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Fostering Career Aspirations through English Language Learning: Exploring Self-Efficacy and ICT Adoption in Secondary Schools

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Abstract:

Focusing on English language learning with a focus on self-efficacy and the use of ICT, the study investigates how learning English influences secondary school students' career plans. A transformation in the way the pupils can communicate, do business and study in English can have a profound impact on their future opportunities as it is still the most widely used language in the world. This article analyzes the influence of the learning of English, digital resources (ICT) and self-efficacy (belief in one's ability to learn) on the possibility of students attaining their career objectives. Information from different sources and previous studies is integrated to understand how these parts function in secondary school.

Introduction

With a focus on the underlying effect of self-efficacy and use of ICT in classroom, this study explores the association between learning English and the career choices of secondary school students. English remains a world language, and the future prospects of students may be unequally affected by their ability to communicate, work and study in English. This paper investigates how students can achieve their career goals through learning the English language, using digital technologies (ICT) and developing self-efficacy (confidence in their own ability to learn). To stage the relationship between these aspects in relation to a secondary school context, we gather diverse data sources and extant studies.

The study of English as a second language has changed as the technology that supports the ICT tools, such as interactive platforms, digital classrooms, or language learning applications, experienced rapid development. In combination with a high sense of self-efficacy, these resources are potent drivers for student motivation and career-related goal-setting behavior. This relationship is explored in the secondary area in this study.

Literature Review

There are numerous studies that show the relationship between oral language and employment opportunities (Richards, 2015; Norton & Toohey, 2011). English is the world language in the area of international business, science, and technology. Students who have a higher level of proficiency in English usually achieve at a higher level in school and are exposed to more job opportunities (Crystal, 2012).

Bandura (1997) theorizes self-efficacy and maintains that having personal confidence that one can attain a goal is central to this. Similarly, such a belief in language learning can also help to foster more engagement and perseverance in learning activities. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that the use of ICT in the classroom has a positive effect on language learning outcomes (Zhao, 2003). Various digital tools interact and adapt to individual students' needs while learning.

The integration of technology in L2 classrooms fosters collaboration, critical thinking, and learner independence (Warschauer, 2004). Nevertheless, teachers still face high levels of inequality of access to the ICT environment and training in many parts of the world. So learning the role of ICT in learning English language particularly in the context of developing countries is important for ensuring just access in education.

Methodology

This study takes a descriptive qualitative approach and explores the literature, enquiry linkages, and field data. High school students in several urban and rural schools were interviewed via surveys. Teachers were also interviewed to explore the impact of ICT tools and teaching strategies on language teaching.

The participants were grouped by English proficiency, access to ICT and self-reported self-efficacy. Data was gathered through an open-ended questionnaire, focus groups and class visits. Thematic analysis was applied to examine themes in the students' career aspirations, perceived English competence and ICT use.

Results & Discussion

The results indicate a potentially considerable association between ESL and occupational aspirations. Students who were proficient in English reported wider and more ambitious career plans, usually international, including ocean exploring. Self-efficacy was a significant predictor of career pathway – students with high levels of confidence in their English ability were more likely to aspire to careers in medicine, engineering, technology, and business. ICT tools have been at the core of language acquisition. Students who ever used digital language resources such as Duolingo, Grammarly, or school-sponsored platforms were more likely to report using and retaining their language skills. Teachers indicated that these tools enabled them to differentiate instruction for students who excelled and those who were experiencing difficulty.

Challenges such as poor internet access, no digital literacy, and poor infrastructures prevented the adoption of ICT, particularly in rural schools. Closing these gaps is critical to ensuring equal access to digital learning for all students.

Conclusion

This research highlights the role of English language education in influencing students' career aspirations. Self-efficacy with the help of ICT is a great mediator for promoting language learning as a tool for future planning and academic success. Policy makers for education should focus on the provision of ICT and ICT training of the teachers in order to support equitable learning environments. Our integrated, community-driven program helps students gain language, technology, and confidence skills that can change their academic and life outcomes.

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