

Case Study: How Has Virtual Learning Impacted Your Own Practices of Teaching?

Rationale

This study is important for two reasons. First, teachers must create an environment where they are required to work collaboratively to improve their profession, build their confidence, and reduce stress while teaching virtually. Secondly, the learning context should be improved specifically focusing on how students are being assessed and scored through virtual learning.

Literature Review

Al Ghazali states that teachers should raise cognitive strategies to remove independence of themselves during virtual learning (2020). Beach and Willows found that when using thought units there was no significant difference between evaluating, diversion, understanding, and describing procedural behavior regarding teaching and learning (2017). According to Etchells et al., Tenured and Non-Tenured Teachers feel as though COVID-19 was taken away from them as professionals (2020). Kaden believes the disruption in education caused by COVID-19 forced educators to realize they were not prepared. With many realizing they had to develop strategies to assist students in navigating the technology and lessons (2020). Reinking (2021), states that Virtual Learning incorporates the learned knowledge of best practices with “real life” situations in a simulated environment. Finally, Steele, Burleigh, and Young found Virtual Learning means educators workload increases because they have to monitor student psychological and emotional safety along with teachers and performing other duties (2020).

Methodology

This study used a descriptive research approach with purposeful selected groups of teachers, who have been teaching in public schools for no more than 12 years, are core subject teachers in a public school system in the northeast section of the United States.

Each interview was recorded by handwritten notes and later transcribed to ensure that the data was accurate. The participants were encouraged to be honest about their perceptions in conducting virtual classes. Open-ended questions were used in the interviews. The questions were not altered nor leading and only the researcher’s tone of voice change throughout the interviews.

The researcher removed all professional and personal distractions while conducting the study. The researcher had the research questions examined to ensure that each question asked was appropriate for the study. To achieve triangulation, three individuals not involved with the study examined the interview questions. These individuals are teacher union members, a core subject teacher in another school in the same school district where the study took place, and a department chairperson in another school in the same school district the research took place.

For this study, the researcher used individual interviews which were handwritten to gather information from the participants. When the interview sessions began the researcher orally stated what research is and what this research is about. The researcher, received oral permission by the participants stating, “They give consent to participate.” The researcher also made sure that there were no physical, mental, or emotional risks involved in participating in the session.

Data Analysis and Findings

For this study, the researcher transcribed the interview responses himself. This was done by reading each transcript to get a better understanding of each response. The researcher for this study coded the data himself. This was done by placing important information that is similar in

the same sections on separate sheets of paper. The researcher then used axial coding which consisted of reviewing the data again to make sure that all the themes were placed in the correct sections (accuracy). The final step in the process was selective coding – selecting the main categories and relating them to other categories to form findings.

Findings suggest that school districts must provide for elementary teachers an outlet (counseling) to discuss various issues developed while teaching online. Findings also suggest that school districts must provide interactive lessons for virtual learning. Further findings suggest that school districts must develop a technology course for standardized test grades along with simpler ways to solve technical issues.

Recommendations

This researcher recommends for future studies that school districts provide professional development focusing on assisting teachers implementing virtual and hybrid instruction. It is also recommended that teachers follow their school district's policies and not make practices policies. The researcher also recommends that school districts must place less stress on elementary teachers and reduce instruction time per class while teaching virtually. Another recommendation is that school districts must purchase designed virtual lessons with futures to keep student interest. The final recommendation for further study consists of school districts using various forms of platforms that have less technical issues.

References

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