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The Impact of Experiential Learning on Students' Academic Achievements a Case of Lukaya Town Council in Kalungu District

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ABSTRACT

This experimental study was undertaken to assess the effectiveness of experiential learning strategies in influencing students learning. This study was undertaken in the form of a naturalistic inquiry. A naturalistic inquiry is one that is conducted in a natural setting of interest to the researcher using natural methods such as observation, interviewing, thinking, reading, and writing. This investigation was conducted with three senior students at Lukaya Seed School with the purpose of assessing the effectiveness of the experiential learning strategy in realizing the set learning outcomes. The researcher used a convenient sampling technique to select all the one hundred and twelve (112) Form 3 History students to participate in the intervention. Data collected from daily journal recording as well as their scores in activities of integration were analyzed using a frequency table with the intention of establishing the mean score and the failure rate of students in history before the intervention was implemented. At the end of the innovation, students were, to a large extent, able to construct an extensive and flexible historical knowledge base. The students were able to take ownership of their learning, and out of question, the researcher observed that senior three history students had become better problem-solvers. They had transformed into aggressive, self-directed learners who collaborated, and they appeared intrinsically motivated. To a reasonable extent, the innovation engendered specific generic skills needed by students from the historic perspective, including reasoning skills, which they evidently applied to solve their own problems. There was also evidence of students becoming effective collaborators, as evidenced by their establishing common ground, resolving discrepancies, and working in groups to negotiate actions they planned to take to arrive at an agreement. Education planners need to put much emphasis on collaborative learning, at least across subjects, to develop students' social skills because they learn a lot from their peers.

Keywords: Experiential learning, Students, Education planners, History.

INTRODUCTION

Experiential learning is a philosophy and methodology in which educators purposefully engage with students in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, and clarify values [1]. Experiential learning is also referred to as learning through action, learning by doing, learning through experience, and learning through discovery and exploration [2, 3]. Learning through experience is not a new concept for the college classroom. Notable educational psychologists such as John Dewey (1859–1952), Carl Rogers (1902–1987), and David Kolb (b. 1939) have laid the groundwork for learning theories that focus on "learning through experience or "learning by doing." Dewey popularized the concept of experiential education, which focuses on problem solving and critical thinking rather than memorization and rote learning. Experiential learning involves several steps that offer students a hands-on, collaborative, and reflective learning experience that helps them "fully learn new skills and knowledge [4]. Experiential learning is learning by doing, which focuses on the idea that the best way to learn things is by actually having experiences, which will stick out in your mind and help you retain information and remember facts. It is therefore a key task for teachers to create opportunities for learners to have experiences based on the things they are learning about. Teachers can help create environments where students can learn and have experiences at the same time. Although learning content is important, learning from the process is at the heart of experiential learning. The researcher embarked on this intervention to assess its effectiveness as far as realizing the set learning outcomes was concerned**.** Since the inception of the lower secondary competence-based curriculum,

numerous seminars, workshops, and educational meetings have regularly been organized in Uganda to deliberate on educational practices that would bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and employability skills. This study was undertaken to test the effectiveness of experiential learning on students' academic achievements in case of Lukaya Town Council in Kalungu District.

Research Objectives

The following objectives were formulated to guide the study:

1. Establish if the experiential learning strategy impacts students' ability to construct an extensive knowledge base;
2. Assess the role of experiential learning strategies in developing students' self-direction and generic skills.
3. Find out if experiential learning was motivating.
4. Investigate the challenges of the experiential learning strategy.

Research Questions

The following research questions were set to guide my study:

1. What is the impact of experiential learning strategies on students' ability to construct an extensive knowledge base?
2. To what extent does the experiential learning strategy develop students' self-direction and generic skills?
3. Does the experiential learning strategy yield any motivation among students?
4. What are the challenges of the experiential learning strategy?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical perspective of experiential learning

There are various theories that were forwarded to explain the experiential method of teaching, but for the purpose of understanding the principles of this strategy, the researcher used the David Kolb Theory [5]. Kolb published this model in 1984, drawing on the influence of other great theorists, including John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and Jean Piaget. The experiential learning theory works in four stages: concrete learning, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. The first two stages of the cycle involve grasping an experience; the second two focus on transforming an experience. Kolb argues that effective learning is seen as the learner going through the cycle and that they can enter the cycle at any time. Concrete learning is when a learner gets a new experience or interprets a past experience in a new way. Reflective observation comes next, where the learner reflects on their experience personally. They use the lens of their experience and understanding to reflect on what this experience means. Abstract conceptualization happens as the learner forms new ideas or adjusts their thinking based on the experience and their reflections about it. Active experimentation is where the learner applies the new ideas to the world around them to see if there are any modifications to be made. This process can happen over a short period of time or over a long span of time. Kolb went on to explain that learners will have their own preferences for how they enter the cycle of experiential learning and that these preferences can be translated into a learning cycle.

Kolb's experiential learning cycle model.

According to NHU [1], the experiential learning cycle rests on the idea that each student possesses a specific type of learning tendency, which manifests in certain stages of experiential learning. For example, some learners will be more dominant in concrete learning and reflective observation, while others will be dominant in abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. The researcher reflected on this principle to gain an in-depth understanding of the strategies.

The four learning styles are:

Diverging. The diverging learning style is full of learners who look at things from a unique perspective. They want to watch instead of do, and they also have a strong capacity to imagine. These learners usually prefer to work in groups, have broad interests in cultures and people, and more. They usually focus on concrete learning and reflective observation, wanting to observe and see the situation before diving in.

Assimilating. This learning style involves learners getting clear information. These learners prefer concepts and abstracts to people, and they explore using analytic models. These learners focus on abstract conceptualization and reflective observation in the experiential learning style.

Converging. Converging learners solve problems. They apply what they've learned to practical issues and prefer technical tasks. They are also known to experiment with new ideas, and their learning focuses on abstract conceptualization and active experimentation.

Accommodating: These learners prefer practicality. They enjoy new challenges and use intuition to help

solve problems. These learners utilize concrete learning and active experimentation when they learn.

Benefits of experiential learning.

According to Kolb [5], experiential learning is "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience." The model describes two ways of grasping knowledge. These are concrete experiences and abstract conceptualizations. The other two modes, reflective observation and active experimentation, help learners transform their experience into knowledge.

In the world around them, including their interactions with people, things, and ideas. This process involves actively engaging with new information, making connections between that information and their existing knowledge, and integrating it into their understanding of the world. Learners also develop their own unique perspectives, interpretations, and ways of thinking based on their individual experiences and prior knowledge. Thus, knowledge construction is a dynamic and ongoing process that is shaped by context, personal beliefs and values, and continued learning and exploration. It is important for educators to recognize the role of learners' experiences in knowledge construction and to create opportunities for students to reflect on and communicate their own perspectives and understanding.

Opportunity to immediately apply knowledge. Experiential learning can allow students to immediately apply the things they are learning to real-world experiences. This helps them retain the information better.

Experiential learning has the potential to help students make deep and lasting connections with course material.

When you set up experiential learning situations for your students, they can apply course concepts and knowledge to real-life problems and situations like those they may encounter in their own professional and personal lives. Through this process, they begin to see patterns in problems and potential solutions. When they encounter similar problems in the future, they can draw on the rich bank of examples and knowledge of patterns among problems and solutions you have helped them to build. All this experience moves them on the path to developing expertise in their fields [6].

Promotion of teamwork. Experiential learning often involves working in a team, so learning in this setting allows students to practice teamwork.

Improved motivation. Students are more motivated and excited about learning in experiential settings. Experiments are exciting and fun for students, and they will be passionate about learning.

Helle et al. [7] gave an explanation that when students have a high degree of motivation for learning, they tend to engage in learning activities because they enjoy and value them, as opposed to being motivated purely by grades. Research on the impact of experiential learning suggests that participating in a class featuring experiential learning increases students' intrinsic motivation to learn over the course of the class [8, 9]. From the perspective of application, Svinicki & McKeachie [10] advised that one way that experiential learning supports motivation is by giving students a degree of autonomy in their learning. Students must take the lead in searching for and applying solutions to problems, and they make many decisions throughout the process that shape their own learning.

Opportunity for reflection. Students using the experiential model are able to spend time reflecting on what they are experiencing and learning. This is valuable, as they are able to better retain information when they can think about what's happening to them. Essentially, without critical reflection, students may "have the experience but miss the meaning [11]. Critical reflection is more than a superficial description of events or an expression of personal feelings that are unrelated to the student's learning.

Real-world practice. Students can greatly benefit from learning that helps them prepare for the real world. Experiential learning is focused on using real-life situations to help students learn, so they are better prepared for their future.

Roles of teacher and students during the lesson

In experiential learning, the instructor guides rather than directs the learning process, where students are naturally interested in learning.

Instructor Roles in Experiential Learning

In experiential learning, the instructor guides rather than directs the learning process, where students are naturally interested in learning. The instructor assumes the role of facilitator and is guided by a number of steps crucial to experiential learning, as noted by Wurdinger & Carlson [12].

Student Roles in Experiential Learning

Qualities of experiential learning are those in which students decide themselves to be personally involved in the learning experience (students are actively participating in their own learning and have a personal role in the direction of learning). Students are not completely left to teach themselves; however, the instructor assumes the role of guide and facilitates the learning process [12].

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study was undertaken in the form of a naturalistic inquiry. A naturalistic inquiry is one that is conducted in a natural setting of interest to the researcher using natural methods such as observation, interviewing, thinking, reading, and writing [13].

Research Area

The study was conducted at Lukaya Seed Secondary School. The school is located in Lukaya Town Council. The school is classified as a mixed day and boarding, O and A level; although it recognizes all religions, it is a government-founded secondary school that started in 2018 as a community school with two classes and an office with 40 desks and 14 students and 10 teachers. Later in 2021, it was commissioned by Hon. Vincent Bamulangaki Ssempijja with 500 students and 37 professionally qualified teachers. The school runs the competence-based curriculum prescribed by the National Curriculum Development Center from Senior One to Three currently and the subject-based curriculum from Four to Six.

Scope of the study

This investigation was conducted by three senior students at Lukaya Seed School with the purpose of assessing the effectiveness of the experiential learning strategy in realizing the set learning outcomes. The focus was on establishing if the experiential learning strategy impacts students' ability to construct an extensive knowledge base, assessing the role of the experiential learning strategy in developing students' self-direction and generic skills, finding out if the strategy was a motivator for students, and investigating the challenges of the experiential learning strategy. The study was undertaken in February 2023 and completed in October of the same year.

Target Population

The target population was all history students from grades one to three, where the competence-based curriculum had been implemented.

Sample size and selection techniques

The researcher used a convenient sampling technique to select all the one hundred (100) Form 3 History students to participate in the intervention. The technique was preferred because in Uganda, history is a compulsory subject from grades one to four, implying that all students in Form 2 were potential participants in the study. The researcher did this to avoid the influence of external factors that could be a threat to the validity of the study.

Types of data collected

The researcher collected two types of data, namely, primary and secondary data.

Secondary Data

The researcher reviewed literature sources that had studied experiential learning strategies to obtain a solid background of theories, principles, and knowledge to explain the characteristics, principles, and benefits of experiential learning methods and how to effectively apply the technique in classroom situations. The researcher also revisited the constructs of curriculum published by the NCDC to get more information on the required approaches to teaching using student-centered methods in secondary schools.

Primary Data

Primary data comprised students' scores generated from the activities of integration given at the end of every theme or topic. The researcher recorded in the journal daily information about students' changing behavioral characteristics, students' level of interest, the development of skills such as positive interdependence, face-to-face promotional interaction, and their gradual development of reflection, individual and group accountability, and the development of social skills such as effective communication, interpersonal and group skills, leadership, decision-making, trust-building, friendship-development, communication, and conflict-management skills that were observed as daily history lesson activities were administered. Students' opinions regarding their experiences in the form of motivation and challenges during intervention, as well as the knowledgeability of instructors to understand and apply the approach to teaching history.

Data collection instruments

The following instruments were used to collect relevant data before, during and before the intervention: activities of integration that required students to solve problems were given after every end of term; the researchers' notebook where daily recordings were made to monitor learners' interest, motivation and interactive mode during the implementation of the innovation; the observation schedule served to help the researcher make meaningful observation of learners' behavior during the implementation of the intervention; two interview schedules were designed and used by the researcher to conduct a one -on-one conferencing with students and History teachers to get detailed information on positive and negative experiences of the implemented strategies.

Data collection procedures

The researcher followed the principles of Haynes [4] to conduct history lessons, which involved a number of steps that offered students a hands-on, collaborative, and reflective learning experience that helped them fully learn new skills and knowledge.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data collected from daily journal recording as well as their scores in activities of integration were analyzed using a frequency table with the intention of establishing the mean score and the failure rate of students in history before the intervention was implemented.

Ethical Considerations

To avoid plagiarism, for every piece of literature used in this project, the researcher had to indicate the source and reference. The researcher sought permission from the head teacher of Kakungulu Memorial Secondary School in Kibuli to conduct this study.

Limitations

This innovation was implemented in only one secondary school, and therefore the results obtained cannot be applied to the factors that influence Form Two History students' achievement in other secondary schools.

DATA PRESENTATION ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

The effectiveness of experiential learning in impacting students' ability to construct an extensive knowledge base;

According to Kolb [5], experiential learning is "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience." The model describes two ways of grasping knowledge. These are concrete experiences and abstract conceptualizations. The other two modes, reflective observation and active experimentation, help learners transform their experience into knowledge. Each of these stages acts as a foundation for the next stage. The researcher investigated this by making a daily observation and rating it as follows:

Table 1: showing the rankings of study groups basing on their ability to construct new knowledge

Students' ability to construct an extensive and knowledge	Excellent	Good	Average	Below
Groups which were able to develop their own perspectives regarding situations.	05	09	08	00
Groups which were able to make accurate interpretations of historical events using their experiences.	08	09	05	00
Groups which able develop their own thinking based on their own individual experiences	05	10	07	00
Total	**18/66**	**28/66**	**20/66**	**00/66**
Percentage	**27%**	**42%**	**30%**	**0%**

Source: Primary Data 2023

When addressing historical events in groups, five (5) groups were rated excellent in developing their own perspectives regarding situations; nine (9) were good, and the remaining eight (8) were average.

Eight (8) were rated as exceptional in making accurate interpretations of historical events using their experiences; nine (9) were good; and the remaining five (5) were average.

Five (5) groups were exceptional in developing their own thinking based on their own individual experiences; ten (10) were good, and the remaining seven (7) were average.

Effectiveness of experiential learning strategies in developing students' generic skills.

Generic skills were defined as those lifelong skills learners will need that apply to broad aspects of life and are not specific to a certain class or subject. In this context, the researcher investigated students' ability to communicate, curiosity, flexibility, purpose, courage, creativity, and critical thinking.

Table 2 shows the percentage distribution of students developing generic skills after engaging in problem-based learning.

Students' level of development of generic skills	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
Communication	9	8	3	2
Curiosity	5	11	4	2
Cooperation	8	13	0	1
Problem solving	5	12	3	2
Creativity	5	10	5	2
Total	**32/110**	**54/110**	**15/110**	**9/110**
Percentage	**29%**	**49%**	**14%**	**8%**

Source: Primary Data 2023

From the table, two above twenty (20) groups were rated as above average in communication, and only two (2) were poor. Another twenty (20) were above average when observed for their curiosity, and only two were less curious. Twenty-one (21) groups investigated and solved their problems with cooperation, and only one group -displayed intolerance. When it came to problem solving, twenty (20) were ranked above average, but the remaining two showed some difficulties. Twenty (20) were creative as far as solving the problems, as seen in the ways they improvised to look for authentic resources to solve their problem; however, the remaining two groups were not that creative, as seen from their reluctance to look for other means to solve their problem and just relying on what the teacher had provided.

The effectiveness of experiential learning in developing students' self-direction

Self-direction begins with understanding one's own thinking and learning. This forces one to plan how to do things in order to learn and acquire appropriate strategies and skills to solve the problem. This state of thinking has been termed metacognition. According to Hmelo-Silver [14], metacognitive strategies are important in developing students' self-directed, lifelong learning skills—the skills that enable autonomous learning. The researcher based this on observing students while they worked in groups to assess their self-direction.

Table 3 shows the percentage distribution of ratings of evidence of self-direction

Level of students' self-direction during learning	Yes	No
Students possess metacognitive Problem-Based Learning awareness of what they do and do not understand.	20	2
Students set learning goals, identifying what they needed to learn more about for the task they are engaged in.	20	2
Students plan their learning and select appropriate learning strategies.	20	2
Students decide on a course (or courses) of action to reach these goals.	21	1
Students were able to monitor and evaluate whether or not their goals have been attained.	20	2
Total	**91/100**	**9/100**
Percentage	**91%**	**9%**

Source: Primary Data 2023

From the evidence in Table 3, twenty (20) groups were aware of what they do and do not understand about their problems, but the remaining two (2) were not. Regarding the setting of learning goals and identifying what is needed to learn more about for the task they are engaged in, twenty (20) groups were conversant with it, but the remaining two (2) were not. About group members planning for their learning and selecting appropriate learning strategies and resources, twenty (20) were aware, and the remaining two (2) were not. Regarding group members deciding on a course of action to reach these goals, twenty-one (21) were aware, and the remaining one (1) was not. About group members being able to monitor and evaluate whether or not their goals have been attained, twenty (20) fulfilled this, and the remaining two (2) did not.

The effectiveness of the experiential learning approach in enhancing students' intrinsic motivation

Helle et al. [7] gave an explanation that when students have a high degree of motivation for learning, they tend to engage in learning activities because they enjoy and value them, as opposed to being motivated purely by grades. Research on the impact of experiential learning suggests that

participating in a class featuring experiential learning increases students' intrinsic motivation to learn over the course of the class.

Table 4 shows the evidence of students' level of motivation to learn.

Students' level of intrinsic motivation	Frequency	Percentage
High	7	35%
Moderate	11	55%
Low	2	10%
Total	**20**	**100%**

Source: Primary Data 2023

The level of intrinsic motivation of students in seven (7) groups was high; eleven (11) groups were moderate; however, two (2) groups were low.

The level of senior three achievements of students after the implementation of the experiential learning strategy

The researcher tested students' historical achievement using integration activities that require students to work in their assigned groups to establish their level of achievement. The results have been presented and analyzed in the table below.

Table 5: Interpretation of Form Two students' history results before the innovation was implemented

Students' assessment scores after the innovation	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	2	10
Coherent	6	30
Accurate	12	50
Relevant	2	10
Total	**22**	**100%**

Source: Primary Data 2023

Findings from the foregoing table show that out of the twenty groups of students that participated in this innovation, two (2) were ranked excellent in performance and therefore displayed an exceptional response, unsolicited by the instructions. Six (6) were coherent in performance because they presented ideas that were connected to each other smoothly, logically, in choice of words, and in a way that gave meaning to the issue. Half of the groups, twelve (12), displayed accuracy when it came to the presentation of ideas that carefully conformed to the facts and truth known about the issue. And the remaining two (2) groups were ranked as relevant in performance since they presented ideas that were connected, correct, and suitable for the issue at hand.

Challenges to using the experiential learning strategy to carry out instruction in history

The researcher interviewed students and gathered their opinions regarding the problems they were experiencing during experiential learning, as follows:

Table 6: showing the percentage distribution of student challenges to problem-based learning

Students' ability to construct an extensive and knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
Some students failed to participate for reasons	14	70
There were not enough resources for students to carry out research on problems.	22	100
Groups performed on average because of lack of enough resources and time to conduct research	19	95
Inadequate time to look for relevant information	22	100
Some groups were often found diverting away from the problem in focus	6	30
The researcher at times ran dry of how to guide learners since the innovation was new.	22	100
Total	**22**	**100%**

Source: Primary Data 2023

Fourteen (14) of the study groups complained that some of their group members failed to participate for various reasons; all the study groups (22) complained of a lack of enough resources for students to carry out research on problems; nineteen (19) of the groups claimed their average because of a lack of enough resources and time to conduct research. The twenty-two (22) study groups, however, highlighted insufficient time for them to perform and accomplish group tasks. The researcher, however, noted six (6) groups who often diverted away from their assigned tasks, and all twenty-two (22) study groups opined that the teacher did not provide sufficient guidelines due to the innovation being new to the researcher.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The effectiveness of experiential learning in impacting students' ability to construct an extensive knowledge base.

According to Kolb [5], experiential learning is "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience." The model describes two ways of grasping knowledge. These are concrete experiences and abstract conceptualizations. The other two modes, reflective observation and active experimentation, help learners transform their experience into knowledge. Each of these stages acts as a foundation for the next stage. During experiential-based learning, the majority of students managed to generate and construct new knowledge because they were able to relate it to what they already knew [15, 16].

Effectiveness of experiential learning strategies in developing students' generic skills.

Generic skills were defined as those lifelong skills learners will need that apply to broad aspects of life and are not specific to a certain class or subject. In this context, the researcher investigated students' ability to communicate, curiosity, flexibility, purpose, courage, creativity, and critical thinking. Students in their study groups were able to communicate effectively and were curious to engage in group tasks assigned to them with creativity as problem solvers and collaborators. This proved the effectiveness of experiential-based learning in developing learners twenty-first century skills that are transferable to a variety of fields that they will encounter as lifelong learners. This also highlights a strong relationship between experiential learning and problem-solving methods.

The effectiveness of experiential learning in developing students' self-direction

Self-direction begins with understanding one's own thinking and learning. This forces one to plan how to do things in order to learn and acquire appropriate strategies and skills to solve the problem. This state of thinking has been termed metacognition. According to Hmelo-Silver [14], metacognitive strategies are important in developing students' self-directed, lifelong learning skills—the skills that enable autonomous learning. The researcher based this on observing students while they worked in groups to assess their self-direction.

A reasonable majority of students in their study groups had developed metacognition skills for working in groups to accomplish a task. This skill automatically yields high levels of autonomous and self-directed learning, as corroborated by Zimmerman [17]. The experiential learning strategy was effective here because the teacher had emphasized this to the students during the lessons. For the two groups that have persistently ranked poor, it was attributed to the lack of seriousness of group members.

The effectiveness of the experiential learning approach in enhancing students' intrinsic motivation

When students have a high degree of motivation for learning, they tend to engage in learning activities because they enjoy and value them, as opposed to being motivated purely by grades [7]. Research on the impact of experiential learning suggests that participating in a class featuring experiential learning increases students' intrinsic motivation to learn over the course of the class. Evidence here is that the majority of students are moderately motivated to learn, which could be attributed to individual students' learning characteristics and personalities, especially when it comes to group learning techniques.

The level of senior three achievements of students after the implementation of the experiential learning strategy

The majority of the groups had particularly good scores in their integration activities, except for two. This could be attributed to their inability to work together in a group to share.

Challenges to using the experiential learning strategy to carry out instruction in history

What students shared explains the findings, which range from individual attributes of learners such as the inability to work together in a group to share ideas to slow learners. It should also be noted that the intervention was implemented on short notice during school practice; there was no time to acquire and provide adequate learning aids to problem solvers. This resulted in constraining students' creativity.

CONCLUSION

At the end of the innovation, students were, to a large extent, able to construct an extensive and flexible historical knowledge base. The students were able to take ownership of their learning, and out of question, the researcher observed that senior two history students had become better problem-solvers. They had transformed into aggressive, self-directed learners who collaborated, and they appeared intrinsically motivated. To a reasonable extent, the innovation engendered specific generic skills needed by students from the historic perspective, including reasoning skills, which they evidently applied to solve their own problems. There was also evidence of students becoming effective collaborators, as evidenced by their establishing common ground, resolving discrepancies, and working in groups to negotiate actions they planned to take to arrive at an agreement. The majority of study groups, however, performed on average in activities of integration because individual members' possessed shallow historical facts and knowledge needed to achieve high scores. Regarding the challenges encountered, there was a problem of some individual group members who were reluctant to participate in group tasks for reasons ranging from immaturity, unfamiliarity with tasks, lack of prerequisite knowledge, and teacher questioning student ideas in a constructive manner. In some instances, the researcher realized that an attempt to reinforce new concepts ended up disrupting group activities and at times asked topical questions to a group or the class, focusing their attention on a specific aspect of the problem. The researcher realized that the method alone was time-consuming and needed to be substituted with other relevant methods.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following were recommended for the study:

1. Determining an appropriate problem for less skilled students requires that the problem designers understand what is developmentally appropriate, interesting to a heterogeneous group of students, and moderately challenging without being overwhelming.
2. The acquisition of learning materials that include authentic sources is a must to overcome a lack of sufficient knowledge.
3. Education planners need to put much emphasis on collaborative learning, at least across subjects, to develop students' social skills because they learn a lot from their peers.
4. Problem solving can be done best alongside other techniques, such as brainstorming.
5. Certain aspects of problem-based learning should be tailored to the developmental level of the learners since some are particularly difficult for beginners who tend to have difficulty applying metacognitive strategies.

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