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Review

Applicability of the learning organisation idea to universities in Kenya

Abenga Elizabeth Sarange B.

Department of Curriculum and Instructional Technology, Faculty School of Education, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kenya.

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The concept of the learning organisation is now gaining more prominence globally, yet there are few organisations that assert to be learning organizations, or identify with organizational learning. On the same breath, the learning organisation concept and practice is voiced more in the developed nations than in the developing ones, more so, Africa. Further, the learning organization appears to be more practical in entrepreneurial organisations than in the educational enterprise. This is evidenced by the dearth of literature still seeking to establish whether the learning organization idea is relevant to universities specifically in Kenya, and also Africa. This article examines the concept of the learning organisation to elucidate the key components in relation to universities in the Kenyan context. The review is pegged on Ortenblad and Koris' typology of the learning organization. Literature review of existing prior works on the components of the learning organization and their relevance to universities, and a reflective discussion based of applicability of key characteristics of a learning organisation in public universities in Kenya is made. The review found the four-point typology limited and a fifth component identified as beneficial toward universities' reflection on their organisational learning status. The learning organisation idea was found relevant for universities in Kenya but needs to be applied thoughtfully and in cognisance of the unique nature of its operations and include the key consumer (university student bodies) perspective in the multi-stakeholder contingency approach. The highly mechanistic learning structure, practices that encourage negative learning, lack of research focusing on internal concerns and emphasis on formal courses at the exclusion of learning at work are obstacles that stand in the way of transformation of universities in Kenya into learning organisations.

Key words: Organizational learning, learning organization, universities.

INTRODUCTION

Universities have teaching and learning, research and community service as their core businesses. Ordinarily one would expect that by virtue of these core activities the university would be a learning organization and

embrace organizational learning as the modus operandi. Ortenblad (2013) cites several studies that have examined whether higher education institutions are learning organisations or not and whether they should be

E-mail: esabenga@gmail.com.

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learning organisations (Abu-Tineh, 2011; Ali, 2012; Bak, 2012; Bui and Baruch, 2010, 2012; Cepic' and Krstovic', 2011; Farrar-Myers and Dunn, 2010; Greenwood, 2009; Khasawneh, 2011; Manlow et al., 2010; Nazari and Pihie, 2012; Nejad et al., 2012; Vatankhah et al., 2011; Veisi, 2010; Voolaid and Venesaar, 2011). Further, there seemed to be agreement on the assumption and expectation that higher education institutions are learning organisations (Ortenblad 2013). Universities in Kenya are examined under the lens of the characteristics of a learning organization with a view of bringing out the relevance of the concept to their operations. This is done with full awareness of the scepticism in sections of literature has so far never found a true learning organization (Waterman, 1994: 65), or that, creating one "is easier said than done" (Pedlar et al., 1991: 2). The question asked here is, can public universities in Kenya become learning organisations through embracing the learning organization principles? The concept of a learning organisation has featured in the organization literature for close to three decades. Propagated by Senge (1990), through his work *The Fifth Discipline*, the concept has been enthusiastically assimilated by management consultants and practitioners in the corporate world, as a means of enabling continual improvement and change. In Kenya, there is scant literature on the learning organisation in relation to higher education. In Africa, few have written about TLO but more in relation to other enterprise than higher education: Waal and Chachage (2011) on university in Tanzania; Steenekamp et al. (2012) on South Africa; Westhuizen and Jean (2002) on South Africa (Nzioka, 2012; Kilonzo, 2014; Mbugua, 2016; Soi, 2013; and Molo, 2010). Their applicability in this paper was therefore minimal.

Higher education and specifically, universities in Kenya face challenges unique to themselves as well as some that are common to other regions. It is assumed here that since organisational learning has been embraced and applied as a problem solving tool to turn around other organisations (Patterson 1999) it may as well be relevant and applicable to universities owing to the benefits that accrue from its practice. Such benefits include efficiency, effectiveness; organisational learning has been described as 'another means to a business goal', 'a way of managing change', 'a route to improved performance, productivity', but not an end in itself (Evans, 1998). Challenges and change are not strange bed-fellows in organisations and cannot be evaded; they must be acknowledged and plan must be put in place to manage them for the survival and growth of institutions. Dealing with change in an organisation involves knowledge generation and dissemination that universities are expected to be in built in operations and policies for the simple reason that knowledge is dynamic. However, there are environmental dynamics influencing universities that are frequently changing. New knowledge, new ways

of teaching and learning, new crop of students and work force, technological and global transformations that when put together demand well thought out ways of preparing for and managing their demands. In the recent past frequent and numerous transformations in universities in Kenya have taken place. Would embracing the learning organisation idea be the panacea to the current turbulence in universities in Kenya? The learning organization idea is proposed to provide the pathway for universities into excellence and continual improvement. Therefore, finding the applicability of the learning organization idea to universities in Kenya is important. Having worked for other enterprises, it may provide an option for universities in Kenya to move towards achieving their vision of being a "world class" institution, or at least help provide the initial steps to the realization of what is standing in their way to reaching their goals and being better (begin to learn).

METHODOLOGY

This is a review paper. Literature review of existing available prior works on the components of the learning organization is done. A reflective discussion of these components is made against the backdrop of the public universities context and practice to find their relevance and applicability. A systematic examination of the Ortenblad and Korris (2014)'s typology is made focusing on different stakeholder perspectives, that is an examination based on a multi-stakeholder contingency approach. The Kenyan university education system is highly centralized. Therefore, reference is made to legal and statutory documents that govern and guide university operations. They include the Universities Act 2012, the Universities Act 2016, the University Charter 2013 and University statues. The characteristics of a learning organization that emanate from the typology are discussed for relevance and applicability based on the operations of universities in Kenya that are guided by the identified legal and statutory guidelines. Conclusions and their implications are made.

The concept of the learning organisation and organisational learning

There are numerous and varied definitions and concepts of organisational learning or what a learning organisation is, and there is no worldwide agreement on the phenomenon (Curado, 2006). Nonetheless, most researchers consider organisational learning as a result of the participation in the interaction and sharing of experiences and knowledge by and among members of the organisation. The definition of the learning organization has been sought by scholars since Peter

Senge (1990: 3), who first described it as an organisation where:

...people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together.

In this definition Senge recognizes the individual as well as corporate learning as being necessary and an environment that allows for free and new thinking, new ideas, and learning on an endless continuum; an environment that cultivates positive growth. In a similar view Franklin et al. (1998) interpret organisation learning as involving multidimensional interactions between the individual and his/her own learning style, interactions between two or more individuals, and continuous interactions between and among alliances (March and Simon, 1958), teams (Senge, 1990), collectives (Dixon, 1994) or groups (Franklin, 1996a); sometimes with the purpose of achieving boosted competence, contentment and leaning for individuals, and groups and the whole institution. The shared form of knowledge is bigger than the individuals' learning capacities simply summed up (Curado, 2006). This implies that individual learning is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for organisational learning to occur. In agreement with the complex relationship between individual and institutional learning, Evans (1998) states that a learning organisation is one that promotes learning among its workforces, but more importantly, is one that itself learns from that learning, and notes characteristics of such organisations as being that they:

- (i) Lack a highly formalised and clearly evident command and control structure;
- (ii) Value individual and organisational learning as a prime means of delivering the organisational mission;
- (iii) Do not view the workforce as a collection of passive, hired hands;
- (iv) Do not believe that technology will solve future organisational problems;
- (v) Involve all their members through continuous reflection in a process of continual review and improvement;
- (vi) Structure work in such a way that work tasks are used as opportunities for continuous learning

Similarly Ortenblad and Koris (2014), as they discuss the relevance of the learning organization idea to higher educational institutions, develop a typology to define the learning organization and identify four aspects of learning organizations to include: *Learning at work*: an organization in which the employees learn while working (as opposed to learning at formal courses); *Organizational learning*: one with mindfulness of the need

for diverse points of learning, and the management of knowledge in the organizational memory (instead of in the individuals); *Climate for learning*: an organization that enables the learning of its individuals by fashioning an empowering environments that make learning easy and natural, offer space and time for experimenting and reflection, and endure failure; and *Learning structure*: an organization with a malleable, decentralized, informal and organic team-based structure which enables its members to make their own decisions to promptly satisfy the dynamic clients' needs and expectations, which necessitate continual learning, flexibility and allowing for specialization of the workforce, but with abilities to perform the work of others in the organization.

Argyris and Schon (1978) as well recognise the complex interplay between the individual, group and organizational learning, and emphasize the important role of the individuals who need to be seen as agents for organizational learning. Organisational learning is the principal process by which management innovation occurs, (Stata, 1989:64, Patterson, 1999: 9) and "the rate at which individuals and organisations learn is the only sustainable competitive advantage, especially in knowledge intensive industries" such as universities. Knowledge-creating organisations such as universities have continuous innovation as their exclusive and core business (Nonaka, 1991: 96), and environments in which "the only certainty is uncertainty", knowledge is the one sure source of lasting competitive advantage (Patterson, 1999). This description places universities in an advantageous position to benefit the most from the learning organisation idea.

The preceding definitions aptly describe the core functions and activities of the university as a whole and of individuals and groups therein. Universities engage in teaching and learning, research and development (learning and utilising research output), and other capacity building activities for the overall good of the entire university and the individual. In this perspective, personal growth, and that of faculty and staff is an expected and fundamental aspect of work as practitioners in the university. Universities are organisations that are devoted to the learning enterprise and that create knowledge, but can public universities in Kenya score well under the six characteristics listed by Evans (1998); can they become learning organizations?

Senge (1990, 1994) summarizes the vital blending of individual, organisational and total environment, for transforming institutions into learning organisations, into five disciplines: *personal mastery*, *mental models*, *building shared vision*, *team learning*, and the crucial "*fifth discipline*", systems thinking. Senge (1990: 69) equates the learning organization to systems thinking which is "the foundation of how learning organisations think about their world". The term "learning organisation" has been defined variously, nevertheless, the substantial features

are: that it learns through creating, acquiring and transferring new ideas and knowledge, and alters its behaviour to reflect these (Garvin, 1998); and that learning is transformational – (Capper et al., 1994). Grinsven and Visser (2011), and Murray (2002) refer to the two factors as empowerment and knowledge conversion.

The questions that seek answers here are whether universities apply new knowledge to improve their performance, whether they change to new ways of functioning, whether they acclimatize to new environments, developments and pressures in the settings in which they operate, and whether they do these focusing on both the individual as well as in a holistic manner through their structures and processes. Universities in Kenya are examined under the lens of Ortenblad and Koris (2014)'s typology of learning organisations.

Universities in Kenya and the typology of the learning organisation

It is generally an agreeable fact that in recent years the university environments worldwide have faced unparalleled challenges and continuous transformations. White and Weathersby (2005), in providing their view point on whether universities can become true learning organizations, found that the underlying values that serve as the foundations of the learning organizations are actually respected in universities. However, “as academics we work in institutions that rarely practice even the simplest tenets found in the theories of learning organizations” (White and Weathersby, 2005 p 292). This is because the culture and environment of universities is shrouded in competitive ratings and rankings, acceptances and rejections, and authoritarian and hierarchical structures –sections, departments, faculties, schools, colleges, campuses, that determine the character and ways of doing business.

In Kenya, the university education landscape is quite uneven in terms of organization, management, ownership or sponsorship. There are public sponsored, private and religious based universities. To add to the diversity, is the central role played by professional and other regulatory bodies in the programmes, processes and management of universities. However, the unifying factor comes in form of common accreditation and registration that are done by government bodies based on more or less common criteria. With this diverse administrative and organisational background individual universities seek their own niches and competitive advantage.

Learning at work

Learning at work as opposed to learning through undertaking formal courses is fundamental in the learning

organisation idea (Ortenblad and Koris, 2014). The idea here is to structure work in such a way that work roles and responsibilities are used as opportunities for continuous learning (Evans, 1998). The job descriptions, tasks and processes of job performance are deliberately arranged and set up in such a way that they consist of and offer opportunities for learning. For learning at work to occur, the individuals perform their daily jobs and when faced with challenging or problematic situations, they are expected to enquire into them and find working solutions on behalf of the organisation (read here university) (Argyris and Schon, 1996). By this the value of individual learning is enhanced and evident as a contributor to achievement of the mission of the university (Evans, 1998). Universities are organisations in which formal courses are taught and in a formally structured manner. To qualify to work in the university, one is expected to meet certain formally acquired qualifications. Though some positions require some level of experience, it would be naïve to deny that learning on the job is inevitable for a majority. There is always an initial experience and further even for the best and highest academically qualified. In addition, the work environment is extremely dynamic for universities and new challenges are faced and new ways of doing business are needed. Universities in Kenya, having experienced exponential growth from seven public universities in 2012 to thirty one currently, have seen these institutions recruit young and freshly qualified academicians and administrators with no prior experience in a university environment. This justifies the application of a blend of formal as well as learning at work strategies to ensure quality, efficiency and effectiveness. It is common to see university management, professional groups calling for and conducting workshops, seminars and other short courses to build capacity in a new competence when there is a system wide concern. Examples for academics would be on research grant proposal writing, graduate student research supervision, innovative instructional technologies and much more. Administrative staff could be offered induction in application of new policy and operations as well as technology. However, individuals also encounter unique situations that require individual learning on the job which can be cascaded and escalated to others if need be. Here is where universities need a great deal of flexibility and an enabling environment to drive and manage individual learning. Without these, the normal requirement to conform to existing formal and highly structured parameters of executing their tasks serves to frustrate learning.

Organisational learning

A learning organization ought to be one in which organizational learning actually takes place. It is one that

is capable of creating, acquiring and transferring knowledge, while modifying its behaviour to reflect new knowledge and new perspectives (Garvin, 1998). A learning organization is capable of doing these through: systematic problem solving; experimentation; learning from past experiences; learning from the others and transferring knowledge (Curado, 2006). A majority of universities in Kenya are still on the developmental phase working along the pathway to getting established with a strong niche for themselves. Though each was established with a clear mandate and purpose, the environment presents innumerable challenges that threaten their execution of the mission as well as their very existence. Research is one of the most potent tools for creating knowledge. Though research is one of the core obligations of universities, a bulk of it is done for academic purposes and focus on national or global concerns with little or no concern for internal functions. This resonates with the observation that higher education institutions seem to single-loop learn rather than double-loop learn, and that even the willingness to single-loop learn is mostly restricted (Ortenblad and Koris 2014, Duke, 1992). That is, they learn within the current mind-set and hardly interrogate the current status and current perceptions in order to learn and acquire a new mind-set. Universities hold their traditions dear, so the search for solutions to problems encountered is fettered to those traditions. This makes universities learning organizations only to an insignificant extent.

Universities in Kenya rarely engage in research about themselves with the aim of learning and modifying their own behavior. The management of this kind of research should be built in the system in order to facilitate transferring knowledge and consequently change behavior. How else can one explain the existence of undesirable, ineffective, inefficient or non-functional phenomena for prolonged years yet concerns are always raised? According to White and Weathersby (2005p 294-295), the reason why dysfunctional practices are so resilient is that universities are historically old, large, and universally common institutions just like the military and the church. They have historically been inflexibly hierarchical, resistant to change, and structurally stable and commonly led by conventionalists who fancy to influence through positional power. The practice of protecting some zones from new ideas and change is not new in public universities just as much as any new idea only gets accommodated when it comes from those higher in the hierarchy. However, at micro levels there is some learning taking place through programme and course reviews after specified durations, appraisals of individuals and processes but with minimum feedback and feed-forward. It should be noted that learning can be negative or positive and not necessarily contributive to the organization because the individual can learn things that are negative to the particular organization but

beneficial to the individual, or learn to improve themselves and not the organization (Field, 1997). There is practice commonly referred to as benchmarking where universities or their members decide to change their way of doing business to embrace what another university perceived to be 'doing better' are doing without knowledge of the need, purpose and relevance for the change. Most universities in Kenya started as constituent colleges of older universities. Normally the staff are seconded from the 'mother' university to mentor the process of establishing it into a fully-fledged university. During this period of mentorship a number of programmes, courses, structures and policies are those of the mentor institution. The senate (the highest decision making body) is that of the mentoring institution. Normally, the vice chancellor is an ex-officio member of the council of the college. The danger here is that practices and cultures tend to be replicated because 'that is the way things are done' or "that has worked for us for long". Innovative strategies may get shunned and no one would like to take risks of failure. This therefore provides a setting for the slow appreciation of the learning organization idea. Learning from past and others' experience may be helpful but only if there was need as well as systematic problem solving process.

Climate for learning

An organization creates a climate for learning when it facilitates the learning of its individuals by creating a positive atmosphere that makes learning easy and natural, offers space and time for experimenting and reflection, and tolerates failure (Ortenblad and Koris, 2014: 175). A learning organisation should not view the staff as a group of passive, employed aides who only do what is prescribed for them to do. The involvement of individuals in an organisation's decision making and creating room for and encouraging active contribution to organisational matters is the way towards enhancing organisational learning. To some extent this is true of universities in Kenya. There is substantial involvement of members in decision making through representation at key organisational points and through policies that provide for inclusiveness as well as procedures and processes involving all levels of stakeholders on matters contributing to achievement of the universities' mission. However, depending on individual institutional leadership the degree of active involvement of individuals varies. Cases of authoritarian, high-handed and undemocratic leadership affect the management of the human resource and interpersonal relations creating tensions which lead to labour unions collision with management. Frequent occurrence of industrial action by unions in universities may be a pointer to an organisation that has set itself up not to learn. Requirements for strict adherence to policy,

guidelines and other procedures that govern university operations, coupled with regular check on compliance which is normally followed by sanctions to some extent reduce the room for flexibility, creativity, individual freedoms and confidence to try out new ways of executing roles and responsibilities for improved efficiency and effectiveness. Organisational learning occurs through learning of individuals and this learning is harnessed for the organisational good. It is therefore necessary that an environment is created that is conducive for and facilitates development of organisational knowledge in the individuals in form of experiences, skills and personal capabilities. More important is the environment that ensures that this individual knowledge is ploughed back into the organisation in the form of documents, records, rules, regulations to guide organisational improvement (Weick and Roberts, 1993). Creating this environment for interaction between individual and institutional knowledge in such a way that it promotes organisational learning is the responsibility of management (Adler et al., 1999). This is knowledge management.

Learning structure

Curado (2006) examines the structures of mechanistic and organic designs in organisational learning and identifies their features and traits. The mechanistic organisational learning design presents a highly formalised structure with low integration and high centralisation. This displays extensive use of procedures, high degree of task specialisation, strict performance control, little use of liaison processes and structures and little delegation of decision making authority. Conversely, the organic design, which is the preferred one for organisational learning to take place, is characterised by low formalisation, high integration and low centralisation. In an organically designed organisation there is little use of written procedures, low degree of task specialisation, relaxed performance control, extensive use of liaison processes and structures and extensive delegation of decision making authority.

Universities in Kenya operate under highly formalised and very clearly visible structures, protocols and command lines. There is heavy emphasis on documented procedures, growing specialization and compartmentalisation of work environments with little talking between departments. The recently introduced performance contracting and performance monitoring and evaluation processes do not give room for flexibility and experimentation. According to Evans (1998) this kind of environment curtails organisational learning. Academic staff do research, teach and engage in service to community. It is expected that new developments from research and innovation are ploughed back to the

curriculum and teaching processes as well inform up-to-date engagement with community speedily. The truth is that modification of programmes structures and content in a response to new learnings and new demands cannot happen before a series of procedural approvals at several levels internally and external to the university. For instance, programme changes have to be vetted and approved at departmental, school, committee of deans, university senate and national regulatory level. Alongside this, the professional bodies' approvals are necessary for accreditation. Accreditations and other quality assurance measures are important, but in this case the lengthy, highly formalised procedures work against the concept of efficiency, timely interventions and organisational learning. It is also expected that individual and organisational learning are a major means of delivering the institutional missions at universities. It is true that individual learning does not automatically translate to organisational learning (Ikehara, 1999). And organisational learning cannot happen without learning of individuals in it. The reason for this is that the purpose, prompt and process of individual learning vary and may not be connected to organisational needs. Further, mechanisms to enable transformation of individual learning to organisational learning are not in place. It is the task of the learning organization to ensure the transformation of individual learning to organizational learning occurs (Wang and Ahmed, 2003). This is evident in cases of individual members and individual units learning new ways to solve issues that affect them as well as all other members and units, however, by and large, the learning is not shared. This takes various forms such as mechanisms of handling large classes, part time staff management, research management, and technology to manage data and records of different types and much more.

The new and emergent trajectory

Ortenblad and Koris (2014) look at the university using a multi-stakeholder approach that typically includes perspectives of the employee, the employer and community. This is characteristic of organizations that have an entrepreneurial focus. However, in the universities set up there are various stakeholders and interest groups beyond these. Key stakeholders include the students who are direct consumers of the programmes and services offered. The administrative viewpoint chiefly undertakes to ensure effectiveness of the specific universities. In doing so, more focus is placed on:

- (i) Accreditation; academic program assessment; administrative planning and evaluation;
- (ii) Institutional research and reporting; and strategic planning analysis etc.

- (iii) Management of resources
- (iv) Effective teaching and learning
- (v) Research outputs
- (vi) Quality assurance
- (vii) Ranking
- (viii) Internationalization, and

The employee perspective undertaken to ensure the well-being of the employees concerns itself more with:

- (i) Working environment
- (ii) Terms of service
- (iii) Career progression
- (iv) Staff welfare

Societal perspective is mainly concerned with ensuring that education and research is of relevance and beneficial to citizens and organizations within the society, and therefore, concentrates on:

- (i) Relevance of the education
- (ii) Relevance of research, whether it is of help to the society, provides impetus to the government agenda
- (iii) Impact of the university to the immediate community

This paper considers a major stakeholder in universities in Kenya whose perspective is coming up strongly in the recent past, the consumer of higher education and the students. The twenty-first century university student has taken a key and central role in shaping organisational learning trajectory of any university. The Universities Act 2012 (number 42 of 2012) of the Republic of Kenya, popularly known as the Charter gives unique inclusion of The Students' Associations and The Alumni Associations as members of the governance of the university. The functions of these bodies are clearly spelt out in the Universities Act 2012, the Charter and operationalised in the resultant statutes of each university. This paper introduces the student perspective. The students in higher education institutions are increasingly getting involved in management matters and have formed governance bodies that work very closely with university management structures. In Kenya, university student governing bodies conduct elections and have structured representation in all levels of management, including membership to the university senate (Republic of Kenya, 2012 part 3:18r, 3:21, 3:22). The functions of the students' associations in the Charter include:

- (i) oversee and plan, in consultation with senate (*where they are members*), students' activities for promotion of academic, spiritual, moral, harmonious communal life and social well-being,
- (ii) draw attention of appropriate authorities ...to special needs, and
- (iii) undertake other functions as provided in its governance instruments approved by the university

council" (Republic of Kenya, 2012 part 3:22).

The University Act 2016, an amendment of the previous act elaborately spell out how every students' council should be elected, terms of office and with clear guidelines pegged on the constitution of Kenya 2010 (Republic of Kenya, 2016: 8-9). The students governing councils and alumni associations are recognised by law and have chapter and national leadership. They play a key role in influencing, monitoring and promoting their welfare, learning environment, modes of teaching and learning, general academics, quality assurance, institutional culture and generally ensuring their rights are met. Most major decisions that are made and that affect the student body are arrived at through a consultative approach with the student bodies. This makes them key stakeholders in the organisation and that for comprehensive organisational learning to take place, their perspective needs to be considered. The importance of this stakeholder is reflected in the seriousness with which the statutory bodies and university managements support and facilitate the conduct of student elections into the governing councils and cannot be over-emphasised. A comprehensive multi-stakeholder approach towards applicability of the learning organisation idea in higher education institutions therefore needs such an expanded view. The students represent a large constituency of the organisation that contribute towards the formation of the culture of the institution. For organisational learning to take root as the culture of the universities the students cannot be left out.

CONCLUSION

Public universities in Kenya currently face numerous challenges in almost all functions. The ever-reducing funding, declining research output against the demand for research driven decision making, teaching and service to community, the increasing demand for higher education hence the rising student numbers against inadequacy of accommodation, tuition facilities, and qualified lecturers, a fast evolving crop of students against slow adaptation to corresponding new ways of learning by the lecturers, advancement in technology that manages and facilitates operations against set-ups and skills not designed for the future, fast evolving job market requirements against traditional and inflexible programmes and courses which cause a mismatch with job market requirements. Like any other organisation, universities face challenges, and these challenges are dynamic requiring swift identification, consideration and changes. This paper adopted the definition of a learning organisation to be one where: people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually

learning how to learn together (Senge, 1990, p. 3). The literature paper examined public universities in Kenya under the four characteristics of learning organisations developed by Ortenblad and Koris (2014), learning at work, organisational learning, climate for learning and learning structure. What stands out is that,

- (i) The universities operate in highly formalised environments with institutionalised hierarchies, lines of command and controls.
- (ii) The link between individual and organisational learning is blurred implying that any translation of individual learning to organisational learning may be inadvertent.
- (iii) Individual learning is motivated more by personal goals and less on organisational learning goals.
- (iv) There is more formal learning than learning at work (which happens through seminars, workshops and other short courses)
- (v) The universities have potential to benefit from principles of organisational learning however, the management culture, structure and environment that are anti-learning pose inhibitions toward becoming learning organisations
- (vi) Universities in Kenya having recognised the role of the students as stakeholders in management of university affairs, have the potential of becoming learning organisations by including the student perspective into organisational learning strategies and processes.

The result of this status is that organisational learning may be at its minimum. Therefore, it is important for universities to find ways through which more flexibility can be exercised to allow for ingenious, novel, creative yet effective and efficient ways of doing things can flourish. Individual institutions and their governing bodies need to consider creating platforms and frameworks that facilitate the alignment and translation of a considerable percentage of individual learning to organisational learning; investing organisational knowledge into individuals in the form of experience, skills and personal competences, and also into the organisation in form of documents, annals, rubrics, guidelines and values (Weick and Roberts 1993). A healthy equilibrium and blend of formal learning and learning at work can be the initial steps towards becoming a learning organisation. Learning, therefore, should not only be associated with formalised and planned events or activities such as programmes of education, training or development. Such programmes should rather be seen as deliberate interventions in the naturally occurring learning processes of individuals (Stewart and McGoldrick, 1996).

To make the universities learning organisations the process of problem solving needs to be engaged in with open and futuristic mind sets, develop mechanisms of enquiring about themselves as part of work and looping

in lessons learnt. They should learn to create knowledge about their past and present to be able to drive the institution to a desired positive future (Curado, 2006). A participative and decentralised decision-making environment is beneficial in facilitating organisational learning. An environment that facilitates and supports the learning organisation idea and putting in place appropriate and friendly learning structures are largely the responsibilities of leadership and management. Therefore, deliberate adoption of the learning organisation idea, its inclusion in the university culture and purposeful enabling of its tenets to thrive are essential in leading the university into becoming a learning organisation.

A practical implication of results of this review is that transformational leadership is key in adoption of structures and environments supportive of organisational learning. Striking a healthy balance between individual and organisational learning and formulating synergetic translation from one to the other in universities is pivotal. The social implication is that a key consumer perspective, in this case, the student governing bodies be included in the multi stakeholder approach to examining the organisational learning status of universities, especially in Kenya.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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Full Length Research Paper

Reflection in language teaching: A comparison between preservice and experienced teachers of English

Ulas Kayapinar

Department of Liberal Arts, American University of the Middle East, Kuwait.

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Teachers' ability to reflect on their performances or reflective teaching has been commonly used and accepted in the educational contexts. However, it has not become a content item or a course in educational curricula so far. For this reason, reflective abilities of teachers or preservice teachers cannot be measured, and there is limited feedback on their reflective performances in the teaching and learning process. The purpose of this study is to provide evidence of reflection and reflective skills of preservice teachers of English (PTE) along with experienced teachers of English (ETE) by measuring the use of reflection in different settings such as classroom settings, colleagues and management settings. Reflection-oriented reactions of ETE and PTE to possible complexities or problematic situations were scored by using Teacher Reflection Scale to reveal if they are reflective practitioners or not. The data were collected from 298 volunteer PTE and 293 ETE. Statistical analyses give evidence that ETE participants reflect more than PTE participants. Among PTE, participants mostly reflect in classroom and colleagues' settings, but not in management settings. Besides, ETE participants also reflect in classroom settings, but not in collegial setting. They prefer to reflect within management setting. Compared to PTE, there is evidence that more ETE in teaching and learning environments reflect on their practices.

Key words: Reflection, teaching, teacher development, assessment.

INTRODUCTION

Dewey (1933) defines reflection as "an active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds supporting it and future conclusions, to which it tends" (p. 43). It is basically being aware of what has been done focusing on strengths and challenges. Schön (1987) defines reflection-in-action as the individual's thinking which serves to reshape what he/she is doing while it occurs. The process starts with

routinized responses such as a surprise or unexpected outcome that the individual brings when there is a situation of action. The unexpected outcome leads to reflection within an action-present. Moreover, the questions What is this? and How have I been thinking about it? make individual's thoughts turn back on the surprising phenomenon. At this stage, the individual thinks critically to restructure strategies, comprehend the

E-mail: ulas.kayapinar@aum.edu.kw.

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phenomena, or frame the problem. Reflection paves the way to an on-the-spot-experiment which makes the individual think of new methods and attempt new actions to test the understanding of the newly observed phenomena or to confirm the moves with the intention of changing the actions for the better. In brief, reflection is a response, a conscious recall and examination of the experience as a foundation for evaluation and decision-making which leads to planning and action (Shahriari, 2018).

Reflection in teacher education and development

Teaching is a collection of simultaneous tasks and requires qualified teachers (Mousapour and Beiranvand, 2015). Hoffman and Duffy (2016) states that thoughtfully changing teaching strategies in response to students or situations is called in-the-moment adaptation, which can be seen as a part of reflection. Reflective teaching has adaptation which is done in response to students and/or situations, and it has to be non-routine, thoughtful, proactive, and invented against usual practices. Similarly, Zeichner (1994) states that teachers, as all professionals, need to reflect. They should reflect on their learners' thinking, understandings, interests and developmental thinking because reflection is essential for bringing understanding to the complex nature of classrooms. He further states that teachers should be trained to reflect on the subject matter and the thoughtful application of teaching strategies. Reflection, also increases critical thinking (Korthagen, 2004), provides a source of knowledge construction in teaching (Conway, 2001), and promotes self-regulation in teachers (Boud, 2000).

Not only for teachers but also for preservice teachers, reflection can become a goal in many teacher education and development programs as the more teacher reflectivity occurs, the better the quality of educator (Tok and Doğan-Dolapçioğlu, 2013). A reflective teacher faces an experience, interprets and describes this experience. Later, she/he generates possible explanations after analyzing, experimenting and testing it (Lee, 2005). When reflective teaching is seen as an approach to teaching, learning, and problem solving that uses reflection as a main tool, it enables teachers and preservice teachers diagnose and understand their classroom contexts and their students' learning better, putting the students' learning at the heart of the teaching-learning process, developing a rationale for their teaching, and taking informed specific actions after they make sound decisions in the classroom (Al-Issa, 2002). Wilson and Jan (1993) described reflection as a process of individual evaluation of self, experience, and learning. Reflection is, in this sense, a beneficial practice to support professional development of teachers and their efforts to improve students' learning (Fendler, 2003;

Hoffman-Kipp et al., 2003). A reflective teacher makes the effort to solve the challenges of classroom instruction and takes responsibility for his or her own professional development (Zeichner and Liston, 1996).

Reflective teachers develop a habit of continuous inquiry and learning from their experiences by framing occurrences of practice from various perspectives, and many valuable attempts have been made to show that teachers' reflective abilities can develop, and their awareness of the potential of engaging in problem identification can be raised through noticing and questioning events of everyday practice (Bulpitt and Martin, 2005; Chiu, 2006; Clarke, 2006; Conway, 2001; Dinkelman, 2000; Garcia et al., 2006; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1982; Lee, 2005; Reiman, 1999; Ticha and Hospesova, 2006; Tillema, 2000; Whipp, 2003). This might be useful in building reflective teacher identities. Gu and Benson (2015) states that pre-service teacher education and the early years of teaching are seen as a crucial period in the formation of teacher identities, as novice teachers try to "make their work match their personal vision of how it should be, whilst at the same time being subjected to the powerful socializing forces of the school culture" (Flores and Day, 2006, p. 220). Although there is evidence to suggest that reflective thinking can be improved by learning (Brown, 1997; Choi et al., 2005; King and Kitchener, 2004; Song et al., 2006), current theories of preservice and novice teacher learning have not accounted for the varied influences of reflection. Thompson et al. (2013) cited that studies on novice teacher learning that attempt to explain differences in uptake of reform-based practice tend to fall into one of two categories which are focused on the development of teacher knowledge and beliefs (e.g., Lee et al., 2007; OECD, 2009) and focus on institutional characteristics such as school climate (McGinnis et al., 2004), but not reflection. Hamiloğlu (2013) studied the practicum process of pre-service teachers and found that professional identities of preservice teachers were influenced more effectively when they were able to reflect. The participants became more aware of the transformation of their emerging identities.

For this reason, professional vision might be identified as an important element of teacher expertise that can be developed in teacher education (Seidel and Sturmer, 2014). Thus, defining and measuring competencies that teachers require for creating learning opportunities should be of particular importance in teacher education (Brouwer, 2010; Cochran-Smith, 2003; Koster et al., 2005).

Even though reflection and reflective teaching practice is seen as teacher's awareness of her/his teaching and one of the popular concepts which has a historical background since Dewey, it is not easy to give a precise and commonly accepted definition for teacher reflection in preservice teacher education. Dewey (1933) states

reflective thinking is valuable because it “converts action that is merely appetitive, blind, and impulsive into intelligent action” (p. 17). Later, Schön’s (1987) contribution influenced the construction of reflection in teaching expertise. According to Schön (1987), a practitioner’s reflection can serve as a corrective to over-learning because a practitioner, through reflection, can surface and criticize the tacit understandings that have grown up around the repetitive experiences of a specialized practice, and can make new sense of the situations of uncertainty or uniqueness which may be experienced. He states that the individuals find themselves in an uncertain or unique situation which is experienced by surprise, puzzlement, or confusion. Moreover, he puts forth the notions of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action for consideration.

In teacher education and teacher development programs, reflection is usually seen as a way of thinking or reacting against some confusions or problematic situations in the classroom limiting the scope or interpretation of reflection to teaching act or performance in the classroom (Clift et al., 1990; Gipe and Richards, 1992; Gore, 1987). Obviously, more guidance is needed by preservice teachers in learning to reflect on their instructional performances and decision-making processes (Nagro et al., 2017).

The development of teachers or future teachers can be empowered to improve upon the stimuli in the teaching and learning environment, and can become an achievable objective (Yost et al., 2000). It can be taught and learnt as it can be seen as an attitude or a habit of active, persistent, and careful examination of educational and social beliefs asking two basic questions, which are What have I done? and What can I do for the better? (Zeichner et al., 1987).

Preservice teachers usually have opportunities to gain some practical experience through microteaching simulations during their university courses (Tuluçe and Cecen, 2015). They reflect on their experiences when they teach small groups of peers, and discuss possible challenges, problematic situations or confusions, thus reinforcing their strengths. However, this does not go beyond a specific instructional method rather than studying or acquiring a skill of “genuine reflective inquiry” (Gipe and Richards, 1992: 52). Many preservice teachers receive limited guidance to reflect based on the instructor’s educational aims (Barnes and Caprino, 2018). Kajder and Parkes (2012) emphasizes that little consideration is taken on the quality of reflection in their study of English and Music preservice teachers’ reflections. Hume (2009) reports that reflection becomes challenging for her Science preservice teachers as they do not see models of effective reflections. Several scholars give evidence of preservice teachers’ reflection which will improve upon their teaching abilities and suggest teaching reflection (Coulson and Harvey, 2013;

Cruickshank, 1981; Feyten and Kaywell, 1994; Gipe and Richards, 1992; Gore, 1987; Holton and Nott, 1980; Hume, 2009; Ryan, 2013; Zeichner, 1994).

In this respect, reflection is an attribute which can be gained by experience, and it can be developed via education and experience although it is a process of self-observation and self-evaluation. Besides, teacher reflection refers to spontaneous critical scrutiny of teachers’ thoughts and behavior in terms of teaching and learning including their beliefs and knowledge as well as practice and effects elicited by those beliefs and knowledge (Sung et al., 2009). Although there has been some research on experiences of identity construction among non-native English-speaking TESOL teachers (Au and Blake, 2003; Gu, 2013; Gu, 2011; Menard-Warwick, 2008; Nemtchinova, 2005; Trent, 2012), there has been relatively little research on the construction of teacher identities in pre-service teacher education and teacher development settings.

Considering related studies (Cole, 1997; Calderhead, 1992; Mena Marcos et al., 2010; Minott, 2009; Poyraz and Usta, 2013; Reiman, 1999; Tok and Doğan-Dolapçioğlu, 2013; Williams, 2008), which contributed to the field of reflective teaching and practices, this study, unlike the existing ones, tries to reveal preservice and experienced language teachers’ reactions and behavior in terms of reflective teaching and makes a comparison between ETE and PTE with a correlative design. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to clarify reflection-oriented reactions of PTE and ETE to possible confusions or problematic situations. In this way, any existing evidence of reflective or non-reflective practice in language teaching will also be revealed. Therefore, this study tries to answer the following research questions:

- 1) Do ETE and PTE use reflection in the teaching and learning environment?
- 2) Is there a significant relationship between PTE/ETE reflection scores for classroom settings and colleagues’ settings?
- 3) Is there a significant relationship between PTE/ETE reflection scores for classroom settings and management settings?
- 4) Is there a significant difference between ETE and PTE total scores of TRS?
- 5) Is there a significant difference between PTE and ETE means of reflection for classroom settings?
- 6) Is there a significant difference between PTE and ETE means of reflection for colleagues and management settings?

METHODOLOGY

This is a correlative study as it analyzes correlations and tries to describe the relationship between ETE and PTE reflection scores to answer the research questions and to achieve the purpose of the study.

Table 1. Participants' demographic characteristics

Gender	N	Experience
Female (PTE)	157	7-8 Months
Male (PTE)	141	7-8 Months
Female (ETE)	160	3-22
Male (ETE)	133	4-25

Participants

Convenience sampling method was used to select the participants. The random study group of preservice teachers and experienced teachers provided the data. They comprised 591 volunteers who were conveniently available to participate in the study. No inclusion criteria were identified prior to the selection of the participants apart from being an English teacher and a preservice English teacher. The data were available for 298 preservice English language teachers (seniors in ELT practicum) and 293 experienced English language teachers at primary schools. English language teachers averaged 14 years of teaching experience. The characteristics of the participants are given in Table 1.

Data collection

Teacher Reflection Scale (TRS)

In order to collect data, a scale for measuring teacher reflection called Teacher Reflection Scale was employed capturing participants' reflective responses in different settings (Kayapinar and Erkus, 2009). Teacher Reflection Scale, including 22 items, is a standardized scale which was developed to measure teacher reflection. It covers two settings of problematic scenarios which are reflection for classroom settings (RCS) and reflection for colleagues and management settings (RCMS). The response categories of the items have three options: Reflection on the problem, attribution of the problem to external causes, and lack of concern for the problem. Teachers read the items and chose one of the response categories, which can also be seen in the following sample item from the scale:

"One of your students prevents others from learning."

- I look for the ways to end the situation.
- I make him/her sit down in the front alone.
- Everyone is responsible for himself/herself.

If the teacher chooses "a," he/she seems to be responding in a reflective manner and receives 1 point. However, the teacher gets 0 point if one of the other alternatives is chosen. This means the teacher is not behaving in a reflective manner but attributes the problem to external causes or shows a lack of concern. To analyze non-reflection, each option representing an external cause and lack of concern is taken as 1 point against the others which are assigned as 0 point as if each is the correct answer in different analyses.

Psychometric characteristics of the scale

The internal consistency coefficient of the scale was reported as 0.868, and the reliability of the scale was reported as 0.835. Additionally, the correlation between RCS scores and RCMS scores

is 0.634 ($p < 0.01$). The correlation between RCS/RCMS scores and the total scores is 0.953 for RCS and 0.838 for RCMS. The correlation coefficients between total sub-scale scores and total scale scores prove that the scale may be used and commented as a whole and/or as independent parts for determining reflection levels according to the settings. Further examinations during the development of the scale demonstrated that the reflection scores do not differentiate according to gender ($t = 1.494$; $df = 130$; $p > 0.05$) and subject areas such as math and social sciences ($t = -1.881$; $df = 126$; $p > 0.05$). For this reason, this scale was seen valid to be used for English teachers. Additional statistical data of this study were obtained by computing the total scores and sub-scores of PTE and ETE. Pearson product-moment correlation and independent samples t test were used to interpret the scale results.

Procedure

Each teacher responded to the items individually on a hard copy in an invigilated session reserved at schools where they work. Each preservice teacher also responded to the items individually on a hard copy in an invigilated session reserved at colleges where they study. Each participant was given a short educational session of reflection before responding to the items in the scale.

Data analysis

To begin with, descriptive statistics results were analyzed to reveal if participants reflect on their practices in the teaching and learning process. The collected data were also computed to measure reflection of PTE and ETE in percentages. Later, the possible relationship between PTE's and ETE's reflection scores for classroom (RCS), colleagues and management settings (RCMS) were examined by correlation analyses. Finally, the total scores of PTE and ETE reflection were analyzed to find out possible significant differences. Independent samples t-test made the comparisons between the reflection scores of PTE and ETE. In order to analyze the data and compute descriptive statistics, SPSS 16.0 was employed. To investigate the correlation between RCS and RCMS scores, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used. The relationship between total scores of reflection and scores of reflection in classroom settings was examined by computing Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. The relationship between total scores of reflection and scores of reflection in colleagues and management settings was again examined by employing Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. Finally, to examine a possible difference between PTE and ETE total scale and sub-scale scores, t test for independent samples was employed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results are provided for each research question

Table 2. PTE and ETE reflection results based on the total scores.

Parameter	PTE reflection (%)	PTE non-reflection (%)	ETE reflection (%)	ETE non-reflection (%)
Reflection	56.43	43.57	66.34	33.66
Reflection (Classroom setting)	67.58	13.03	68.33	23.63
Reflection (Management setting)	4.61	57.62	24.62	46.02
Reflection (Colleagues setting)	27.81	29.35	7.05	30.35

Table 3. The relationship between PTE/ETE reflection scores for classroom settings and colleagues settings.

Parameter	PTE		ETE	
	Reflection Cl. Settings	Reflection Col. Settings	Reflection Cl. Settings	Reflection Col. Settings
Reflection (Classroom settings)	1	0.570**	1	0.150*
N	298	298	293	293
Reflection (Colleagues setting)	0.570**	1	0.150*	1
N	298	298	293	293

*Correlation is not significant. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 4. The relationship between PTE/ETE reflection scores for classroom settings and management settings.

Parameter	PTE		ETE	
	Reflection Cl. Settings	Reflection Man. Settings	Reflection Cl. Settings	Reflection Man. Settings
Reflection (Classroom settings)	1	-0.456**	1	0.156*
N	298	298	293	293
Reflection (Colleagues setting)	-0.456**	1	0.156*	1
N	298	298	293	293

*Correlation is not significant. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

individually. Data presented in tables and results of scale statistics were used to interpret the results of the research. Tables 2 to 7 present the data and values on statistical significance of differences between the reflection scores for ETE and PTE in different settings.

“Do ETE and PTE reflect in the teaching and learning environment?”

The total scores of reflection of the two groups were calculated and the percentages of the participants who reflect in the teaching and learning environment are presented in Table 2.

Here, the mean of the total scores that PTE collected is 56.43%. This might mean that the mean scores do not seem sufficient for PTE to be reflective. In this sense,

they can be called partly reflective. Among the ones who reflect in the teaching and learning environment, the percentage of PTE who reflect in classroom setting is found 67.58; it is 4.61 in management setting, and it is 27.81 in colleagues setting. The highest score among the sub-tests belongs to classroom setting, and the lowest score belongs to management setting. These results might emerge from the intensive teaching of theory and practice of methods and techniques in language teaching curricula. Unlikely, teaching of reflection and relationships with management and colleagues do not seem to take an important part in the curricula as the scores indicate. All in all, the scores might give evidence that there is not a systematic study of reflection and reflective teaching in language teacher education curricula, and the reflective teaching skills of PTE are just limited.

Table 2 shows higher results for ETE. The mean of the

Table 5. The difference between ETE and PTE means of reflection total scores.

t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. Error difference
7.146	589	0.000**	1.94977	0.27286

Table 6. The difference between ETE and PTE means of reflection for classroom settings.

t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
-1.468	589	0.143*	-0.17468	0.11903

*Correlation is not significant.

Table 7. The difference between ETE and PTE means of reflection for colleagues and management settings.

t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. error difference
-5.489	589	0.000**	-0.35526	0.06472

*Correlation is not significant.

total scores that ETE received is 66.34%. This might mean that the mean scores do not seem sufficient for some ETE to be reflective. In this sense, they can also be called partly reflective even though it is higher than the PTE reflection result. Apart from the total scores, reflection sub-test mean in classroom settings is found to be 68.33; it is 24.62 in management setting, and 7.05 in colleagues setting. The highest score among the sub-tests belongs to classroom setting, and the lowest score belongs to colleagues setting. This might indicate a change in behaviour and attitude in time. This change might be a result of the effect of experience in teaching and learning environments with considerable knowledge of theory and practice or methods and techniques in language teaching. In addition to this, a variety of factors or variables might cause a difference in teachers' reactions to management decisions or regulations, so the scores of reflection in management settings become pretty higher than the ones PTE received. Unlikely, reflection in colleagues setting is pretty lower than the ones in management settings and the ones PTE received. This might mean that, reflection in colleagues setting may not take an important part in teachers' practices as they become more experienced. All in all, the scores might mean that there is not a systematic practice of reflection and reflective teaching in language teaching environments, and the reflective teaching skills of ETE are also limited.

The table also shows the percentages of PTE who do not reflect on their practices in different settings. The results show that 43.57% of the PTE who participated in the study did not give reflective answers at all, not only in

RCS but also in RCMS. Within this percentage, 13.03% were not reflective for classroom settings, 57.62% were not reflective for management settings while the 29.35% were not reflective for colleague settings. The results show that the highest percentage of non-reflection belongs to reflection in management settings. This is also supported with the PTE results of reflection in management settings, which is the lowest among others. This might be caused by the curriculum content and the lack of experience of working in an educational environment in which PTE should report to. Next, colleagues setting takes the second highest value with 29.35%. The least amount of non-reflection comes with 13.03% in classroom setting. This might also support the idea that there is limited or no content for colleagues and management in the curriculum content of teacher education. Moreover, 33.66% of the ETE who participated in the study did not give reflective answers at all, not only in RCS but also in RCMS. Within this percentage, 23.63% were not reflective for classroom settings. This is comparatively a higher percentage for the ones who reflect. Management setting has the highest percentage with 46.02% while the 30.35% were not reflective for colleague settings. The choice analyses also present interesting results on the tendencies of PTE and ETE. More than half of PTE who do not reflect have a tendency of lack of concern (53.78%) while almost half have a tendency of attribution of the problem to external causes (46.22%). In addition, more ETE (58.14%) have a tendency of lack of concern when they have a problematic situation, and 41.86% of them have a tendency of attribution of the problem to external causes.

This might mean that some ETE become more unresponsive when they face a problem or confusion in teaching and learning environments.

“Is there a significant relationship between PTE/ETE reflection scores for classroom settings and colleagues’ settings?”

PTE who reflect in classroom practices also reflect in problematic situations with colleagues. To see if there is a significant relationship between use of reflection in these two settings, the results of the analyses are given in Table 3.

As shown in Table 3, although the percentage for the PTE colleague settings was low, the correlation between reflection scores for the classroom setting and the colleague settings is significant. This might mean that anyone who reflects in classroom practices might also reflect in colleagues setting. Table 3 shows that the correlation between ETE reflection scores for the classroom settings and the colleague settings is not significant. This means that there is no meaningful relationship between reflection for the classroom settings and colleagues’ settings. As seen in the percentages in Table 2 previously, ETE reflect with an amount of 7.05% in colleagues setting, whereas in classroom settings it is at 68.33%. This might support the idea that ETE ignore their colleagues, or they do not reflect on problematic situations in which they are involved with their colleagues. Pennington and Richards (2016) report that teachers’ personal identities become more work-related and instructional through processes of negotiation, experiences, and interactions with others. PTE might be more connected to negotiation and interactions with their colleagues as they are classmates most of the time, go to schools together, have more time to share and discuss while ETE’s connections, in time, might grow lack of concern and attribution of the problems to external causes depending on the environment. The relationship between ETE reflection for the classroom and management settings is given subsequently.

“Is there a significant relationship between PTE/ETE reflection scores for classroom settings and management settings?”

The relationship between reflection for the classroom settings and management settings for PTE is shown in Table 4. The results in Table 4 indicate that most PTE who were reflection-oriented for the classroom settings were not reflective in the management settings. There is more of a negative relationship between reflection for the classroom settings and management settings than the relationship between reflection for the classroom settings

and colleague settings. In other words, as the reflection scores increase for classroom settings, they decrease for the management setting.

The table also indicates that the relationship between ETE reflective behavior for classroom settings and ETE reflective behavior for management settings is not significant. The coefficient (-0.156) related to the relationship between the two might mean that there is no linearity between these components. In another way, reflecting on classroom settings does not mean reflecting on management settings accordingly.

“Is there a significant difference between ETE and PTE total scores of TRS?”

The Table 5 presents the significant difference between ETE and PTE means of reflection total scores. This table indicates the group of participants who reflect more as a whole including settings of classroom, colleagues and management.

The statistical analysis shows that ETE and PTE differed significantly on their total reflection performances. This might give evidence that, in time, teaching and learning environments let ETE gain some insight for reflection even if they are not possibly able to formulate theories about reflection specifically. Supportively, Dicke et al. (2015) report that, by the transition into the profession even after completing their preparation, too many teachers state they are unprepared and feel stunned before they enter the classroom.

This result also shows that PTE definitely reflect less than experienced teachers when reflection is taken as a whole. This might pave the way to the idea that reflection should be included in the curriculums of teacher education as a specific subject to make PTE formulate theories about the problematic situations or confusions in the teaching and learning environments as PTE need more guidance in learning to reflect on their instructional decision making (Nagro et al., 2017).

“Is there a significant difference between PTE and ETE means of reflection for classroom settings?”

Table 6 gives the results of a t-test which does not indicate a significant difference between ETE and PTE means of reflection in the classroom settings.

The legend of the table indicates that ETE and PTE scores did not differ significantly on their reflective practices in classroom settings. Another implication might be that their limited reflective practices for classroom settings do not meaningfully differ. This means that both parties are partly reflective even though the scores of ETE are higher than the scores of PTE, as given previously in Table 2. It might be difficult for experienced

and preservice teachers to reflect on their practices as they are not taught how to reflect in classroom settings, or they might not be aware that they can reflect on them in order to improve their performances and find sound solutions to take effective action. For this reason, a context, framework, or model for reflection should be provided for PTE (Coulson and Harvey, 2013). This would help and encourage PTE to look into their experiences in practice and pave the way to engage in reflection by taking reflective action.

“Is there a significant difference between PTE and ETE means of reflection for colleagues and management settings?”

Table 7 gives the results of a t test which indicates a significant difference between ETE and PTE means of reflection in the colleagues and management settings.

ETE and PTE differed significantly on their reflection performances for colleagues and management settings. ETE might reflect on problematic situations with colleagues and the management in the teaching and learning environment as they work together, and they need to gain some experience and share the same working culture for some time. As Pennington and Richards (2016) stated, the sense of teaching is developed in an interactive way. However, PTE do not have real life experiences and working culture as they do not work together with their peers for a long time in the same teaching and learning environment or an institution. Still, PTE reflect more on colleagues setting than ETE, and ETE reflect more on the management than ETE. This might be driven from the work culture and experiences that they have had in the teaching and learning environments. Additionally, most teaching curriculums do not have specific emphasis on working culture, working with colleagues in a social environment, and stimuli driven by a real management system in the teaching and learning environment. Adiguzel and Karadas (2014) found in their study with 548 teachers that the perception level of teachers on organizational commitment is not satisfactory, and professional seniority makes a difference in teachers' organizational commitment. Teachers' organizational commitment and reflection on management settings grow in time as they experience a variety of situations in the teaching and learning environment. These are not specific components of teacher education curricula and programs. These might be the reasons for PTE not to reflect on management settings more than they do for colleagues.

Conclusion

Gore (1987) mentioned, “claims about reflective teaching

are in advance of any solid evidence” (p. 35). To collect solid evidence and make valid and reliable comparisons, this study uses an empirical measurement tool presenting some evidence of reflective practices performed by experienced teachers of English and preservice English teachers. Assessment of reflection using a scale is supposed to contribute and pave the way to the field of reflective practice in teacher education with the increased attention to the quality of teacher education as reflective teaching is a way teachers think about goals and lessons in a thoughtful, analytical, and objective way, and they assess the origins, purposes, and consequences of their work at all levels (Cruickshank, 1981; Zeichner and Liston, 1990).

It gives findings of reflection performances in different settings such as classroom settings, colleagues and management settings in the teaching and learning environments. An examination of the findings shows that the results of the correlations applied to the reflection scores of ETE and PTE revealed a statistically significant difference. It can be inferred that ETE reflection scores in classroom settings are not statistically and significantly more different than PTE scores. However, an implication can be stated as the curriculum or learning environment might be prompting for ETE's reflective practice in colleagues and management settings. In Yorulmaz (2006) study, teachers stated that any type of in-service training related to reflective thinking was not provided to them. However, the findings and results give interesting evidence that more than half of ETE did attain higher reflection when compared to PTE. There was also a statistically significant and meaningful difference between the means of the mentioned groups' total reflection scores. Apart from all variables or factors which cannot be controlled including external and environmental stimuli, experienced teachers of English reflect on their practices to some extent more than preservice teachers of English, or their level of reflection improves significantly in time. This result might mean that experienced teachers' experiences in colleague and management settings might lead them to develop reflective skills in their practices in time while reflective skills of preservice teachers of English do not show any significant difference in higher education. This might be because preservice teachers are not taught reflection in language teaching curricula even though experienced teachers are introduced to classroom practice innovations from time to time, and a teacher's enthusiasm to new practices makes an impact on classroom practice implementation (Sansom, 2017). Kerimgil (2008) also states that more imposition of constructive curriculum could be more convenient for the development of PTE reflective thinking. Still, this study is limited with only primary school teachers. Further studies might be held on reflection for larger samples, not only for English teaching but for all areas, in correlative and/or experimental designs to

produce more data and results. Some questions might arise for the effect of reflective thinking and teaching, the change in teacher attitudes, beliefs, and performances. This might lead to far-reaching implications for decision makers and teacher educators to question the possibilities of reflective thinking and teaching for all preservice teaching curricula since PTE gain insight and increase higher levels of reflective thinking by becoming reflective agents while challenging problems and having opportunities for learning and practicing reflective skills.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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Full Length Research Paper

The relationship between orientation and rhythm ability of children doing karate

Alper Tunga Peker* and Mustafa Vural

Department of Physical education and Sports, High school of Physical Education and Sports, Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University, Ağrı, Turkey.

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The aim of this study is to determine the relationship between orientation and rhythm ability of children doing karate. Children who do karate from Turkey participated in the study. Their age is 14.60 ± 0.82 years; height, 1.60 ± 0.06 m and weight, 53.40 ± 7.01 kg. 20 numbered medicine ball run tests and sprint test with given rhythm were used to determine orientation and rhythm ability of the subjects. The study showed that their rhythm ability affected their orientation performance ($p < 0.05$). Rhythm ability ($r = 0.456$) displayed a positively significant relationship ($p < 0.05$). In conclusion, the rhythm ability affected the orientation performance of the children. It is expected that the orientation ability will develop when the rhythm ability is developed.

Key words: Karate, orientation, rhythm, coordinative abilities, exercise.

INTRODUCTION

In many sports, optimal performance requires several components of performance, such as efficient exhibition of motor coordination and behavior and perceptual ability (Williams et al., 1999). In sport science, there are two type of perceptual abilities. One of them is basis sensorial functions that are not for particular types of sport expertise (Williams et al., 1999; Abernethy, 1998). Sport-special perceptual skill is the other type of perceptual process. Studies have displayed that athletes who specialize are superior to rookies in perceptual abilities, such as determining the existence of a ball in sport events in a short time (Allard and Starkes, 1980; Starkes, 1987). It involves searching for relevant, informative parts of the opponent's body and fields, anticipating the

direction of the ball and the opponent's action in advance, recalling and recognizing structured scenes of game and play (Garlan and Barry, 1991).

Karate which includes attacking and defence techniques is a well known combat art. It requires performance outcome based on a point against a rival (Imamura et al., 1998; Filingeri et al., 2012; WKF, 2016). Karate movements contain sudden accelerations, directional changes, and sudden, fast and explosive attacks (Soykan et al., 2011). Karate athletes move very fast with short and narrow steps (Masciotra et al., 2001).

Rhythm ability plays a very important role in perception of an externally given rhythm by athletes as well reveals rhythm in many motor activity. The rhythm ability also

Corresponding author. E-mail: tungapeker@hotmail.com.

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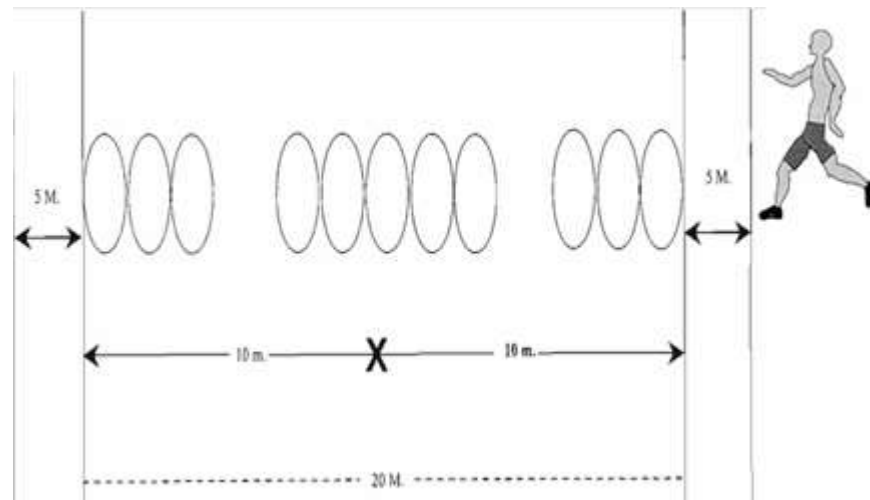


Figure 1. Sprint test with given rhythm.
Source: (Chib, 2000; Minz, 2003; Singh, 2004).

enables athletes to reproduce a rhythm which is in the motor memory in several motor actions (Minz, 2003). Sportsmen have to perceive rhythms given in a musical shape and have to reveal them in their movements in some technical sports such as gymnastics and figure skating. In many sports, there is no rhythm externally given. In these situations, sportsmen have to use rhythm existing in their memory. This is of vital importance to realize motor learning effectively and to do movements in a high level quality (Singh, 2004).

Orientation can be defined as an ability to identify players' own position, other players and equipment. This ability enables sportsmen to determine the whole body position and body's parts in space and time, as regards gravity (Holmann, 1980). Orientation makes players analyze and change their body's movements or location in time and space associated with defined motion (Singh, 1991). It enables sportsmen to determine and position their body's location and movement or an object's (such as ball, goal, opponents and teammates) location and movement in relation to space (Minz, 2003). The location of the ball, teammates and opponent consistently change during competition, particularly in sports which are performed as a team. Sportsmen have to have orientation ability well to adapt to varying conditions and situations in the game. Orientation ability helps players or athletes who do sport as a team and individually to perceive the game field and implement movements which are correct according to their position in the game field (Sayin, 2011). No study has investigated the relationship between orientation and rhythm ability, besides whether rhythm affects orientation or not in academic literature. Therefore, the aim of this study is to determine the relationship between orientation and rhythm ability of children who do karate.

METHODS

Data collection process

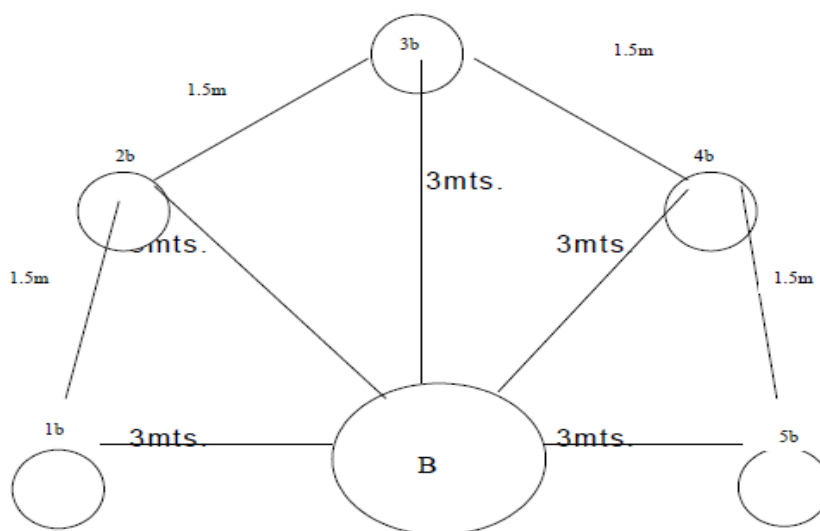
To test our hypotheses, 20 children who do karate from Turkey were assessed. These players were in the same club. To examine the orientation and rhythm performance of karatekas, an orientation ability test (Numbered medicine ball run test) and sprint test with given rhythm were used. Test-retest intraclass reliability for the numbered medicine ball run test, the sprint test with given rhythm were consecutively .92, .93 (Singh, 1991; Chib, 2000; Minz, 2003; Singh, 2004). These tests were performed indoor and conducted on a single day for each test subject.

Subjects

Subjects age was 14.60 ± 0.82 years; height, 1.60 ± 0.06 m and weight, 53.40 ± 7.01 kg. The sample included 20 children who do karate in Turkey. Before data collection, all participants received a detailed explanation of the study's benefits and risks; each subject signed an informed consent form that was approved by the local ethics committee and university.

Sprint test with given rhythm

This test is to determine rhythm ability of the subjects. The subject had to run 30 m-distance with the maximum sprint speed between two lines (starting and finish lines). The sprint time of the subjects was taken by photocell (Smart speed) which was arranged on the lines as starting line and finish line. In the second attempt, the subject had to run at a particular rhythm with maximum speed through eleven hoops which were arranged systematically (Figure 1). Three hoops were kept in a sequence adjacent to each other at a distance of 5 m away from the starting line. Similarly, three hoops were kept at a distance of 5 m away from the finish line. Five more hoops were kept in a sequence in the middle of the running distance. The subject had to run through these hoops stepping between each of them adjusting to the new self-rhythm. This



B – Medicine Ball Weighing 4 Kg.

b – Medicine Ball Weighing 3 Kg.

Figure 2. Numbered medicine ball run test subjects.
Source: (Chib, 2000; Minz, 2003; Singh, 2004).

process was explained and demonstrated to the participants then all the participants had one trial to finish test.

Scoring

Difference between the timings of 1st and 2nd attempt was taken as the score (Singh, 1991; Singh, 2014).

Numbered medicine ball run test

This test is to determine orientation ability of the subjects. All the medicine balls weighing 3 kg were arranged (Figure 2) on an even ground in a semi-circle with a distance of 1.5 m between the balls. The medicine balls weighing 4 kg were kept 3 m away from these medicine balls. Behind all the medicine balls of 3 kg weight, metallic number plates of 1 sq foot size were kept from 1 to 5. Before the start of the test, the subjects were said to stand behind the start-finish photocell gate which is behind the sixth medicine ball facing toward the opposite direction. On signal “ready-go”, the subjects turn, crossing start-finish gate and run the number called by tester, touch the medicine ball and run back to touch the sixth medicine ball, immediately another number is called. Similarly, a total of three times the number was called by the tester. After the subjects performed accordingly for three times, they completed the test by crossing start-finish gate again. Using a photocell, the tester measures the time between the “Go” signal and crossing the finish gate in units of 0.1 s. Before the actual test was administered, one practical trial was given to all the subjects (Chib, 2000; Minz, 2003; Singh, 2004).

Statistical analyses

SPSS 23.0 IBM statistical software was utilized for data calculation and evaluation. According to the normality test results, Skewness value was 0.319-0.190 while kurtosis value was 0.292-0.378 for rhythm and Skewness value was 0.391-0.190 while kurtosis value was 1.319-0.378 for orientation. Pearson correlation analysis was used to explain the relationship between the measurements. Linear regression analysis was utilized to determine the effects of rhythm ability on orientation performance. Significant level was taken as 0.05.

RESULTS

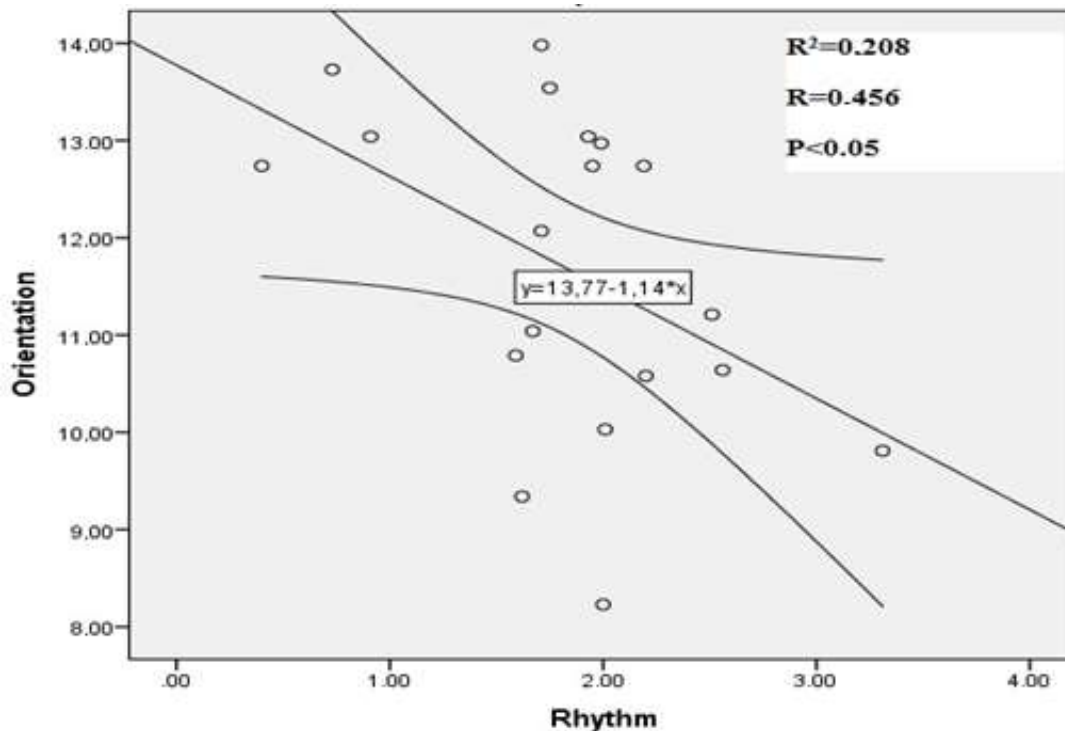
The mean (SD) age was 14.60 ± 0.82 years; height was 1.60 ± 0.06 m; weight was 53.40 ± 7.01 kg; rhythm ability was 1.82 ± 0.64 s, and orientation was 11.69 ± 1.61 s for the 20 karateka children (Table 1). Figure 3 showed that the children’s rhythm ability affected their orientation performance ($p < 0.05$).

DISCUSSION

This study is designed to investigate the relationship between the orientation performance and rhythm ability of children who do karate. It is observed that rhythm ability affects orientation performance ($p < 0.05$). Rhythm ability

Table 1. Description for athletes (Mean \pm SD).

Variable	N	Mean	SD
Age (years)	20	14.60	0.82
Height (m)	20	1.60	0.06
Weight (kg)	20	53.40	7.01
Rhythm (s)	20	1.82	0.64
Orientation (s)	20	11.69	1.61

**Figure 3.** Regression analysis between orientation and rhythm ability.

($r=0.456$) displays a positively significant relationship with orientation ability ($p<0.05$). According to Singh (1991), coordinative abilities are very important to exhibit movements optimally and efficiently in many sports. When our findings are evaluated in terms of this knowledge, results can provide valuable information for coach and trainers to improve skills of players.

The relationship between coordinative abilities and the other conditional abilities is unquestionable because for any action that is intended to be prompt, adequate and efficient, what you need first is speed, strength in order to impose it and defeat resistance on the opposite side, especially in the critical moments of contest which usually occur at the end of it. On the contrary, these abilities are not effective in athletic performance unless they are used together with conditional abilities (Smidu, 2014). Besides

this, the relationship between a coordinative ability and each one of the other coordinative abilities is amazing. In a previous study, there was a significant relationship between agility and orientation ability of judokas (Taskin et al., 2017). Singh and Saini (2017) studied the relationship of coordinative abilities with basketball skills. Results of the study showed that there was no significant relationship between rhythm ability and basketball skills. On the other hand, there was a significant relationship between orientation ability and field goal speed test of basketball skills.

In a study, researchers reported that there was a significant relationship between balance ability and playing ability of judokas while there was no significant relationship in terms of rhythm, reaction, orientation and differentiation of coordinative abilities with playing ability

of judokas. In case of wrestler, a significant relationship of balance and differentiation ability with playing ability was found whereas there was no significant relationship between rhythm, reaction, orientation of coordinative abilities and playing ability (Rana and Rajpoot, 2015a). There were several studies which reported orientation ability scores as 10.21 ± 0.56 , 11.12 ± 2.67 respectively for North-zone intervarsity team volleyball players and all India interuniversity basketball players. These results are close to the results of our research (Singh, 2015, 2013). In another study, rhythm ability scores were shown as 2.46 ± 1.22 for volleyball players and 3.23 ± 1.26 for handball players. In addition, orientation ability results were shown as 12.84 ± 1.83 for volleyball players and 11.2 ± 1.11 for handball players (Lohchab, 2014). Researchers investigated the role of coordinative abilities in badminton and table tennis. Results of the study displayed that there was no significant relationship between playing abilities of badminton and table tennis players in terms of orientation ability (Rana and Rajpoot, 2015b). Previous studies showed that researchers examined the relationship between coordinative abilities and playing abilities in some sports. Also they investigated the relationship in terms of agility and orientation, but no study was found on relationship between orientation and rhythm in literature. In conclusion, it can be said that rhythm ability affects orientation performance. It is expected that orientation ability will improve when rhythm ability is well developed.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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