

Editorial

Ssekamanya Siraje Abdallah *

Educators continue to grapple with the issue of educational quality at various levels, from preschool all the way to postgraduate studies. Papers in this volume of IIUM Journal of educational studies deal with different aspects of educational quality. Two of the papers consider the role of leadership and management; another two deal with instructional strategies; and the last two focus on the implementation of Instructional technology. All these are important factors for ensuring educational quality.

The first article by Abdullah bin Mohamed Al-Manie and Majed bin Abdullah Al-Saeed Deals with the important issue of educational planning. Using the “SERVQUAL” model of evaluation, it sought to determine the quality of an Educational Planning training course provided by the Leadership Training Center in the College of Education at King Saud University in Saudi Arabia. As expected, there were gaps between trainee expectations and their satisfaction with the training after it was implemented. This study is important as it gives us an idea about what actually happens in training educators about improving academic quality.

Still on the subject of educational leadership and management, the second article by Najla Aiman Mohamed Idrus, Azam Othman and Ahmad Faizuddin dealt with how Malaysian Headmasters deal with the crucial task of human resource management. Using a qualitative case study design, they studied human resource management practices in six schools in Malaysia. The major findings of this study revealed that a majority of the headmasters perceived human resource management as a shared responsibility among teachers and school administrators. Most importantly, they considered human resource management a crucial function for achieving educational goals. Leaders of private schools found human resource management to be very important for sustainability.

The third article by Fawziah M. Aldosary deals with the area of curriculum and instruction. Using the experimental design, it sought to determine the effectiveness of an enrichment program in developing geographical and cosmic concepts and knowledge among second year high school students in Saudi Arabia (KSA). As expected, the program was effective. The implication of this, as recommended by the author is that training courses should be conducted for pre and in-service teachers in order to change the Geography curriculum from an achievement curriculum into an enrichment one. The curriculum should be enriched with activities that develop geographical and cosmic concepts and cosmic awareness.

* Kulliyyah of Education, International Islamic University Malaysia

The fourth paper by Asma Musazay and Madihah Khalid deals with the instructional strategy of task-based language teaching (TBLT) in the context of second language acquisition. While this approach is widely used for promotes actual use of a target second or foreign language, little research has been conducted in Malaysia regarding TBLT and its implicit method. This case study at the language training center of the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), found that the teachers possessed a clear understanding of TBLT, agreeing that TBLT is beneficial. However, they were not only unsure of the advantages of using it in the classroom but also expressed some fear of adopting it fully, primarily as a result of the problems they face pertaining to the end of semester assessment. More work needs to be done to popularize this useful strategy.

The fifth article by Kishabale Bashir, Issa Omar Malecela and Sharifah Sariah Syed Hassan discusses how university lecturers integrate ICT tools in their classes. Using a qualitative design, it specifically explored the experiences and intentions of lecturers to integrate computer-related technologies in their undergraduate classrooms. Among the major finding are that lecturers were found to be aware of the relevance of Web 2.0 tools for instructional purposes. However, they highlighted low Internet speed as the main challenge in their efforts to integrate technology into their instructional activities. The article highlights how instructional technologies are matched with learner-centered instructional strategies to enhance learners' 21st century skills that are essential for career readiness.

The sixth article by Kishabale Bashir focused on the role of user interface design in fostering students' learning. It explored the perceptions students at a higher learning institution in Malaysia on how user interface design fosters their learning process in a multimedia courseware. Results of this qualitative study indicated that the nature and usability of the interface design of multimedia courseware influences learning motivation, interactivity and cognitive load. The participants also identified software and hardware issues as the key challenges in using the multimedia courseware.

Together, the articles in this issue of IJES are intended to prompt the reader to look into the various aspects of educational quality. The struggle continues.