shaping the policy choices towards using education as a vehicle for developmental change. Fagerlind and Saha (2016), Thompson (1981), Jean-Francois (2015) and Bloom, Canning and Chan (2006) all contend that education is a leading tool for the promotion of economic growth and sustainability within developing countries.

Education for development requires ensuring that quality standards are met. According to Ntim (2014), in 1993, the Ghanaian government instituted its National Accreditation Board with a view toward assuring that quality culture becomes rooted and embedded in Ghana's higher education system. The government deemed it necessary to implement this as a roadmap to reverse the deterioration trend in its educational outcomes. Additionally, the policy was initiated by the Ghana government in order to increase access in its higher education system; as such, the accreditation body aimed to ensure that people with the right qualification are enrolled and admitted into the higher education establishments and to prevent the compromising of standards at the point of departure in the higher education journey. Furthermore, another objective behind this policy was to increase the country's capacity to respond to its development needs and aspirations via education (Ntim, 2014). The quality of training was considered indispensable in

meetings that laid out procedures and standards for the deliverance of public service to the Ghanaian people. Lastly, the policy gained the attention of political leaders and policymakers because it was a means to bridge the gap between limited resources and returns on investment experienced in the 1960s within Ghana's higher education system.

According to Ntim (2014), these developments were implemented through the granting of institutional autonomy and the responsibility of quality assurance. This is significant because it empowered institutions with the legislation and authority to oversee quality assurance in the entire higher education system of Ghana. Thus, the approach prevented the possibility of interference in the accountability and internal operations of these entities.

Similarities of The Gambia and Ghana's Educational Systems

As Table 1 and 2 illustrate, information from both The Gambia's and Ghana's ministry of education websites, reveal similarities between the educational systems of the two countries.

Table 1: Gambia's Education System

Level	From Grade	To Grade	Age	From Age to	No. of Years
• Primary	1	6	7	13	6
• Middle	7	9	13	16	3
• Secondary	10	12	16	19	3
• Tertiary (University)					

Source: Gambia Education System (2020)

Table 2: Ghana's Education System

• Level	From Grade	To Grade	Age	From Age to	No. of Years
• Primary	1	6	7	13	6
• Middle	7	9	13	16	3
• Secondary	10	13	16	20	4
• Tertiary (University)					
• Exams: WAEC WASCE Exam					

Source: Ghana Education System (2020)

Tables 1 and 2 above indicate that both countries' citizens and school-going children spent the same number of years at the primary education level. Similarly, both the Gambia and Ghana have the same educational structures and school-going ages at the middle school education level. The only difference between the countries was observed at the secondary school level in terms of structures and ages for school-going boys and girls: for Ghana, this period lasts

four years whereas, in the Gambia, it lasts three years. With respect to University education, both countries' bachelor's degree programs last four years.

Discussion: Critical Analysis of Ghana's and the Gambia Educational Systems through Language Policy

Through the lens of language policies and with respect to the arguments made by Achebe (1965) and Ngugi (1992), as well as with the utilization of the House (2004) conceptual framework, the review demonstrated that Ghana is more proactive than the Gambia in its drive to incorporate local languages into the educational system. Achebe (1965) advocates for the adaptation of the English language as the official language in the former British colonies since it will unify the various ethnic groups in these countries. On the contrary, Ngugi (1992) argues that former British colonies need to use their indigenous languages in their educational system because language is a career of culture and identity. Ngugi (1992) posited that writing in non-native languages enriches that language. For example, native Akan and Wolof speakers writing in English language enriches the English language. Therefore, in his view, Africans need to write in their native languages in order to preserve their cultural heritage. Nevertheless, the positions of both sides of this argument denote Pennycook's (2017) postulation that "with English Language taking up such an important position in many educational systems around the world, it has become one of the most powerful means of inclusion or exclusion from further education, employment, or social positions." (p. 9).

Comparatively, from the language policies of the Gambia and Ghana, one can deduce that the Gambia is far behind when it comes to using education to facilitate the development aspirations of the country. In fact, based on a content review of education reports, the Gambia has had University education in the country after 1995 when the University of Nova Scotia in Canada launched a University Extension Programme in the Gambia, which gave birth to the University of the Gambia in 1999. Overall, a major takeaway from the Gambia's education policies for development is that it demonstrates the power distance that exists between its citizens and those in authoritative positions to make policy choices anchored on education as a machinery to propel development. Similarly, this behavioral pattern denotes the lack of cultural assertiveness, future, and performance orientation within the country's leadership.

One important conclusion that can be derived from Juffermans and Van Camp's (2013) analysis regarding stakeholder dynamics is the need to provide equal representation of voices, irrespective of gender, race, ethnicity and region, regarding education matters. This is crucial because challenges still exist within both the central and decentralized education systems in the Gambia. Therefore, the Gambian government should enact and enforce policies that ensure stakeholders are not discriminated against in local school meetings and gatherings. Overall, the present conditions indicate the power distance that exists in both formal and informal settings when dealing with issues regarding language in the Gambia. Specifically, drawing from House et al. (2004), this review demonstrates that the Gambia's policymakers maintain a power distance

regarding language policy because people's perspectives are not involved in their decisions regarding language policy. This also signifies that the policymakers are not assertive, but rather submissive with respect to the English language inherited from their colonizers.

This study suggests that Ghana is far ahead of the Gambia when it comes to the realization of the importance of including its local languages within its education system. This is a manifestation of power because it shows that the political leaders of the Ghana believe in certain ideologies recognizing their cultural orientation and its preservation. To a larger extent, this is in line with the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) policy advocacy. The Gambian authorities have not taken any step toward the inclusion of local languages within its educational system. This pattern of non-action clearly demonstrates the lack of will and interest on the part of the country's authorities with respect to the preservation of its cultural heritage. Indeed, the inclusion of these languages within the educational system would facilitate the preservation of the Gambia's culture and prevent its dilution or evasion within the educational system, which is currently copied from the British. For example, the present education system includes the lyrics of "A for Apple" when children are learning phonetic pronunciation, while this could be culturally contextualized by transforming the lyrics to a more culturally relevant example, such as "A for Aunt."

Conclusion

The review shows that there are significant differences in terms of cultural orientation in the education policies of Ghana and the Gambia. For instance, Ghana has recently become cognizant of embracing the teaching of its indigenous languages in its educational system, whereas the Gambia is still behind in its incorporation of local languages into the policy stream due to limited priorities. This difference manifests the axiom of power by the political leaders and policymakers in the choices they make regarding education policy. This is culturally significant because it exemplifies the tendency of domination and privilege they have over the masses. Similarly, this trend denotes the differential level of assertiveness that both the Gambia and Ghana have in incorporating education into their development agendas. Ghana has proven to be more proactive than the Gambia because, since its attainment of independence, it has recognized the important role education can play to facilitate its development agenda. Education is important because it influences the culture of the people, which is their way of life. Therefore, in both Ghana and in the Gambia, at different moments, education was used by policymakers and political leaders to transform the lives and livelihoods of its citizens. Lastly, this analysis indicates that the Gambia's has many opportunities to learn from Ghana in reforming its education system, especially with respect to language policy, the establishment of quality assurance and accreditation agency, the development of higher education and crafting a national development plan. This is because Ghana is far ahead of the Gambia in these areas and its socio-economic indicators are stronger compared to The Gambia.

In conclusion, the review offers a set of recommendations to scholars, policy makers and practice. The study recommends that scholars engage in further research to ascertain a better understanding of the rationales behind the Gambia's and Ghana's policy choices with respect to language and education for development. The review adds to the conversation on language policy and education for development in West Africa. Further studies of this nature are needed for the sub-region in order to provide a better understanding of language and education for development in Sub-Saharan Africa. The comparative analysis and findings with regard to both The Gambia and Ghana fills in some of missing information regarding language and education for development policies in Africa. Policy makers should roll out language and education for development policies in their national plans because it signifies a departure from colonial legacy and its impact in the African continent. The review highlights the high stakes involved in the implementation of language and education policies for development in Africa. Therefore, the adoption of language and education policies for development would ensure that all policy actors on the spectrum take into account the improvement of outcomes in language and education for national development.

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The State of Instructional Technology in Pre-colonial, Colonial and Post-colonial Africa: A Survey of Literature

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Abstract
This article examines the evolution of instructional technology in pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial Africa's educational systems through a survey of existing literature. It stresses the position that education pre-dates colonization of Africa as customary education taught morals and the essence of communal living from the cradle with the goal of molding decent human beings who would preserve the cultural heritage of the people. However, with colonialism, beginning with the Portuguese, who first introduced their brand of education in the continent, the earlier focus was fundamentally altered to making the African embrace the mannerisms and ways of life of the colonists. This trend continued with the British, French, and German colonial administrators who balkanized Africans among themselves. As the literature on the subject revealed, what started as distance learning through the aid of radio and television metamorphosed into many variants. The paper noted that the emergence of the computer and the accompanying internet connectivity has made instructional technology a challenge and opportunity in many educational settings across the continent.

Keywords: distance learning, educational technology, e-learning, information communication technology, instructional technology

Introduction

There have been many definitions of technology as a concept by as many scholars that broached the topic over time. One that is particularly significantly related to the subject matter was by Saettler (as cited in Gentry, 2011) "The word technology does not necessarily imply the use of machines, as many seem to think, but refers to any practical art using scientific knowledge" (p. 2). A further clarification of the 'practical art' suggested technique, which makes possible the instructional applications of the machine. Technology has undoubtedly revolutionized learning, in the same way it has transformed all aspects of human endeavor in modern times. Kohut,

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Taylor, Keeter, Parker, Morin, and Cohn (2010) argue that significantly, technological and generational change happen to be two sides of the same coin as they move together side by side in a natural progression. Another perspective on the definition was by Simon (as cited in Gentry, 2011), "Technology is a rational discipline designed to assure the mastery of man over physical nature, through the application of scientifically determined laws" (p. 2).

There is a connection between this definition that presupposes the mastery of man over nature with attempts to leverage technological development in information technology to improve learning outcomes in educational institutions. Related to the topic also, is the perspective of Finn (as cited in Gentry, 2011):

> In addition to machinery, technology includes processes, systems, management and control mechanisms both human and non-human, and… a way of looking at the problems as to their interest and difficulty, the feasibility of technical solutions, and the economic values – broadly considered – of those solutions (p. 2)

Instructional technology, broadly speaking, is leveraging Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to impart knowledge in educational institutions. Education per se, brought instructional technology to Africa. Education as an avenue to learn new things preceded the colonialists who held sway over African countries for several decades in their colonizing mission. In various parts of Africa, customary education taught morals and the essence of communal living from the cradle. In the traditional African society (pre-colonial), education was stepped down through the family, clan or village settings (Mazonde, 1995). It was organized in such a way that everyone, especially among the adults, had a role to play in the proper upbringing of the younger members of the society. The importance of being your brother's keeper was the underlining factor in the morals taught to the younger elements in face-to-face settings in the absence of technology. Basically, the methods of stepping down instructions were both formal and informal.

Mazonde (1995) situated much more poignantly, the main objectives of the African customary education; firstly:

> To preserve the cultural heritage of the extended family, the clan and the tribe. Secondly, to adapt members of the new generation to their physical environment and teach them how to control and use it; and to explain to them that their own future, and that of their community, depends on the understanding and perpetuation of the institutions, laws, language and values inherited from the past. (p. 2)

In contrast, the purpose of colonial education, in addition to helping the colonists in the colonial civil service, was to make the African become a complete European in thoughts and in deeds. This position was succinctly put by Wa Thiong'o (1981), a Kenyan scholar, who noted that . . .

> . . . the process annihilates a people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately

> in themselves. It makes them see their past as one wasteland of non-achievement and it makes them want to distance themselves from that wasteland. It makes them want to identify with that which is furthest removed from themselves. (p. 3)

The advent of colonialism by the European political elite and the collaborating missionaries and their business counterparts brought to Africa what is today known as modern education. This genre of European-style education, which was first started by the Portuguese missionaries in the fifteenth century, was popularized by other European missionaries across Africa in the eighteenth century in the wake of colonialism (Mazonde, 1995). The British, French, and Portuguese colonial administrators formed a perfect partnership with the missionaries in the spread of this Western-style educational system in the various African countries where they had a foothold.

Then, school was the special prerogative of the children of kings, colonial civil servants, and the *nouveau riche* of the society. With the imperial powers' wholesale involvement in the educational nurturing of Africans began the gradual introduction of technology into the school system as it evolved in the various metropolitan countries over time. However, at the initial stages, Mazonde (1995) noted that the educational emphasis was on liberal arts as there was not much of instruction in the technical, vocational, and professional fields. Instructions were stepped down directly through a class-style sitting of face-to-face arrangements as instructional technological aids were a rarity.

Research Questions

Based on the gradual evolution of instructional technology approaches into the African educational system, the research questions that guided this study are:

- What has been the state of instructional technology in Africa during the pre-colonial and colonial periods?
- What is the level of access, utilization and quality of instructional technology in post-colonial Africa?

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

The purpose of this study was to review the state of access, utilization, and quality of instructional technology during the pre-colonial, colonial, post-colonial periods in Africa. With the way the rest of the world is adapting to changes in information and communication technologies in pedagogy, Africa's growth in ICTs appears to be sluggish. This article highlights some of these inadequacies with a view to putting them before educational policy makers on the continent. Advancement in educational offerings in this new information age is viewed through the lenses of the progress attained in forging ICTs strategies in instructional technology.

Instructional technology applications in educational settings evolved to aid learners realize learning outcomes through the channels of multi-media, CD ROM, projectors, as well as the Internet. In precolonial and colonial periods in Africa, these modern innovations that aided instructional technology in the classroom were rare in the same way that literature on them are not readily available. In contrast however, the post-colonial era became the boom time for instructional technology solutions in the classroom and many African countries have embraced the synergies amid some hiccups (Okah, 2010). Due to its phenomenal impact on students' learning, many of the countries on the continent have enacted IT policies to guide implementers of this strategy that has thrown up many vistas of learning. As the literature would show on access, utilization, and quality of instructional technology in mainly post-colonial Africa, amid the glitches being experienced by many countries in the region, there is no let off in creating a favorable environment for this strategy to thrive.

Access to Instructional Technology

There is dearth of literature on any form of instructional technology as contemplated in the definitions by Saettler and Simons (as cited in Gentry, 2011) during the pre-colonial and colonial epochs in Africa. However, technological approaches to instruction were being gradually deployed in the immediate post-colonial period owing to the massive enrollment witnessed across all schools in the provision of education in the various African countries. These forms of technological strategy of instruction in African education began in the wake of the measured introduction of distance learning through television and radio broadcasts as means of educating the mass of the population (Mazonde, 1995). In many African countries, open universities have emerged as a potent way of learning through technological aids in the modern era. Technology has, understandably, remained a boon to education and it has changed the face of learning in various societies across the world, including Africa. Clearly, the evolution of multi-media channels, CD ROM, projectors and the like in classroom instruction have advanced the cause of learning in later epochs in Africa (Okah, 2010).

How does technology aid educational pursuit? Simply put, technological synergy in the educational arena is euphemism for e-learning or online learning as well as the use of other electronic aids to step down learning. Okah (2009) defined e-learning as the online delivery of information. In another paper, Okah (2010) saw the concept as integrating learning with technology. This definition subsumes the use of all electronic aids for learning purposes. For Landon and Landon (2010), e-learning is synonymous with instruction distributed through purely digital technologies such as CD ROM, the internet and private networks. In their own perspective, Hagg, Cumming, and Dawkins (2000) saw the concept of tele-education in various dimensions, among them, e-education, distant learning, distributed learning, and online learning, which are all delivered through various channels of Information Technology (IT) such as chatrooms, videoconferencing, e-mails, and the internet. It is a form of self-directed learning that has assumed an important place in education, which affords students greater autonomy and leaner control.

Technology has undoubtedly revolutionized learning, in the same way it has transformed all aspects of human endeavor in modern times, and Africa has not been left behind in the scheme of things especially in the post-colonial era. Significantly, technological change and generational change happen to be two sides of the same coin as they move together side by side in a natural progression (Kohut, Taylor, Keeter, Parker, Morin, & Cohn, 2010).

One of the strategies that facilitates active learning in educational institutions in this age is text messaging, due essentially to its instantaneous effect. Innovative mobile learning has assumed a very significant portion of educational offerings in Africa, and mobile applications (e.g., Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS), Short Message Service (SMS), which is also euphemism for text messaging, internet-based tools, mobile phones, and the others) have become avenues to promote learning (Gurocak, 2016). The mobile phone's portability, coupled with its wide reach to populations far and near, has increased its attractiveness in educational settings; and faculty across African schools have taken advantage of its offerings.

Over the years, the emergence of mobile wireless technologies has been a source of enthusiasm among professionals in industry and, especially, faculty in higher education institutions because of its potential in shifting the classroom learning environment from the conventional settings to mobile learning (Kims, Mims, & Holmes, 2006). The advantage of wireless technology over the erstwhile wired technology is huge given its limitless freedom to operate from anywhere regardless of time and location and this is where text messaging through mobile phones remains one of the attractions in the mobile learning technologies of this era.

Kims et al. (2006) made a clear distinction between mobile or wireless technologies and mobile wireless technologies. Specifically, Kims et al. (2006) defined mobile wireless technologies as:

> Any wireless technology that uses radio frequency spectrum in any band to facilitate transmission of text data, voice, video, or multimedia services to mobile devices with freedom of time and location limitation. (p. 79)

This is where the mobile phone electronic device perfectly fits into the freedom of being located anywhere, anytime into the context of using it for instructional purposes for students. Many Educational institutions in Nigeria, for instance, have adopted this technological approach towards instructions in various schools across the nation (Okah, 2009).

Elsewhere in the Southern African nation of Zimbabwe, the country is still grappling with acquiring basic utilities such as telecommunication infrastructure, hardware, software and networks and it is only when these are easily available that consideration could be extended to serious educational and training issues like pre-service teacher education and integration of technology instruction (Chitiyo & Harmon, 2009). The paper noted that there was the urgent need for African countries to develop the use of ICTs in instruction in order to revitalize African universities to meet the crucial needs of the population in the 21st century. Chitiyo and Harmon (2009) noted that the political instability in Zimbabwe in the last ten years has not only seriously incumbered the growth of technology instruction but has culminated in the backward slide of ICTs capabilities in the country. It was the contention of the paper that the situation in Zimbabwe was a

true reflection of what has been happening in other African countries as it relates to technology integration into instruction. In the East African country of Tanzania, there are a legion of factors militating efforts towards institutionalizing instructional technology in order to liberalize access to the majority of people.

According to Hennessy, Onguko, Namalefe, and Naseem (2010), some of these constraints include inadequacy of electricity supply which culminates in incessant power outages, poor technology infrastructure, large classes and overcrowded computer labs, low bandwidth, high costs of (mainly satellite) internet connectivity (especially for rural schools located outside the national telecommunications network and electricity grid), software licenses and equipment maintenance, insufficient and inappropriate software. Added to these hiccups, the authors stated that there was also lack of qualified teachers to birth a seamless integration of instructional technology. They called for a proactive government policy that would drive ICTs integration policies in the country's educational system.

Utilization of Instructional Technology

The West African country of Nigeria, which has a blossoming Internet connectivity reach in both rural and urban locations has a national information and communication technologies' (ICTs) policy that is geared towards the education of the mass of the people. Since one of the fundamental features of the Nigerian IT policy is to leverage the huge potentials of ICTs to enhance education, it also has one of its general objectives of fostering pedagogical innovation in the area of e-learning (Vooslo, 2012). The Nigerian IT policy was approved more than two decades ago, and it became fully operational almost immediately. As of today, virtually all universities (both public and private) and other allied institutions have Internet connectivity that navigate their operations using the processes of the new information age. Other levels of educational training are leveraging the potential of instructional technology in advancing the cause of learning.

In higher educational institutions across Nigeria, a study by Allen and Seaman (2013) stated that as of 2012, more than 6.7 million students participated in at least an online course in pursuit of their various educational degrees. This represents the growing number of students signing up to the technological platform of learning which is fast taking roots in the country. The frequent labor disputes over wages and provision of other amenities between the members of the academic community and the Nigerian government, which owns most of the universities, have increased the attractiveness of online learning. When such disputes result in closure of classes, people resort to online course offerings to satisfy their educational diet.

In another West African country of Ghana, where the ICTs revolution has since taken roots in the educational institutions, a study conducted by Boabeng-Andoh (2012) noted that there is a positive correlation between the use of ICTs and the teachers' competence. The study noted further that both traditional and adult learners appreciate the integration of ICTs into their study. Computer technologies remain the most essential information and communication technology tools being deployed in the world today, and with increased pressure on educational

institutions in Nigeria to do more with less resources, ICTs has come to the fore as the veritable instrument to realize the goals of education for many more people (Nwachukwu, Eke, Uzorka, Ekpenyong, & Nte, 2009).

In a policy brief on the instructional technology situation in South Africa, Mdlongwa (2012) contended that the resort to ICT in educational institutions to improve learning could assist in overcoming some of the difficulties of improving the effectiveness and productivity of both learning and teaching in the country's schools, and in the process, reduce the digital divide. The paper noted that ICTs utilization in South Africa was not at the desired point since out of a population of 48 million as at 2002, only about three million had internet access. However, since the introduction of computers to South African schools beginning with private, and then public, in the 1980s, the growth of its widespread use has been very sluggish owing to paucity of funds and lack of prioritization among competing demands.

Quality of Instructional Technology Used

In their appraisal of this strategy, Iloanusi and Osuagwu (2009) contended that ICTs-enhanced instruction tended to stimulate critical reasoning and provided a much wider variety of means for accomplishing educational goals. Nwachukwu et al. (2009) also stressed that while there might not be any iota of illusion that instructional technology would address all the challenges of education, but there is no denying the fact that technology has intruded into every facet of life in today's world. The use of internet-enabled strategies to step down instruction, has, therefore, become widespread among educational institutions in most African countries, ostensibly, for ease of learning in the post-colonial era. It is the contention of Nwachukwu et al. (2009) that ICT boosts value to the methods of learning and to the organization and management of learning institutions. The paper noted that technologies are a driving force behind much of the development and innovation in both developed and developing countries, and this would explain why African countries keyed into the strategies in the post-independence era.

In Nigeria, Yusuf (2005) stressed that ICT has contributed to the quality and quantity of teaching, learning, and research in conventional and distance educational institutions in the country. This is due to its dynamic, interactive, and appealing content; and it also provides real prospects for individualized instruction. However, despite these overwhelming advantages, the quality and spread of ICTs is at a low ebb in Africa. Yusuf contended that with a total contribution to world population standing at 12 per cent, the continent has just about two per cent presence in ICTs use in its operations. The reasons accounting for this appalling situation could be attributed to low Internet connectivity, inadequate access to ICTs infrastructure and low involvement to software development. This overall poor quality has undoubtedly affected the rapid integration of instructional technology strategies in all facets of educational offerings. Against this background, the Nigerian ICTs policy has as one of its major themes the integration of IT into the mainstream of education and training.

In the East African country of Kenya, there are complaints against the quality of instructional learning facilities. Ndirangu and Udoto (2011) noted that the quality of the library,

online resources, and lecture facilities provided by Kenyan public universities have failed to meet the test of quality. The paper added that institutions were incapable of supporting the desired educational programs effectually in order to facilitate the development of learning environments that support students and teachers in realizing their objectives. In a policy brief on the situation in South Africa, Mdlongwa (2012) had made similar critique about disjointed facilities which has affected the smooth utilization of ICTs solutions on a wider scale.

Methodology

This article sprang from a survey of literature on the subject of instructional technology in pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial epochs in Africa and the need for its uptake in current educational offerings across the continent. Relying on a variety of literature on the subject, the intent is to examine the state of access, utilization and quality of instructional technology during the pre-colonial, colonial post-colonial periods in Africa. The article explored the extent of instructional technology integration into the educational systems in selected African countries under the various epochs. The countries include Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Ghana, and Tanzania. This was a convenient sampling to include countries from different regions of Africa. As would be expected, the development of technology infrastructure and the accompanying components were the major challenges for the countries at the very early stages of their nation-building. This proved a major concern for many others that hindered appreciable progress.

Databases such as Google Scholar, ERIC, and JSTOR were the sources of data where all the relevant articles were selected. The procedure was to use keywords such as instructional technology, educational technology, information communication technology, distance learning, e-learning in Africa using the resources of the Ohio University Alden Library to generate the articles. Table 1 below shows related articles on the various search engines from where the reviewed articles emanated.

Table 1: Database and Keyword Search

Database	Keyword	Documents
Google Scholar	Inst. technology in Africa	159, 000
	Information comm, technology	3, 400
	e-learning in Africa	71, 000
	Distance learning in Africa	2, 590, 000

ERIC	Inst. technology in Africa	33, 335
	Information comm, technology	245
	e-learning in Africa	106
	Distance learning in Africa	18, 702
JSTOR	Inst. technology in Africa	6, 144
	Information comm, technology	54, 457
	e-learning in Africa	1, 050
	Distance learning in Africa	45, 592

Once the articles were assembled from the aforementioned data bases, I used the conceptual framework of access, utilization and quality of instructional technology in order to analyze the reality of selected African countries during the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial periods.

Findings, Discussion, and Analysis

To effectively deal with the research questions for this paper, this section has been broken into the precolonial and colonial epochs. Thereafter, the findings and analysis would turn its searchlight on the post-colonial period when this revolutionary instructional technology synergies were birthed in Africa. Under the postcolonial period, we examine closely the topical issues of access, utilization, and quality of instructional technology strategies that are on offer in the selected African countries.

Precolonial and Colonial Epochs

From the definitions of technology offered by Saettler and Simon (as cited in Gentry, 2011) earlier in this paper, it is worth noting that the customary education offered in pre-colonial African societies was devoid of any scientific body of laws. Although it is within the realm of knowledge passed on from one generation to the other, there was no extant body of scientific laws guiding it. To that extent and related to Mazonde's (1995) description of the type of education offered in that era, instructional technology synergies as we know them today, were practically non-existent and therefore, inapplicable. Colonization by European imperialists supplanted the pre-colonial era as European missionaries and their business collaborators established their foothold across Africa.

As Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1981) contended in his treatise, colonial education came with the idea of Europeanization of Africans to fit into the colonial civil service. Also, Mazonde (1995) noted that the educational emphasis was on liberal arts since there was not much of instruction in the technical, vocational, and professional fields. Suffices to say that instructions were stepped down directly through a class-style sitting of face-to-face arrangements as there was little semblance of instructional technological aids. So, for most of Africa, instructional technology

was not a feature of their educational offerings during the colonial period with the exception of a few who remained under colonization until the 1980s. Related to the first research question therefore, it can be argued that there was little or nothing of instructional technology in the educational systems of both pre-colonial and colonial periods in Africa. Since we cannot establish the use of instructional technology applications in both precolonial and colonial eras, it would be difficult to contemplate its access, utilization, as well as quality.

According to Mazonde (1995), in the pre-colonial era, customary education was mostly stepped down through one-on-one family circle or via the instrument of peer groups as passed on from one generation to the other. The family setting was the strongest citadel of learning, and any aberrant behavior was dealt with at that level before it rears its ugly head in the public sphere. Effectively, what we know as instructional technological aids in the modern era were absolutely non-existent. The colonial setting was a little different even though it was also devoid of any tangible technological aids. This is because, in the Western metropolitan countries, which were lording it over the colonies at the time, what is today known as instructional technology education were equally absent. Therefore, you cannot give what you do not have, or you give little of what you have! However, to meet the requirements of the colonial civil service as stressed by Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1981) colonial education was organized in class-style setting of students being grouped together with the teacher at the helm leading the instruction for them. It was an improvement over the pre-colonial variant as students progressed to the next level of education based on their mastering of content taught in their class.

Post-colonial Period

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 1984), computer technologies and other aspects of digital culture have changed the ways people live, work, play, and learn, and has impacted the construction and distribution of knowledge and power around the world (1984). The United Nations agency believes that science and technology are crucial components of development and growth, and many of the problems of underdevelopment had been attributed to weak indigenous science and technology capacities, inappropriate technological choices, poor technological development policies, and dependency-producing transfers of technology (UNESCO, 1984). To redress this, since 1968, UNESCO aggressively advocated for developing countries (a large chunk of which are in Africa) to pursue science and technology policies that would aid sustainable development (UNESCO, 1984). Since most of the countries in Africa had become self-governing by this time, it was the spur of the moment that crystallized into the various technology-enhanced educational policies by the various countries on the continent in order to put technology at the center of development.

Another United Nations agency at the forefront of campaign for learning globally is the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and its work has been very remarkable in the post-colonial period in Africa. Based on its entrenched policy of "Every child has the right to learn", UNICEF advocates strongly for the right to education for the world's children (UNICEF, 2019). Even though UNICEF (2019) statistics show that over one billion children go to class daily

around the globe, yet another 617 million children and adolescents around the world are unable to reach minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics – even as two thirds of them are in school. In fact, the statistics estimate that one in five children are entirely out of school globally. Unfortunately, a sizeable number of these are in crisis-torn African countries and other parts of the world ravaged by poverty, the main factors fueling the unfortunate development. Over the years, in addition to working in health-related fields on the continent, UNICEF tacitly promotes education under three planks. These include, access, where it advocates gender equity, learning and skills, quality learning outcomes and skills development where innovative instructional technology aids are taught; and finally, emergency and fragile contexts, where it campaigns for improved learning and protection during emergencies.

As postulated by Kohut et al. (2010), technological change is synonymous with generational change as humanity undergoes transformation over time. Therefore, the post-colonial period started in the age of fast-paced technological innovations, which was complemented by the emergence of internet connectivity. These advances in technology and information dissemination synergies across the globe hastened the introduction of instructional technology solutions in Africa's educational offerings. This development upped the ante for African countries, which prompted some to begin the enactment of IT policies as studies such as Vooslo (2012), Yusuf (2005), and Okah (2010) showed on Nigeria, Mdlongwa (2012) on South Africa, as well as Chitiyo and Harmon (2009) on Zimbabwe. As these developments unfolded all over Africa in the years following independence, we will briefly look at access, utilization, and the quality of the offerings in the selected countries. With the gradual implementation of these policies in the various countries, instructional technology aids were being launched at all levels of educational offerings.

Access to Instructional Technology

In terms of access, as the post-colonial advances in the use of instructional technology in educational institutions continue to expand, Nigeria has recorded a surge in recent years (Allen & Seaman, 2013). Studies by Allen and Seaman (2013) showed that as of 2012, more than 6.7 million students participated in at least an online course in pursuit of their various educational degrees. Also, in Ghana, a study by Boabeng-Andoh (2012) noted that there was a positive correlation between the use of ICTs and the teachers' competence as the bug of instructional technology spreads in educational institutions in the country. Also, as reported by Mdlongwa's (2012) policy brief on South Africa, there is also a growing awareness on the utilization of ICTs solutions in educational offerings.

In the East African country of Kenya, the government's revolutionary development blueprint christened "Vision 2030" formulated the policy of one laptop per child in order to avail the children the opportunity of using computer for learning to quicken their migration into the digital age (Waga, Makori, & Rabah 2014). Besides entrenching the digital culture from the elementary school as proposed by the Vision 2030 laptop agenda, the study focused on the efforts to build a centralized digital content repository containing e-learning resources, research

applications and tools with a collaborative on-line modern digital library accessible with a controlled right based accessibility in the country. The Kenyan approach to digitization was engineered to assist students on the e-learning synergies, which would address the dwindling instructor-student ratios while universities and research institutes through collaborative ventures would participate alongside their international colleagues with immediate innovation promoting the local industries. Although the implementation of the one laptop per child policy in Kenya has attracted criticism over cost and other issues, it remains a right step at the right time that would bridge the rural-urban divide given that the world has moved on towards a knowledge economy.

Table 2: Top 10 African Countries for Internet Users and Penetration Rates, Year 2020

Country	Population	Internet Users	Penetration (%Population)
Algeria	43,851,044	25,428,159	58.0
Congo, De. Rep.	89,561,403	16,355,917	18.3
Egypt	102,334,404	49,231,493	48.1
Ethiopia	114,963,588	20,507,255	17.8
Kenya	53,771,296	46,870,422	87.2
Morocco	36,910,560	23,739,581	64.3
Nigeria	206,139,589	126,078,999	61.2
South Africa	59,308,690	32,615,165	55.0
Tanzania	59,734,218	23,142,960	38.7
Uganda	45,741,007	18,502,166	40.4

Source: Internet users statistics for Africa. Retrieved from https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm

Given the fact that access and utilization are both driven by the quality of Internet connectivity in operation in the various countries, it is worthwhile to scrutinize the demographics of the people who have Internet connectivity in the various countries in the table shown below. As Table 2 showed that Nigeria, which had the highest population of Internet users on the continent, but only 61.2 of internet penetration. This would clearly impact negatively on the utilization of technology modulated instruction in the various levels of educational offerings across the country.

Utilization of Instructional Technology

Henessy et al. (2010) and Chitiyo and Harmon (2009) have noted, on Tanzania and Zimbabwe respectively, that the utilization of instructional technology applications is confronted with a lot of challenges. Tanzania is confronted with issues that include inadequacy of electricity supply which culminates in frequent power outages, poor technology infrastructure, large classes and overcrowded computer labs, low bandwidth, and high costs of (mainly satellite) internet connectivity. On its part, Zimbabwe is contending with acquiring basic utilities such as

telecommunication infrastructure, hardware, software and networks in order to bolster instructional technology applications in its educational system. Despite all these hiccups, however, instructional technology synergies are reportedly in use in the countries' educational systems. In Nigeria where appreciable progress appears to have been made integrating instructional technological aids into class offerings, the issue of frequent power outages remains a major obstacle to educators. Even where equipment is available, lack of power to operate them has constituted a major barrier towards seamless class use.

Quality of Instructional Technology Used

While it is indisputable that there is appreciable level of access and utilization across African countries in the use of instructional technology solutions in educational institutions, the quality of what is on offer appear problematic in most of these countries. Studies by Okah (2010) on Nigeria, Chitiyo and Harmon (2009) on Zimbabwe, Ndirangu and Udoto (2011) on Kenya, as well as Hennessy et al. (2010) on Tanzania aptly capture the problems being experienced in these countries, which are summed up in problematic technology infrastructure and strong foundational policy initiative. Okah (2010) noted that the problem of paucity of funds to execute technology-related educational programs was at the core of the challenges facing the quality of what is on offer. Undoubtedly, Africa has come a long way to arrive at its present epoch of access and utilization, yet there is a long way ahead to reach the desired level of quality. This is a challenge that must be overcome.

All the other African countries surveyed, except Kenya, have low to medium percentages of internet penetration, and this reflects the conclusions of Henessy et al. (2010), and Chitiyo and Harmon (2009) on Tanzania and Zimbabwe, respectively, all of which cited poor foundational infrastructure as the bane. The studies show a similarity of conclusions on poor infrastructure impacting negatively on access, quality, and utilization.

Recommendations

Recommendation for policy makers: In the new world information order that has birthed the globe's knowledge economy, Africa's educational offerings must embrace all the dynamics of instructional technology synergies to remain competitive and take active part in educational practices. Anything otherwise is suicidal and counterproductive. Studies by Okah (2010) as well as Chitiyo and Harmon (2009) have acknowledged that the digital divide between Africa and the rest of the world is huge. Therefore, the only option left for education policy makers in Africa is to rise to the occasion and ensure that the current wide gap is substantially reduced. The pathway to this reduction is the enactment of favorable and strong policies consciously designed to institutionalize instructional technology strategies at all levels of educational offerings on the continent. Therefore, it is high time that African leaders seize the initiative and rebuild the existing fragile infrastructure through proactive policies.

Recommendation for practitioners: The reality of today's world is that the much-touted technology transfer is a mirage and practitioners must rally and deepen integration of technology in educational offerings. To that extent, African governments must prioritize human resource development by investing in capacity building and training of the personnel in the education sector in order to realize the objectives of raising a new army of competitive graduates that could hold their own among contemporaries from across the world. Enough financial resources should be devoted to building technology infrastructure across the landscape to enable organizations and educational institutions to leverage upon them to firm up their instructional technology synergies. Instructional technology solutions should be made available and taught across all levels of educational institutions beginning with the kindergarten to the tertiary education offerings. The idea of catching them young should not be lost on policy makers in future, and one such laudable initiative to be embraced by other African countries is the one laptop per child policy in Kenya. Given the huge potential of technological synergies, it's a win-win situation to play an active role. The development of scholars have linked technological advancement to the overall development of a nation; therefore, it is sine qua non for the continent to embrace technology in order to make a headway.

Recommendation for future research: This article had been developed before the unprecedented COVID-19 health challenge, which practically paralyzed the entire world. Many countries of the world with the requisite technology infrastructure quickly reverted to remote working for their workforce and learning for their educational institutions across all levels. You could still feel the motion even amid the lockdown that pervaded these countries, but many African countries apparently lagged behind, understandably! Future researchers should examine closely how African countries could synergize post-COVID-19 and tap from technological advances in their educational offerings. It is only a deepening of technology at all levels of educational pursuits that could galvanize efforts towards desirable development.

Conclusion

It is incontrovertible that the advent of technology has reshaped the modern world in so many ways never contemplated. From the definition of technology by Saettler and Simon (as cited in Gentry, 2011), it is obvious that instructional technology was absent from the category of customary educational offerings prevalent in African societies in the precolonial age. However, the colonial era came with some semblance of instructional technology, which was built upon in subsequent years of development. Although the colonists came with their policy of Europeanization of Africans according to Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1981), the gradual introduction of instructional technology in educational offerings began in that era. This was essentially to reflect the technological changes taking place in the metropolitan countries, since ipso facto, the territories were their extensions overseas, they also benefited from the changes.

Significantly, instructional technology blossomed in various African countries in the post-colonial era. The United Nations agencies led the way in advocating for educational technologies into African schools' curriculum. Of particular importance is UNESCO's

conviction that computer technologies and other aspects of digital culture have changed the ways people live, work, play, and learn around the world; and Africa and other developing countries must factor into its offerings to meet the goals of development. This advocacy facilitated policy initiatives that expanded the space for instructional technology for schools in Nigeria (Okah, 2009), the Vision 2030 blueprint in Kenya (Waga, Makori, & Rabah, 2014) that facilitated the distribution of laptops to schoolchildren and several such actions by the other countries on the continent. UNICEF was also a contributory factor to the growing awareness of computerization and instructional technology in several African nations through its collaborative activities with the governments in the post-colonial era.

It is worthy to note that the expansions taking place in the various countries were not without hitches. Several studies, including Okah (2010) on Nigeria, Chitiyo and Harmon (2009) on Zimbabwe, Ndirangu and Udoto (2011) on Kenya, as well as Hennessy et al. (2010) on Tanzania have highlighted problems associated with quality, access, and utilization in the various countries. A major hiccup common to all these countries is the issue of poor communication infrastructure, which would require a deft political will to resolve in order to put the continent on the proper path to integrating instructional technology in its educational offerings. The lackluster development of instructional technology on the continent is aptly surmised by the statistics from Internet World, which showed that Nigeria, which had the largest population of Internet users in Africa, was ranked 129th on the world's fastest broadband speed. In modern times, fast Internet drives pedagogical instructions in the wake of online classes and other hybrid variants of educational pursuits. What this means in effect is that, although the countries have since introduced one form of instructional technology or the other, a lot still remains to be done.

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The Opportunities and Challenges of Online Instruction in Transnational Education and Learning[1]

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Abstract
This study reports on the opportunities and challenges of online instruction in transnational education and learning. The purpose of the study was to reconsider the opportunities the online teaching/learning mode provides learners and instructors and identify and analyze challenges faced by both learners and instructors using the online option in higher education. The article argued that the quest to make more strategic gains from online education programs comes with challenges to both learners and instructors as teaching/learning are likely to suffer in the online instruction mode. Although the online mode provides learners the opportunities for higher education they may otherwise not have and employment for instructors, the article claims that high teaching/learning standards and effectiveness seem to be compromised in online instruction considering that relationships play a key role in optimizing an individual's intelligence (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Marzano et al., 2005; Fonkem, 2012) and consequently the individual's ability to perform teaching and learning tasks.

Keywords: distance education, international education, online learning, transcultural learning, transnational education

Introduction

Online instruction is today an integral part of education and learning across the world. Over the past several years, learning or knowledge creation is changing drastically with the proliferation of online programs as there is an ever-growing desire and demand for increased online education

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opportunities. While some prospective students prefer online or distance learning over the traditional educational environment, often these students are working adults who want online options as they attempt to complete a degree while still working, either full or part-time, and while maintaining a family (Rehfuss, Kirk-Jenkins, & Milliken, 2015). As a distance mode of teaching and/or learning, the online model takes place within nation-states as well as across international and cultural boundaries. Although many universities consider online instruction as an alternative to traditional faced-to-face classroom instruction, students and instructors may not always see the online instructional process in the same light when it comes to the instructional process in online courses. This study identifies and analyzes some of the challenges that students and instructors face in online instruction. The arguments in the study are supported by data collected from students and instructors. In addition to the literature reviewed, e-mail and telephone interviews were conducted with a group of online students and instructors to further explore the challenges of online instruction in a transnational and may be trans-cultural context in this study.

Background

This author's experience with transnational education and learning is longstanding. He grew up in Cameroon, Africa in the 1960s and 1970s. At the time, the country had only one university in Yaounde and so opportunities for higher education were very limited particularly to the people of British Cameroons also known as the people of English-speaking Cameroons. These people did not have much of a chance in the lone University of Yaounde, Cameroon which was, to state the obvious, a French-speaking institution akin to those in France and other French-speaking countries. At the time, many citizens of British Cameroons who wished to earn university-level qualifications had to travel to the United Kingdom, the U.S., Nigeria, Ghana, India, Uganda or Sierra Leone to have access to higher education opportunities. These opportunities were, however, not open to many of the people of British Cameroons because of a number of reasons. Some of these reasons included financial inabilities as well as political handicaps. Many families were not wealthy enough to send their children abroad for university education. In addition, the government of the Republic of Cameroon, for its own reasons and needs, used the passport as a tool to hold back many prospective students who wished to study abroad. In many cases, only a few who had government scholarships were issued passports to travel abroad for educational purposes. In other words, the majority of those citizens who were either financially unable or those who were financially capable, but were not issued passports, and still desired higher education resorted to transnational education in the form of correspondence courses. The brief background narrated so far provides the historical foundation of transnational education in the author's home country and the author's incursion into the world of transnational education. For purposes of the discussion in this article, transnational education refers to:

> [A]ll types of higher education study programmes, or sets of courses of study, or educational services (including those of distance education) in which the learners

> are located in a country different from the one where the awarding institution is based. Such programmes may belong to the educational system of a State different from the State in which it operates, or may operate independently of any national education system. (Council of Europe, 2002, para. 28)

Many of the individuals who did not want to end their educational pursuits because of government policies or because of the inability to travel abroad for higher education, invested in transnational education in the form of correspondence courses provided by educational institutions in Britain. Jean-Francois (2016) considered correspondence education as that type of transnational education whereby "a providing institution from a provider country provides instructions to students in a host country via printed, audio, or visual materials" (p. 8). Some of the best-known providing institutions used by learners in Cameroon until the 1990s led the Rapid Results College (RRC), Wolsey Hall, Oxford University and the London College of Preceptors (LCP). These different institutions provided instruction mainly via printed materials. Those students who invested in correspondence education programs then paid exorbitantly for lectures shipped to them in bulky envelopes. In a few cases, audio materials were also available especially following the availability of the tape recorder technology in the 1970s.

Today, in the first decades of the 21st century and the current ease of online communication, the tradition has shifted greatly from courses by correspondence using bulky printed materials to courses via the Internet on computers and hand phones. However, whether by correspondence or online, the instructor and the student in this model of transnational education remain vastly unknown to each other. Even when we consider the recent technological advances that bridge the physical divide in online instruction by providing two-way video-related opportunities such as Skype, illuminate, and others that help reduce the distance between the instructor and the learner, we can argue that both the instructor and the student remain faceless to a large extent. Most often, they are near strangers to each other and it becomes extremely difficult for each party to get beyond imagining what cultures they may belong to and above all, what expectations of each other may always be.

These unknowns were the experiences of this author recently. He teaches a course, HSL 727 – Applied Research Methods course in the Transnational Master's Degree program at a reputable American University. At a meeting with a technology trainer, it became very clear to the author how far apart the instructor and the student could truly be in a typical Internet-mediated classroom though connected on a computer screen. In his planning with the technician, she made him aware that "*the students were truly somewhere else, not just at unknown locations with different geographical times and cultures, but also and above all, far apart in their mind set about the course and its instructional processes* (Personal communication). It became very clear to this author as instructor how difficult it can be to create and sustain a teaching/learning community with the student(s) in such a faceless transnational and sometimes trans-cultural education setting. In the course of the dialogue with the technology expert, this author thought of the important place of the instructor-student relationship as a major component of effective teaching and student learning. Marzano et al. (2005), Arbaugh (2010), Fonkem (2012), and

Preston (2014) are among those scholars who consider instructor-student relationships as primordial in effective instructional practice. With particular reference to the online instruction mode, Preston (2014) made the strong point that a sense of trust must be established between the instructor and the learner that promotes honest communication through reinforcing participation, collaboration, and knowledge transfer in online instruction. This article emphasizes the learning climate and instructor-learner relationships in its examination of the opportunities and challenges of online instruction in transnational and trans-cultural education and questions the teaching/learning effectiveness in online education in the context of instructor/learner understanding of the perceptions and expectations of each other.

Theoretical Framework

Effective relationship building and maintenance is an essential component of effective teaching and learning. Relationships between instructors and learners as a way of enhancing student learning are important not only for student learning, as noted by Marzano et al. (2005), but also for the instructor from the perspective of the learning climate. "Effective relationship building means discovering and incorporating students' interests into class goals, noticing individual accomplishments and events in students' lives, and interacting with each student as an individual" (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 59). In addition, writing about the importance of relationships in the classroom, Fonkem (2012) emphasized the need to plan with the students in mind as an important component of instructional practice. The reality is that teachers can be as ready as they can be to teach, have the best differentiated lesson plans for varied learning styles, but if they do not meet the respective needs of the students, the students will not learn. In the area of neurobiology, Siegle (1999) in his studies on cognitive functions of adults also emphasized that relationships play a key role in optimizing an individual's intelligence and consequently their ability to be resilient.

Besides, in post-industrialized Western societies and notably in the U.S., instructors need students' feedback to retain their job and to gain promotion too. In the home country, professors were never accountable to students as their promotions depended on a hierarchical relationship in and out of the university, and even with political connections in the ruling regime. In my host society, professor-student relationships are conditioned by the fact that professors exist because there are students to be taught. Students are consequently at the center of everything that happens in the classroom.

When we explore any ideas in class, the policy is *no participant left behind*. And referring to questions, every question is important not only to the student who may have posed the question, but more importantly, every question is a contribution to the knowledge base of the class. Since students who come to the class come from a variety of experiences, backgrounds, and needs, the approach in my classes is that as a class we are made up of unique individuals. As a consequence, I am very aware of the needs of different students and try to accommodate the individual needs in the learning activities and processes. Referring to the place of relationships in

the classroom in student learning, Marzano et al. (2005) have asserted that "the relationship between teacher and student is the starting place for a good classroom experience" (p. 56). Emphasizing the relationship component of the instructional practice, Fonkem (2012) noted that most often because of the need to meet the required curricula expectations, teachers find themselves engrossed in teaching students they do not know because they do not believe in building these relationships but more because they do not have the time to artfully teach and socialize.

Part of this author's learning especially in the U.S. has been that in order to make progress in human relationships, we need to give up seeking to control others. In previous teaching experience in a less democratic setting, he did not realize that the only behavior one can control is one's own; that no one can make people do anything they do not want to do. The desire to control student behaviors was hurtful to students as student behaviors were anchored by fear more than on friendships. Relationships with students in that setting were between an all-knowing powerful professor and little-knowing powerless students. This type of relationship embodies what Freire (2004) termed "banking or domesticating" education in which the educator comes across as an oppressor and the students are the oppressed. According to Freire, the capability of banking education to minimize or annul the student's creative power and to stimulate their credulity serves the interests of the oppressors (educators)…" (p. 73).

This professor-student relationship theme in the narratives stands out in post-industrial American culture within a learner-centered context. In the home country context, the professor was the center of learning. However, the teacher taught, the student had to adapt to his/her teaching style. It did not matter whether an entire class failed. The story was told of a certain Mathematics professor who did not care about his students and might not have had any relationship with them. In fact, the professor had set his/her exams from material that he/she had not even taught and knew that no student would understand the questions. He/she was happy that no student would pass. At the same time, he/she knew that his/her job was not in jeopardy whether anyone passed or not. Besides, the students – the oppressed – are in Freire's (2004) words, regarded as the "pathology of the healthy society" who are "incompetent and lazy" (p. 74).

Although research has revealed that the actual presence of an instructor in the room is unnecessary in fostering critical thinking, deep learning, and engaging communities of interaction (Redpath, 2012), some of the participants in the study leading to this article indicated their frustration with the learning they were getting via online instruction. As Jane, one of the learners, indicated, *"I came into this program without a good understanding of how it works. I need an instructor in the room."* Emphasizing the place of interaction and deep learning in instructional practice, Preston (2014, p. 40) made the pertinent point that a sense of trust must be established that promotes honest communication through reinforcing participation, collaboration, and knowledge transfer. In all, relationships between instructors and learners can be experienced differently in the two worlds of transnational educators and learners. In a corporate race-to-the-top culture higher education institutions compete for students as they struggle to make strategic gains especially considering the climate of acute budget cuts experienced by many institutions.

Research Method

In order to adequately explore the subject of opportunities and challenges of online instruction in Transnational Education and Learning, this study used a combination of data collection approaches to capture the underlying reasons for online instruction in transnational teaching/leaning context. This approach was important for this study because a study involving understanding issues of schooling in cross-national settings or contexts can be complex particularly when the researcher would like to include different perspectives to counterbalance individualistic biases from informants (Brennan, 2005; Malin et al., 2011). The method included asking 10 graduate students at a mid-sized university in the Midwest who were taking courses in Universities abroad on specific University to University arrangements. The assignment was for the 10 students to write essays about their opinions of their transnational education instruction experiences. The students did not receive any concrete questions to answer, except encouragement to write honestly about any experiences they had with transnational education instruction. Prior to contacting the students for this project, they had already taken three other courses from three different professors using the same instructional medium. The students were encouraged to comment about whatever experiences they had as they took one course after another. The 10 essays received were analyzed (to assess how often a certain topic was brought up) and qualitatively (to get a better understanding of the individual experiences of the students). To be sure students would be honest with their answers, the instrument did not ask them to provide any information that might reveal their identity or the identity of the instructors. As such, it was impossible to distinguish among students based on characteristics such as gender, class status or location of the student and instructor in the analysis. Anonymity of participants was therefore totally secured in spite of the researcher's interactions with them.

In addition to gathering data from students involved in degree programs, completely implemented online, a dozen professors teaching transnationally through the Internet were interviewed. In total, 13 different professors were represented. Three main questions were asked and then followed up on the interviewees' answers. The first core question inquired what kind of comments—positive or negative—instructors had received from students about their courses. The second question asked instructors to provide concrete examples of challenges they faced as online instructors in a transnational setting. The third question asked the instructors what kind of support from colleagues or institutions they would find helpful to address these challenges. While the researcher talked to 5 of these instructors in person, eight responded to the questions by email. For reasons of confidentiality, the instructors were listed only by pseudonyms and did not include any information about their courses or institutions. In analyzing the collected data, I proceeded with cross-tabulation to draw inferences in the data as the responses had some connections with each other. The analysis employed a narrative approach to reconcile the different opinions of the respondents and highlight any tensions and challenges considered as opportunities for improvement. In trying to understand the experience of learners and instructors in or with how they engaged in the courses taken online I looked for themes in the stories the told through the essays.

Challenges

Athanase Gahungu (2011) recognized that "being a faculty member is a journey full of challenges and opportunities" (p. 7). In terms of challenges, the issue of power and authority in instructional practice and the relationships with students are evident for transnational and oftentimes trans-cultural instructors. From a programmatic perspective, for instance, Gahungu pointed out how foreign-born and foreign-educated academics bring with them a heavy baggage of not only being born and raised in another culture, but also of a limited familiarity with the US higher education system (p. 7). This perception of the challenges before the instructor comes from the face-to-face classroom situation. It does not even include the challenges that confront instructors in transnational and trans-cultural online cases. The different cultural worlds of instructors and learners for Collins (2008) may make it difficult for transnational instructors to relate to students adequately in a general sense. At the same time, it may also be difficult for students of a different culture to relate to instructional models and contents from another culture. As individual learners and instructors, limited familiarity in terms of cultural systems may constitute a challenge or be a limiting factor for transnational/trans-cultural educators and learners alike. In this regard, transnational/trans-cultural instructors will need to work hard and fast to adjust to faceless learners spread across unknown geographical locations and cultural backgrounds.

Some of these cultural differences in teaching and learning have been highlighted in the experiences of immigrant professors in the American college and university classrooms (Hutchinson, 2015). In *Experiences of immigrant professors: challenges, cross-cultural differences, and lessons for success,* the example is provided that many cultures have different education systems and ways of teaching, and students may have a hard time adapting to these foreign concepts and ideas. If the dimension is this great in face-to-face classroom situations, such cultural differences will be all the more extensive in faceless classrooms of the digital model. In this regard, it is evident that the trans-cultural context of transnational education presents its own challenges for both instructors and learners.

Teaching and learning are high communication or interaction events. Arbaugh (2010) recognized that learning is optimal when a high level of interaction and collaboration exists. Fonkem (2012) and Marzano et al. (2005) had, in a similar vein, emphasized the importance of relationships in instructional practice. Communication is at its best when instructor and learner are in the presence of each other considering the non-verbal elements in every communication event. When instructors teach live classes, they can realize that some students are not getting the point just by noticing the look on the learner's face or that some learners are grasping the concepts being communicated by the nod of the head. In online instruction as faceless instructional meetings, it is very difficult for the instructor to notice who is grasping the concepts being communicated and who is not. Even in examples of notetaking, many instructors know of cases of students in face-to-face classrooms who need the instructor up-close to indicate what they may be doing incorrectly. In my experience teaching distance education classes using

compressed video, the instructor may never know the level of accuracy in notetaking. When students do not take notes accurately, the weakness influences students' learning considerably.

Other major challenges at the level of the transnational education context include the unpredictability of computers, electricity supply, unreliability of signals, the pressures of life, lack of direct supervision, and the commitment of students to their assignments, etc. Let us discuss some of these factors consecutively. First, computers as machines, break down periodically. Some students complained that they were unable to work on assignments and/or submit them in time "because their computers had crashed" or failed to function somehow. Whether true or false, the instructor is not in a position to verify such realities. We know the suitability of online education is premised on the assurance that the Internet will be readily available. This situation may be valid in the developed world, but it is not a given in many developing countries where the Internet is not always "readily available." Another problem or challenge with the availability of the Internet is the fact that many learners in the developing world continue to rely on Internet cafés, which are very unreliable because most of them use old computers that function with low capacity. These old computers are known to break down constantly and frustrate users.

Where the computers work efficiently, there could be yet another major challenge. Electricity supply is inconsistent in many parts of the world. Some students complained that they were used to *constant electricity cuts* some of these cuts could *last for an entire week*. Whenever that happened, the cuts hampered the ability of transnational learners to contribute to online class discussions or chats, and also hamper their ability to submit assignments to the instructors. Similarly, this situation also hampers the ability of the instructor to post assignments or follow up on different discussions.

Considering that many online education students are working adults who desire online options as they attempt to complete their education while also working, and while maintaining a family (Rehfuss, Kirk-Jenkins, & Milliken, 2015), we must understand that such students are under so many pressures of life even when they prefer learning online learning. As students (full time or part time), as individuals managing a family, and also as individuals working in a world where the work environment is increasingly very competitive, it is not difficult to envision the pressures under which these students attempt to learn. Functioning under such pressures, the student is unable to give the best of him or herself to the learning content and process.

Power imbalance is one area of challenge in online instruction. Bekele and Menchaca (2008) noted that students in online courses have more power concerning their learning activities, and this imbalance requires the instructor to encourage more collaboration, self-directed discovery, and uncovering meaning. Many of the instructors surveyed for this study indicated that in spite of the efforts they made to encourage student collaboration, they were not always successful in enforcing such student collaborations and felt that they were weakened in this regard especially when they relied on positive student evaluations to retain their contracts.

From this author's perspective, every academic who chooses a teaching career faces many real challenges as he or she is continually evaluated on his/her ability to teach, conduct research, publish, and perform other duties within and around campus. The challenges are more

daunting in distance education where the instructor and the student are virtually unknown to each other. Subscribing to this viewpoint, Ngwainmbi (2006) pointed out how the challenges grow even more difficult for foreign-born faculty. As Ngwainmbi noted, "[T]hough highly qualified, many say they are overworked, underpaid, underappreciated and face discrimination from other American professors, students and staff" (p. 28). Moody (2004) also indicated that the transition for foreign-born instructors, who have to adjust to a different classroom culture, is even more difficult. Unfortunately, it would appear that many transnational/trans-cultural educators have to make this transition without institutional support as many of the institutions may not even know the locations of the transnational learners let alone understand the education systems of student origins.

The result of these different challenges in online learning that some refer to as computer-mediated learning has been that higher education administrators and faculty have tended to minimize online education rating it as inferior to face-to-face offerings (Allen & Seaman, 2009). Others, including Noble (2003) and Angulo (2016) have described online degree programs as *diploma mills* in their reference to institutions or organizations that grant large numbers of educational degrees based on inadequate or inferior education and assessment of the recipients. Some of these critics of online learning argue that if digital education becomes just another fast-food commodity, students and teachers will lose, while higher education becomes further entrenched in corporate big business. Arguing in similar light, Paulson (2016) indicated that the messages of convenience in online education sadly prey on desperate, vulnerable adult learners who are not always informed consumers and who are only looking to improve their lives and their circumstances. According to Paulson (2016), some advertising slogans for these institutions are now promising credit for life experience, seeming to imply that a college education does not really offer anything new or of value and that individuals already know what they need.

Opportunities and Benefits

Whether in the 1960s and 1970s with correspondence courses or in a 21st century environment of exploding online instruction, transnational education presented and continues to present many opportunities not only to many students across the world who may not otherwise have access to higher education, but also to a good many instructors and higher educational institutions. For each of these categories or groups, the opportunities of online instruction are numerous.

Beginning with students in both the developed and developing worlds, online instruction provides an opportunity for many working adults to access higher education while working and living with their families. Husbands and wives who take advantage of online instruction as students do not need to be away from their family and children, and also do not need to be away from their communities. Many researchers including Coltrane (1997); Zimmerman, Haddock, Current & Ziemba, (2003); and Saginak and Saginak (2005) have indicated that husbands and wives are increasingly juggling family responsibilities in order to create a sense of balance in the midst of enormous family responsibilities, trade-offs, and sacrifices. Many adult learners who

already have families have mainly sought to further their education through one form or other of distance education. For them, it is very cost effective on the one hand and on the other hand, online instruction keeps families together in a world in which family members are increasingly trying to find a balance in their lives. In particular, Saginak and Saginak (2005) point out how "fathers are changing more diapers, cooking more meals, and reprioritizing the demands of work, increasingly adding more family responsibilities to their daily activities" (p. 162). In brief, online education gives most people the opportunity to acquire higher education while working. It is cheaper and learners live in their own environment thereby avoiding rents and other expenses as well as the costs and risks of commuting to a campus environment.

For instructors in the online approach, they have the opportunity of securing jobs that would otherwise not be there for them. In an increasingly difficult economic time when many families live from paycheck to paycheck, the possibility of online instruction provides added income to many families. Neil, one instructor in the study, mentioned how he still had to struggle to teach online in spite of the challenges because if [he] did not take the job, his institution would find someone else to do it. In other words, some online instructors are on the job because it is for them an opportunity to survive the hardships posed by an economic crunch in which people are working much harder and for less. Some of the instructors interviewed indicated that they taught for online institutions only to supplement their income and that very few of their students accepted their efforts to connect, engage, and mentor their learning and development. Others considered online students as lacking in critical analysis and synthesis skills and also as lacking any sincere interest in research. Additionally, the instructors in the study considered the writing of online students as poorly developed as most of the students remain distant, disconnected and seemingly uninterested in doing more than the minimum required of them. Although some instructors recognized the fact that a few of the students do fit with the online learning environment and are generally mature, highly motivated and possess advanced skills, the instructors indicated that the students generally preferred to summarize and write as little as possible. This increasingly changing nature of how education is delivered is forcing all colleges and programs to adapt and to reconsider what they offer and how they offer it. Yet another participant in the study stated that he taught an online class only because he knew his institution would give the course to a different instructor if [he] did not teach it. These developments should be a cause for pause; inherent to any assets are also liabilities.

In all, online education provides several opportunities to both instructors and learners. It provides many people the opportunity to acquire higher education while working and living with their families. The option is more cost effective and allows participants to live in their own environment and countries in many cases. Students do not need to leave home or to travel abroad to new cultures and expensive and sometimes risky living conditions.

We have discussed the fact that in a world where an expanding array of working adults and others desire access to higher education programs there is a need for institutions to offer degree programs and courses for such students. However, in a drastically changing classroom within a larger context of higher education becoming further and further entrenched in corporate

big business, we may seek to understand who benefits more from the proliferation of online degree programs: the student, the instructor or the institution?

Paulson's (2016) characterization of the universe of online degree programs is poignant. He indicates that the proliferation of online programs over the past several years have seemed to create an unfortunate race to the bottom, as many programs feel increased pressure from either their institution or external sources, like federal financial aid, to not only make sure that students graduate but that they graduate within defined timeframes. John Paul adds that "the pressure to successfully and timely graduate people, coupled with an expanding competitive variety of online degree options with aggressive marketing campaigns, has seemed to skew expectations about higher education." (p.3). He further argues that

> A current prevailing message seems to be that it does not really matter what degree one obtains or from where they obtain it, only that they complete their degree and in as short of a time as possible. This places an overemphasis on simply obtaining the degree and not the quality of the knowledge or skills that are gained (p. 3).

In this climate, the institutions rather than the students and instructors appear to be the beneficiaries. Although it is true that students have the opportunities for higher education and instructors have employment opportunities through online degree programs, high teaching/learning standards and effectiveness seem to be compromised. In this case, Paulson (2016) may be right in advocating for *a cause for pause* as *inherent to any assets are also liabilities*.

It would appear the proponents of the increase in online programs focus on the skills and abilities of students and instructors involved in these programs. Very much in the tradition of Jordan (1992) and those scholars who consider relationships as important in teaching and learning, including Fonkem (2012) and Marzano et al. (2005), this author argues that it is needless to overemphasize the place of relationships in the deeper examination of the relational dynamics that promote growth. According to Jordan, "complex factors are involved in those relationships which not only protect people from stress but promote positive and creative growth" of individuals (p. 3). On the connection between the intellect and relational development other researchers, including Siegle (1999) already observed that "Interpersonal experience plays a special organizing role in determining the development of brain structure early in life and the ongoing emergence of brain function throughout the life-span" (p. 24). Siegle (1999) emphasized that interpersonal relationships are the central source of experience that influence the brain's development. Neural pathways in the brain are activated by experiential opportunities provided to children through relational engagement, which results in "strengthening existing connections or creating new connections" (p.13). For Siegel (1999), "human connections create neuronal connections" (p. 85). Human connections viewed from the standpoint of online instruction are therefore primordial in ensuring instruction and learning quality. In arguing this point, it is important to note the emphasis higher educational institutions would like to place on the training of instructors to provide them with the strategies, techniques, and tools needed to narrow the gap

between learners and instructors in online teaching and learning. Increasingly, the need for meeting the goals of making online learning more engaging with the online community of learners and creating a highly interactive learning environment is being felt as the years go by.

Conclusion

Online instruction is here to stay not only because of the opportunities it provides students who may otherwise not have the opportunities for higher education, and jobs for instructors, but more importantly, it is a way for academic institutions to make financial profits. This article argued that the quest to make more strategic gains from online programs comes with challenges to both students and instructors as teaching/learning is likely to suffer in this instructional mode. The backdrop to this study was always the question as to how we achieve greater effectiveness in instructional practice in the online mode of instruction when we know that instructor and students' interaction and expectations influence the instructional effectiveness. The study argued in agreement with Paulson (2016) that "the message of online education increasingly communicates to potential students, either blatantly or inadvertently, that they can expect to get an advanced, post-secondary degree in their spare time with little to no disruption to their lives, at a time, place, and in a format that is completely convenient to them and meets their preferences, and all with little to no effort or sacrifice on their part" (p. 3) leaves room for concerns of rigor, academic dishonesty, and students commitment to quality education. It is still uncertain how instructors and students in online transnational education succeed or not considering the difficulties involved in understanding the perceptions and expectations of each other as well as the challenges of adjustment required to meet such expectations both ways. As we witness the proliferation of online degree programs, how higher education institutions involved in online education in general are forced to reconsider what they offer and how they offer it remains to be seen. From an analysis of the data, this author continues to think higher education institutions rather than the students and instructors appear to be the greater beneficiaries of online education from the perspective of their strategic gains. Although it is true that students have the opportunities for higher education and instructors have employment opportunities through online degree programs, high teaching and learning standards and effectiveness seem to be compromised in online learning and teaching considering that relationships play a key role in optimizing an individual's intelligence (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Marzano et al., 2005; Fonkem, 2012) and consequently his or her ability to perform teaching or learning tasks.

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BOOK REVIEW

Review of *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children* by Gloria Ladson-Billings

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Ladson-Billings' *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children* (2009) underlines the integral role of culture in education. Organized into seven chapters, the book exemplifies different critical factors that teachers need to consider in their understanding of culture in the teaching process. The chapters include an introductory quote as a highlight of the sequential text. In this context, the author borrows from empirical and personal insight into the relevance of a subject in the culturally competent teaching environment. Most importantly, the approach involving inclusion of such diversity in the sources of insight influences the text by making it comprehensive enough and relevant to its audience.

The writer focused on the experiences of African Americans in the U.S. education system that is heavily marred by racism. *The Dreamkeepers* allows readers to reflect on the importance of an education system that is all-inclusive for students from different cultural backgrounds. Ladson-Billings has highlighted some significant issues affecting youngsters from minority groups and low-income families during the learning process. The book is credible since the writer based the highlighted theories on classroom observations and interviews to provide a snapshot of eight teachers identified by principals and parents as having strategies that can transform an archetypal classroom to one that offers excellent education to African American children.

The credibility of the author is shown by her achievement in the education sector. She is a prominent educator who has conducted in-depth research on the best practices for teaching. The writer has also explored the educational issues facing African Americans because she is from the community. In addition, the book is also informed by contributions from teachers who have been successful in educating black children. To eliminate the racial bias that instructors could have regarding a particular group of students, the author used information from eight teachers, five of whom were Blacks and the rest Whites. Therefore, the materials that have been covered in the text are associated with reflections of educators who are perceived to be successful in teaching pupils from different backgrounds.

Ladson-Billings has used various writing techniques that ensure that the target audience is informed about the ideal strategies that enhance the successful delivery of educational

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materials to learners from minority groups and underprivileged families. Although the book focused on the learning experiences of African Americans and the distinct approaches that have been utilized to enhance the success of the learning process, the ideas brought forward by the author are crucial in the identification of the ideal classroom setting for such pupils. The teachers who were interviewed when Ladson-Billings was researching the text's materials have provided powerful sentiments about their role, in the creation of the ideal strategy that will improve the ability of students to successfully engage in the learning process. Teachers described African American children as uninterested, at risk, and unmotivated. Furthermore, most educators have the misconception that Black learners are from abusive homes or low-income and violent communities.

However, the interviewees have a different perception of African American children. Some of the phrases they used to describe the youngsters include verbal, bright, God's little flowers, and geniuses. Teachers' perception of children from minority groups is an essential factor that determines the success rate of the learning and teaching process. Ladson-Billings argued that identifying the potential of a student is pivotal to understanding the strategies that should be applied in a classroom setting to enhance the success of the learning process. Furthermore, teachers should not be discriminative in a classroom based on the cultural background of their learners. Instead, it is their duty to fathom the unique abilities of each student and polish their brilliance through the creation of supportive relationships and applications of ideal instructional philosophies.

The Dreamkeepers ascertains that the different needs of African American students should be a priority for teachers. Accessing quality education systems has been problematic for Blacks in a historical context. During the slavery era, educational institutions primarily focused on providing educational materials to the other races but not African American slaves. Only a few Blacks had access to education, particularly those in the Southern States. The Whites were unwilling to provide the slaves with the tools and resources that could empower them politically and socially, and allow them to create strategies of fighting against the oppressive social institutions of the time. Similar experiences have been documented after the abolition of slavery when segregation impeded the quality of education offered to different members of the U.S. Even in the contemporary American society, discrepancies exist between the education provided to African American students and those from other ethnicities. For instance, since many Blacks are afflicted by poverty, they rely on public learning institutions, whereas the high-income Whites usually take their children to private schools, which have more teaching resources.

Regardless of the economic, social, and cultural differences existing amongst students, there are elements that make a teacher successful in creating the ideal learning environment for all students. Observations that are similar to Ladson-Billings' have identified various classroom settings preferred by instructors who have been identified as successful in teaching children from diverse cultures. Some of the classrooms have been described as orderly and traditional because they are teacher-oriented. Child-centered classroom settings are also efficient although they are noisy and chaotic. Nevertheless, all successful teachers have one surmounting characteristic; for instance, they recognize the fact that all learners have unique abilities and that it is their duty to

ensure they have the ideal support mechanisms to enhance students' learning outcomes. Furthermore, successful teachers understand that students have different lifestyles when not in school; therefore, they may not have a social support system to help them realize their potential. Since children have disparate abilities to realize their strengths and capitalize on them, instructors are ethically bound to help them realize their full potential.

Ladson-Billings also highlighted the importance of teachers applying available resources to empower their students. Hence, she described several characteristics unique to successful educators. For instance, instructors who are dedicated to empowering learners from diverse cultural backgrounds sacrifice most of their time for the benefit of the children. The teachers interviewed to generate content for the book emphasized the need to push challenged students to achieve their optimal best. According to the teachers, they have had to spend extra time in the mornings, evenings, and weekends with African American students because, although they have differing abilities, they need to be given extra support to realize their potential. In effect, since the youngsters are provided with an ideal classroom setting, they can critically think about any challenging concepts that they come across during the learning process. Correspondingly, this ability of critical thinking is reflected in the future when they are forced to solve complicated issues affecting their lives or the society.

Ladson-Billings also ventured into the sensitive issue of racism. The interviewees in the text acknowledged the fact that institutional racism has been prevalent in the U.S. education system. Therefore, children should be provided with tools that can help them deal with this reality. Even so, the approaches used by different teachers define how youngsters will adapt to a world that is not always fair. Incompetent instructors are likely to instill into children from minority groups the idea that they are not capable of learning in the same way as other students can. African American children have not been offered ideal motivational incentives that will enhance their ability to be successful in learning. In contrast, successful teachers have been noted for their ability to make Black learners perceive themselves as unique. The students were convinced that they are not bound by the stereotypes that are prevalent within the society, as they were given the appropriate support mechanisms that helped them acknowledge the fact that they are bright, intelligent, and capable of achieving their goals despite the hurdles and milestones they have to overcome to achieve success. Therefore, successful teachers of African American learners used ideal strategies to ensure that minority group students are not prevented from achieving success because of the institutional racism that has plagued the American community for many years.

The interviewees also believed that most teachers failed in their mandate of empowering children from minority groups because they focused on an outdated methodology of education that fails to make a difference on students from disparate sociocultural backgrounds. A community that has been marginalized historically needs to be given ideal resources that will enhance its learning outcomes. However, the underlying perception of instructors and the classroom settings need to be changed to enhance the ability of students to successfully integrate into the learning environment. However, a casual observer may fail to comprehend the importance of these factors; thus, this will result in teachers focusing on the traditional

approaches of instruction. On this note, successful educators ought to apply strategies that will have a positive impact on all students in spite of their cultural backgrounds to ensure that they benefit from the learning process.

Ladson-Billings is primarily concerned about the lack of an educational infrastructure that supports the educational achievement of youngsters from minority groups. Although she focused on the African American community, it is imperative to note that the book is reflective of the entire U.S. education system and its impact on students. Racism is one of the factors that has caused learners not to realize their potential. The historical context and experiences of African Americans have been marked by institutional racism. As a result, the community has had difficulties accessing critical services that could play a pivotal role in empowering the community. Even so, the policies that have been implemented in various ways have denied African Americans the right to access services such as healthcare and education. Subsequently, the wellbeing of the community has faced many challenges. Teachers have the resources and ability to improve the well-being of students; this can be achieved through the provision of high-quality education and enhanced learning environments. Some teachers have been able to go beyond the racism barrier and become successful in identifying the ideal classroom setting strategies that enhance the ability of all students to benefit from the learning process. In addition, the book ensures that instructors have knowledge of what society expects of them so that they can offer a learning environment that is accommodative of all students' needs irrespective of their backgrounds.

Ladson-Billings has highlighted some approaches that teachers can apply to make a difference in their learners. Interviewing some of the teachers who have been recognized as successful instructors of African American children has elicited significant insights on the different strategies that teachers can use when dealing with children from underprivileged backgrounds. Furthermore, encouraging diversity in the classroom is crucial in ensuring that students from different cultural backgrounds can enjoy a conducive learning environment. The book also cautions teachers to desist from judging the learning abilities of children based on the lifestyles they lead outside school.

In essence, the book offers significant insight into the cultural impacts of educational processes on issues such as race. However, it would be more impactful had the author provided further information on the implications of teacher commitment on student retention levels. The argument's direct relationship to subpar motivation for African American students appropriately exemplifies the implications of race on academic success. More attention on race differences and resource availability among minority students could have effectively highlighted the implications of culture on learning. Nonetheless, the interplay between personal perspectives on the different issues and research was an ideal method of presenting the arguments to the audience. Hence, I would highly recommend the book to anyone interested in learning about the role of culture in education.

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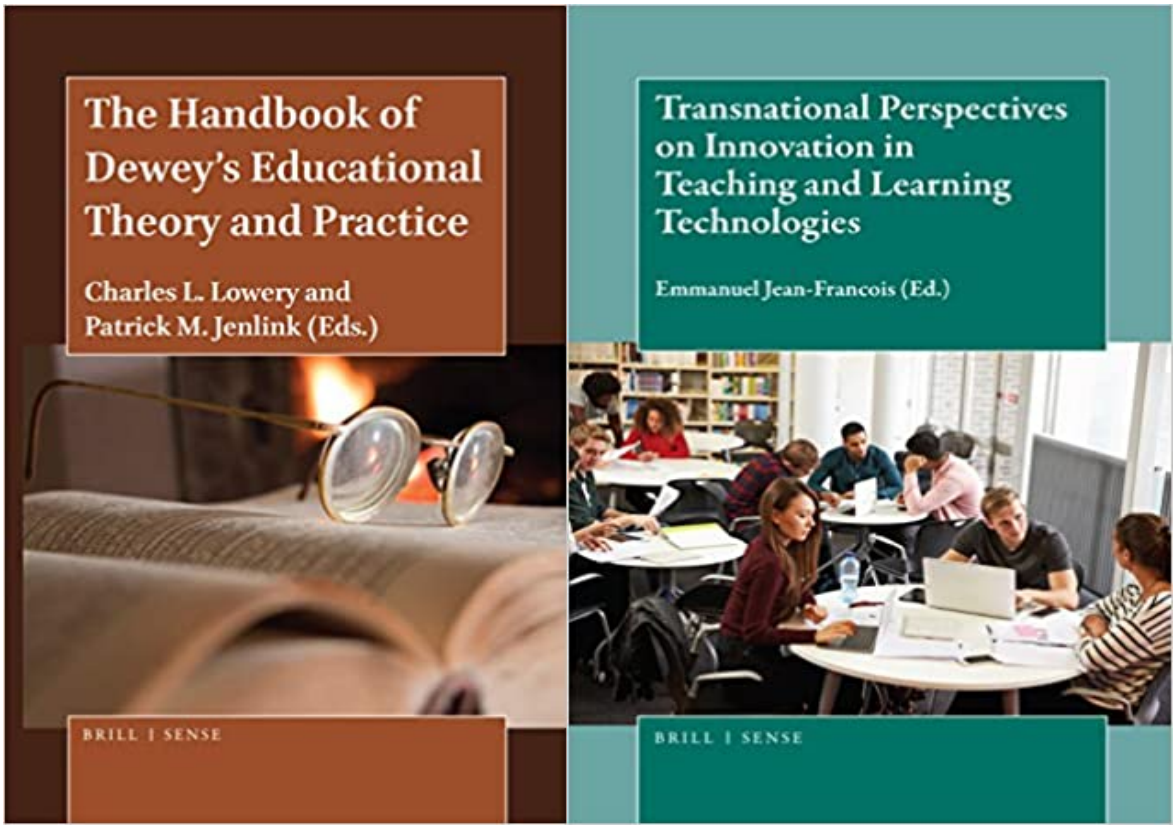

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