

A Study for the Relationship between Learning Environment and Modern-Apprenticeship-Mode - Student's Adaption in Classrooms

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Abstract. This study is focused on "the Relationship between Learning Environment and Modern-Apprenticeship-Mode-Student's Adaption in Classrooms(MAMSA). The purpose of the study is to find out how the students taken in Modern Apprenticeship Mode adapt socially, physically, cognitively and emotionally to Learning Environment which they are subjected to. The main objective is to establish relationship between learning environment and education level of Modern-Apprenticeship-Mode-Student's Adaption in vocational higher education institutions in Hainan. The design of the study is descriptive correlation where quantitative and qualitative survey approach is adopted. The researcher selected the subject of Tourism Management in Hainan College of Economics and Business, Hainan Province. A sample size of 120 Modern Apprenticeship Mode students were randomly selected from the college. Findings reveal that a positive relationship between MAMSA and their learning environment. The researcher recommends the need for colleges that rely on MAMSA for pilot and its financial implication, to improve their learning environment. Lecturers should endeavor to be more creative and use modern information, communication technological (ICT) equipments and materials in delivery of lectures. Lecture rooms should be computer based and sound proof making them more conducive.

Introduction

Students come from many different social and cultural backgrounds and in a classroom there are wide variety of diverse students from other cultures and this gives rise to cultural diversity in classrooms (Charney, 2012). It is very important also for teachers to build a healthy environment in the classrooms and thus build strong student relationship in return. This is important as the relationship when strong among lecture and student and student-student, helps to achieve greater responsiveness and higher level goals in classrooms. Building relationship is important in institutions of higher learning and this is supported by Smith (2016) who asserted that building collaborate relationship is composed of interpersonal relationships based on truth, mutual respect and participation which aids in solving complex classroom problems. When effectiveness is considered in lecture rooms, productivity is based on capacity of teacher to perform well in delivery of the lessons to students and also his/her ability to use appropriate teaching materials (Epstein, 2012). This is not the case with efficiency for private universities. Universities especially privately owned universities, prefer efficient output with little amount of resources involved. Efficient administration in academics is viewed as the biggest advantage a university can have if it is resource hungry but with lesser competitive higher education environment (Ramsden, 2014). As students population increases in the Modern-Apprenticeship-Mode in China, more students cross their business or industry to access universities in China where they can accept the education both from the university and the industry. The number of Modern-Apprenticeship-Mode students (MAMS) are on the increase in China because liberalization of education has opened doors to many vocational universities or colleges to operate within the educational policies and provide education at all levels. Environments are also

changing and as environments change, institutions ought to introduce new practices, imbibe current technology to match changing environments.

Methods

This study adopted both mixed method design integrating observation, interviewing, questionnaire, and check-list as one database which also helped in checking the accuracy (validity) of the database. The design allowed the researcher collect both qualitative and quantitative data at the same time and this was very useful in interpreting the overall results. A check- list was made for learning environment while a questionnaire was used in gathering more data on MAMS adaptation in the classroom. The questionnaires were administered in the lecture room and the researcher was on the ground to administer the questionnaire as well as use the checklist. So both pragmatic view and constructivist philosophy were engaged in the study as the researcher was able to harmonize observation and, checklist, interviewing some MAMS while engaging them in a focus group discussion. 120 randomly selected MAMS in Hainan College of Economics and Business form the sample size. Snowball method of random sampling was used in selecting participants in this research because only MAMS participated in this study and the process of data collection went on while the students were in the lecture rooms not while outside. This is to ensure that social, physical, cognitive and emotional adaptations were captured in classroom environment. The researcher also administered the questionnaires and retrieved them on the spot. The data was collected and analyzed.

Results / Findings

Students agree that some classroom materials are enough but not up to expected standard. Most of the lecturers were still relying solely on white-boards and marker to teach, But most of the lecturers for MAMS are from the positions of the industry now. The chairs and benches are not comfortable as some chairs lack arm rest. MAMS complained that the classrooms are not conducive and would have preferred a much better learning environment. On observation, some classrooms(learning place) are disturbed by noisy surroundings and the lecturers struggle to raise their voices while teaching and students are often distracted from outside. Most of the lecture rooms lack basic modern classroom equipments. The result of analysis on learning environment will be shown using table 1 and table 2.

Table 1. Mean and Interpretation of Level of Indicators for Learning Environment

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Computer / visual display	2.15	Low/ unsatisfactory	3
Space and size of lecture room	1.65	Very low /unsatisfactory	4
Lightening (brightness/ visibility)	2.95	satisfactory	1
Sound proof (interferences)	1.56	Very low /very unsatisfactory	5
Chairs and desks	2.84	High satisfactory	2
Mean	2.23	Low Unsatisfactory	

Table 2. Range and observation mode of interpretation

Legend Mean Range	Observation Mode	Interpretation
3.26-4.00	Very high	Very satisfactory
2.51 – 3.25	High	Satisfactory
1.76-2.50	Low	Unsatisfactory
1.00-1.75	Very Low	Very unsatisfactory

The results obtained this study have shown that computer and visual display materials with mean of 2.15 is unsatisfactory, space and size of lecture rooms are also very unsatisfactory, the most appalling in its state is the serenity of lecture rooms in terms of noise. Most of the lecture rooms are so noisy that one wonders how proper understanding of lectures can be possible. This accounts for the mean of 1.56 obtained from the analysis of data. However, lightening, chairs and desks ranked higher

and satisfactory in the classroom environment of private universities in Hainan Colleges of Economics and Business. In higher institutions the use of MAM in education is getting increasing attention from policy makers in China. The support of Chinese Central Educational Department, Provincial Education Department, Universities and Industry Companies has been concentrated on MAM and MAMS. Owing to cost of procuring these equipments, Industry Companies do not find it easily to cope with visual classrooms which is the current trend in lecture rooms for those funded universities. It has been observed also that very low connectivity to internet are seen in MAM and more computers are for students' use in classrooms. This could be why majority of Industry Companies are offering art, industrial culture and humanities more than science, engineering and technology-based courses. The findings of this study seem to agree with the idea that facilities and equipment are the major factors influencing academic achievements and outcomes in our university education. The implication is that if the MAMS are not comfortable in these classrooms, how can they readily adapt socially, physically, cognitively and emotionally? The result of their adaptation is shown in the following table 3 and table 4.

Table 3. Level of Student's Classroom Adaptation

Indicator	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Social	2.65	Very high	1
Physical	1.98	Low	4
Cognitive	2.55	Low	3
Emotional	2.50	Very high	2
Average	2.37	Low	

Table 4. Range and response mode of interpretation

Legend	Response Mode	Interpretation
3.26 – 4.00	Very High	Very good
2.51 – 3.25	High	Good
1.76 – 2.50	Low	Poor
1.00 – 1.75	Very Low	Very Poor

Table 3 and table 4 give a summary of the man scores of MAMS on their adaptation in the lecture rooms. There is low level of adaptation and it is clear from the results that social and emotional adaptation rate higher with mean of 2.65 and 2.50 respectively, but those data are not convincing enough. On the contrary, physical and cognitive adaptation are low and the researcher inquired to ascertain why the low mean scores. The interview revealed that students had expected the physical environment of the lecture rooms to look like the ones they have seen on the university website of some of these private universities. They had prepared themselves for better environment than they had been in MAM but some of the lecturer rooms are just lower than expected. They therefore find it difficult to adapt satisfactorily. One student admitted that he often skips lectures because he get cramps when he sits for two hours at a stretch in any of the lecture rooms. Another students submitted that he sits very close to the lecturer up in front row if he is to grasp any concept taught in that lesson. Whenever he is not able to secure adequate sitting position, his preference will be to be absent in that lecture.

On further inquiry, the researcher gathered that this attitude has actually affected most students grade point Average (GPA) at the end of the semester.

This finding is supported by the idea that innovation and new technologies drive growth, jobs and living standards. That means new environment with less technological advancement affect growth in individuals and do not stimulate economic growth. The best learning environment are ones with high challenges and less stress, vitalized and patterned to student's adaptation

Social adaptation refers to eradication or reduction of social barriers which helps individuals integrate themselves by getting acclimatized to their environment. In higher institutions social adaptation are quite high even in MAM universities because interactions between government,

universities, industries and others are well harmonized. All students are being treated as same group and so MAMS are socially adapted

According to social cultural theory, social interaction plays a fundamental role in cognitive development but in this study, while social adaptation had a high mean score cognitive adaptation score low. A difference of 0.30 in mean could be seen as not significant.

The study established the relationship between learning environment and adaptation in MAM of Hainan College of Economics and Business. There is a positive and significant relationship between learning environment and classroom adaptation as the findings of the study have shown that Pearson linear coefficient of correlation between learning environment and classroom adaptation has a "r" of 0.014 and a "p" value of 0.01, between the two variables indicating that they are closely related to each other. Simple correlation analysis (r) was used as in bivariate relationship and this indicated that the two variables are linked.

Summary and Recommendations

The study has shown that MAM of Hainan College of Economics and Business in Hainan are not making serious effort in transforming their classrooms into modern information, communication and technology classrooms (ICT) with visual display equipment and computers to meet the expectation of MAM students who make a try of Working and Learning simultaneously to obtain university degrees. On one side the MAMS can gain salary from the industry company monthly, on the second side the MAMS can learn the theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge in the industrial positions and on the third side, the MAMS can gain the certificate or even diploma of the university education.

There is inadequate educational facilities and incompatible environment to students convenience but the technologies and equipment is more advanced in industrial education base. Though this research was not in-depth in checking other facilities outside classroom, there is no doubt that dependability on obsolete teaching and learning aids is still the norm in Hainan College of Economics and Business. Other equipment such as textbooks and reference materials are grossly inadequate for MAMS.

It is based on these findings that the following recommendations are made MAM industrial companies must endeavor to meet the recommended modern classroom /lecture rooms standards set by NCHE monitoring and evaluation of learning environment should not be overwhelming to school quality assurance and also to external body assigned with this task.

Lecturers in MAM industrial companies should be advised to develop themselves in using visual classrooms as this is the trend.

Lecture rooms in MAM industrial companies should be student friendly, sound proof, comfortable seats with writing desks safe and very comfortable for students.

Provincial government and educational department should pay equal attention to both universities and industrial companies to mention equal and uniform standards in both quality and quantity of education in China.

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