



Strategies to Promote Lifelong Learning by Teachers: A Comparative Analysis of Public and Private Schools

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Abstract

Learning is a never-ending process, yet, many teachers are unaware of its deliberate implementation and practical strategies. Therefore, the current research was conducted with the purpose of a) examining lifelong learning promoting strategies by teachers and b) comparing lifelong learning promoting strategies among public and private school teachers. For this purpose, a survey was taken, and data were collected from 78 teachers (45 public and 33 private school teachers) using a cluster sampling technique. The data was collected by using researcher developed lifelong learning promoting strategies survey. The survey contained 25 statements and five dimensions of lifelong learning i.e., support personalized learning, curricular alignment, encourage anytime learning attitude, promote students' autonomy, and provide helpful information with a Cronbach alpha of 0.976. An Independent sample t-test was performed, and the results showed no statistically significant difference in lifelong learning strategies survey scores of public and private school teachers with a 0.4% effect size. The study's results can promote learners' autonomy and utilize teaching strategies in both streams of the education sector that encourage learning beyond the classroom and strengthen the link between education and the job market.

Keywords: Lifelong learning, teaching strategies, public and private school teachers and independent sample t-test.

1. Introduction

Lifelong learning (LLL) encourages students to acquire new knowledge outside the traditional and formal educational settings. LLL includes systematic and deliberate activities which enable students' desire to learn about anything and at anywhere (Odabasi, Kuzu, & Gunuc, 2012). Besides, it allows individuals to utilize knowledge to fulfil the roles of a citizen who can adapt in any situation and contribute to the betterment of the society. A lifelong learning has become vital to become successful in the dynamic society of today's era. Bennetts (2001) defines LLL as "a tool that provides an individual with the means to develop the skills that they already possess and increase their potential to the highest levels irrespective of time and place".

The concept of LLL is emphasized by UNESCO in Learning to be (Faure, 1972). The report argued that lifelong learning needs to be the keystone or organizing principle for education policies, and that the creation of the learning society should become a key strategy for facilitating learning throughout life for individuals and societies. Not only this, there is a Prophetic Hadith which says to "seek knowledge from cradle to grave". From this, it can be seen that LLL is also invigorated in religion Islam. Similarly, the same thing is also mentioned by John Dewey in the words that "Education is not preparation of life; education is life itself". Meaning that learning is an active process that should occur to enhance one 's living and understanding thereof. Moreover, lifelong learning is also one of goals of sustainable development goals (SDGs) established by United Nations in 2015. The full title of SDG 4 is "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all".

The concept of LLL gained a huge attention during COVID-19 pandemic in which some students were able to keep up with the transition to remote learning, many others, particularly young and socio-economically disadvantaged learners, experienced large learning losses consequently learning inequality increased. The 2021 OECD Skills Outlook: Learning for Life suggests that these inequalities may stem from the influence teachers and parents can play on the development of lifelong learning attitudes in youngsters. Key perspectives that make up a LLL outlook are motivation to complete assigned tasks on time and getting pleasure in reading. These mentalities

are particularly crucial during school terminations, when learners learn in their own speed or have to sort out work all alone and can assist peers in school and have continuous endeavor to learn without physical presence of teachers.

The foundation of LLL is mostly laid at schools where teachers' behavior and adopted strategies to promote LLL plays a key role. However, research suggests opposite of it, for example, Gottfried, Fleming, and Gottfried (2001) found an association of motivational problems with the amount of time students remain at school which result in negative attitude for learning in future of students (Hargreaves, 2004). Though, there are very limited studies which highlight the role of teachers in promoting LLL (Spiel, Lüftenegger, Wagner, Schober, & Finsterwald, 2011), yet; even if they are doing it there are no evidence which show how they are doing it since LLL is rarely taught explicitly. Thus, the main aim of the study was to analyze which LLL promoting strategies are being used by Public and Private school teachers.

1.1. Research Questions

RQ1: What type of lifelong learning strategies are adopted by public and private school teachers?

RQ2: Is there a significant difference in the mean lifelong learning strategies scores for public and private school teachers? If yes then what is that difference? If no why?

2. Literature Review

2.1. History of Lifelong Learning

Grundtvig is viewed as the pioneer of LLL since he was the first who involved the idea of deep rooted learning during the 1800s. Comenius' perspective likewise added to idea of deep rooted learning (Wain, 2000). LLL was considered as a notion which emphasize the significance of professional preparation and was formed in the idea of grown-up schooling until 1970s. In later years, LLL has been seen as a concept including all areas of society and all levels of the school system.

The idea of efficient LLL at first was explained by UNESCO during the 1960s. This depended on the acknowledgment that education is not limited to certain age, but instead a general and long-lasting process. Everyone has the right to essential schooling; however, this right conveys less importance in the event that it isn't supported by the right circumstances for learning. Thus, UNESCO put down quality schooling for all as one of its base targets, and battles that any type of social progression and, financial improvement of a nation relied upon its capacity to teach every one of its residents. The 1970s and 1980s saw numerous hypothetical and reasonable examinations on LLL particularly in Europe which prompted what the EU commission alluded to as education Permanente, and the OECD as recurrent education. The distinction in these terms is that though education Permanente alludes to a long-lasting learning framed on the basis of socio-cultural changes, recurrent education thinks LLL in terms financial and technological changes.

The requirement education and access to information has been elevated by what Yang and Cotera portray in their paper as '21st Century Global Challenges' including worldwide monetary emergencies and the always developing danger of environmental change pestilence. UNESCO has been a mainstay of help to member states in answering both their technical and scholarly necessities in education that caters for the present and future requests in the financial situations. Advancing all through one's life is the surest approach to managing the continually changing difficulties of the 21st Century. The term changed during the 1990s from "Lifelong Education" to "Lifelong Learning" as the previous was seen more as a 'prescriptive and a regularizing process instead of student situated decision that it ought to be.

2.2.Characteristics of Lifelong Teachers and Learners

Teachers have to play untraditional roles to promote lifelong learning, they need to promote learners' ownership for learning, teach them how to think instead of what to think, model lifelong learning for students, encourage self-development of students through evaluation, and make learning an enjoyable activity for students. Most importantly, such teachers and schools focus on self-directed and student-centered learning approaches (Argon, Yilmaz, & Ismetoglu, 2016; Bryce & Withers, 2003).

Effective life-long learners as having the ability to 1) set goals, 2) apply appropriate knowledge and skills, 3) engage in self-direction, 4) locate required information, and 5) adapt their learning strategies to different conditions (Kirby, Knapper, Lamon, & Egnatoff, 2010; Meerah et al., 2011).

2.3.Teaching Strategies to Promote Lifelong Learning

Kiley and Cannon (2000) discuss few teaching strategies of LLL which includes involving students in planning and assessing their own learning, make students learn in informal situations, engage them in active and peer learning process, give them opportunities to integrate knowledge from different disciplines, and use group and project-based teaching methods.

3. Methodology

3.1.Research Design

The main purpose of the current study was to analyze the type of lifelong learning strategies implemented by public and private school teachers and to examine whether there is any statistically significant difference between both. To achieve this purpose, quantitative research approach was adopted and survey research design was followed.

3.2.Population and Sample

The population contained all public and private school teachers of a sub-urban area of Sindh. The data was collected by using cluster sampling and all 78 responses were included for further analysis. The demographic information of respondents is given in the table below:

Table 1: Demographic Information of Lifelong Survey Respondents

Gender	Male	36	42%
	Female	42	54%
Age	21-25	40	51%
	26-30	23	30%
	31-35	8	10%
	36-40	3	4%
	40+	4	5%
Academic Qualification	Masters (18 years)	11	14%
	Masters (16 years)	23	30%
	Bachelor (16 years)	29	37%
	Bachelor (14 years)	15	19%
Professional Qualification	M.Ed	15	19%
	B.Ed	28	36%
	PTC/CTC	16	21%
Institute	None	19	24%
	Public	45	58%
	Private	33	42%
Teaching	None	4	5%

Experience	1-2 years	23	30%
	3-4 years	24	31%
	5-6 years	10	13%
	7-8 years	9	11%
	9-10 years	3	4%
	10+ years	5	6%
Teaching Grade Level	Primary	21	27%
	Elementary	16	20%
	Secondary	24	31%
	Higher Secondary	17	22%
Subjects Teaching	Language	29	37%
	Mathematics	18	23%
	Science	17	22%
	Other	14	18%

3.3. Research Instrument

The data was collected by using researcher developed lifelong learning promoting strategies survey. The survey contained 25 statements and five dimensions of lifelong learning i.e., support personalized learning, curricular alignment, encourage anytime learning attitude, promote students' autonomy, and provide helpful information with a Cronbach alpha of 0.976.

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha Value of Lifelong Survey

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.976	25

3.4. Data analysis

There were two variables: one categorical, independent variable (e.g. public/private school teachers); and one continuous, dependent variable (e.g. lifelong learning strategies survey scores). Therefore, independent-sample t-test was calculated by using SPSS and eta square (effect size) was calculated by using the appropriate formula.

4. Results

The results obtained from SPSS are summarized in the following tables. In the table 3, the descriptive statistics is shown and table 4 includes the summary of independent sample t-test for overall and for each category of lifelong learning strategies respectively.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Lifelong Learning Strategies of Public and Private School Teachers

Lifelong Learning Strategies	Institution	N	Mean	SD
Support Personalized Learning	Public	45	3.13	0.81
	Private	33	3.30	1.07
Curricular Alignment	Public	45	3.49	1.01
	Private	33	3.81	1.15
Encourage anytime learning attitude	Public	45	3.70	0.96

Promote Students' Autonomy	Private	33	3.75	1.12
	Public	45	3.69	0.90
Provide Useful Information	Private	33	3.73	1.08
	Public	45	3.80	0.97
Overall Lifelong Learning Strategies	Private	33	3.86	1.17
	Public	45	3.56	0.83
	Private	33	3.69	1.01

Table 3 shows the descriptive data for the public and private schools about lifelong learning strategies. The five categories which were found in literature were that a) they support personalized learning in classroom, b) they ensure an alignment among outcomes, instructions and assessment, c) they encourage anytime, anywhere learning attitude with and without use of technology, d) they promote students' autonomy in class, and e) they provide useful information to students. The mean scores of private school teachers in all categories of lifelong learning strategies are slightly higher with most difference in curricular alignment. However, whether this difference is statistically significant or not will be decided after evaluating the results of t-test.

Standard deviation is also shown in the above table which emphasizes that how much variation or dispersion is occurred for each of the category from the average or mean value. A low standard deviation indicates that the data points tend to be very close to the mean. A high standard deviation indicates that the data points are spread out over a large range of values. It can be seen in the table that the standard deviation value of all categories of lifelong learning strategies of private school teachers are spreader than public school teachers i.e. $SD > 1$. This shows that responses of private school teachers fluctuate more than public school teachers.

Table 4: Summary of Results of Independent Sample T-Test

Lifelong Learning Strategies	f	Sig.	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect Size
Support Personalized Learning	2.104	.152	-.704	.484	0.7%
Curricular Alignment	.502	.481	-1.166	.248	2.1%
Encourage anytime learning attitude	.561	.457	-.195	.846	0%
Promote Students' Autonomy	.662	.419	-.163	.871	0%
Provide Useful Information	2.953	.091	-.206	.837	0.6%
Overall Lifelong Learning Strategies	1.329	.253	-.544	.589	0.4%

It can be seen in the output above that the significant level of Levene's test in all variables is greater than 0.05. This means that the assumption of equal variances is not been violated; therefore, equal variances assumed values are reported. Furthermore, Sig. (2-tailed) value of all variables is above the cut-off of .05 which means that there is not a statistically significant difference in the mean lifelong learning strategies survey scores of public and private school teachers.

Moreover, effects sizes were also calculated and they were also very small. For support personalized learning it is 0.7%, 2.1% for curricular alignment, and 0% for encourage anytime learning attitude and promote students' autonomy each, 0.6% for providing useful information and 0.4% for overall lifelong learning strategies. Relatively, the magnitude of differences in the means was greater in curricular alignment as eta squared value is 2.1%.

5. Discussion

The main purpose of the current study was to analyze the lifelong learning strategies used by public and private school teachers and draw a comparison between that.

Both public and private school teachers were found to implement lifelong learning strategies but because their mean average lies in 3 and slight above which means that they sometimes implement those LLL strategies. Therefore, teachers of both sector need training to implement lifelong learning strategies in a long run. However, the LLL strategies survey scores showed slightly increased scores of private school teachers; however, that difference was not statistically significant and minimum effect size was not. Deveci (2015) conducted a similar study about tendency of students for LLL and drew a comparison between Turkish and Emirati students. Like present study, his study also showed a moderate level of students' propensity for LLL.

Most of the studies show that private school perform better than public schools (Siddiqui & Gorard, 2017). On contrary to this, our study's result shows the similar results of adopted LLL strategies between public and private school teachers. Private schools are autonomous and they generate revenue from different sources to meet the expenses of schools and provide better facilities to students. The opposite results are such a disappointment for many parents and other relevant organizations. The public schools may not be blamed much because, in Pakistan, less GDP is allocated for education and teachers' training on LLL strategies or other similar things is less priority.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

No profession in the world can excel without being a lifelong learner. Lifelong learners have better job opportunities and they contribute for the betterment of the society and nation. If students are taught about being lifelong learner since school, then they are more likely to retain that attitude in future. Analyzing whether teachers specifically of both public and private sector teachers implement lifelong learning strategies will help to train and focus on this factor from schools. This is the main reason for which the current comparative study was conducted. The data was collected by using a researcher developed survey about lifelong learning strategies and survey was sent to both public and private school teachers via google form, 45 public school and 33 private school teachers filled the survey. The collected data was analyzed by using SPSS and independent sample t-test was calculated to analyze the mean scores and difference in lifelong learning strategies between public and private school teachers. The findings revealed that the teachers of both sectors implement lifelong learning strategies to a moderate level with a slight increase in LLL strategies of private school teachers. However, the difference was not statistically significant and effect size was also minimal.

Based on these findings it is recommended that teachers should be made aware about the importance of lifelong learning for students. Besides, training should also be arranged for teachers of both sectors to integrate LLL strategies in their teaching. Finally, teacher education department should include a component to promote lifelong learning strategies when future teachers in their department do practice teaching.

7. References

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