



“Ekisaakaate” (Royal Enclosure) Living Values-Based Contextual Instruction Pedagogy and Early Childhood Moral Learning Outcomes in Buganda Kingdom in Uganda

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Abstract

The study was prompted by the increasing moral decadence among the young children in Buganda Kingdom in particular and Uganda at large with many young people not being merciful, honest and loyal. They lack moral ethics, etiquette and are not responsible. Different approaches have been suggested as effective in promoting moral development of children, with no particular mention of one that uses a cultural value-based system. This study examined the relationship between ekisaakaate living values-based contextual instruction pedagogy and early childhood moral learning outcomes in Buganda Kingdom. Methodologically, cross-sectional research design guided the study. A sample of 159 ekisaakaate trainers were systematically selected to participate in the study and data were collected with the use of questionnaires. Descriptive and statistical analyses were used to analyze data collected. Frequencies and percentages were used to show the distribution of respondents on different items. Correlation was used to establish the relationships between the variables and in order to establish the predictor variable that contributed most to moral learning outcomes, a Simple Linear Regression (SLR) Analysis was used to establish the predictor variable that contributed most to moral learning outcomes. Results empirically revealed that active cooperative learning, problem-based approach to instruction and participatory learning have a positive influence on early childhood moral learning outcomes. Hence the study recommends that stakeholders such as early childhood education directors, teachers and parents in the respective early childhood centers should encourage the use of living values-based contextual instruction pedagogy to enhance early childhood moral learning outcomes.

Keywords: Moral Learning Outcomes, Living Values-Based Contextual Instruction Pedagogy, “Ekisaakaate”, Early Childhood

INTRODUCTION

Raising empathetic and emotionally healthy children requires moral education. Raising children to value virtue and denounce evil may be what the world needs. One must establish morality early on to help youngsters distinguish good from bad. Yet, Buganda Kingdom and Ugandan youth are becoming increasingly immoral (Segawa, 2012; Ainebyona, 2015; Atuhaire, 2015; Okoth, 2013). Children are morally repugnant, rude, and lack a sense of responsibility (Ainebyona, 2015). According to Segawa (2012), younger people have disregard for older people. The decline in morality has resulted in an increase in the number of instances of indiscipline, a lack of empathy, a rebellious attitude, youngsters becoming increasingly wild, and the majority of them believing

that they know what they're doing and don't need supervision from their parents or elders (Okoth, 2013).

To the greatest extent possible, attitudes and values that come to define people are formed during childhood. Ideals and attitudes formed at a young age might last a lifetime (Samuelsson & Kaga, 2008). Those who practise morality become experts at acting ethically (Bagozzi, Sekerka, Hill & Sguera, 2013). Worldwide, moral standards are deteriorating (Walker, Brownlee, Cobb-Moore, Boulton-Lewis, Ailwood, Johansson, & Whiteford, 2012). Traditional African communities get social security and stability through following society's values (Agulanna, 2008; Ushe, 2011). Throughout Western Africa, ethics creates personal relationships with Igbo, such as '*onyia biri ibe ya ebiri*' (live and live) (Akanbi, 2014). The Ibo Land's morality code, known as "Omenala," approves and forbids behaviours and social activities (Akanbi, 2014). The Igbos value truth and rightness, humility, fidelity or obedience, dignity, honesty/righteousness, fairness, hospitality, women's chastity before and during marriage, respect for human life's sacredness, and God's love and faith. (Areji & Anyaehie, 2015).

The world's leading psychologists, theologians, and culture theorists have debated moral growth since human civilization began (Schulman, & Mekler, 1994). Various methods have been used to teach youngsters morality, like moral formation, moral enquiry, values clarification, and social learning. "Moral formation" instills morality in children (Crittenden, 1990). This includes moral guidance, rewarding and disciplining children, and modelling good behaviour and appropriate responses to others. The second is "moral enquiry," which encourages children to discuss and justify morality. Moral enquiry reveals the justification for common morality, requiring explicit intervention or gentle direction (Coles, 1997). Children must learn why morality requires what it does. Values clarification/modification is another moral education method. These programmes let kids find their own morality. Youngsters also learn to be tolerant of others' values (Kurtines & Gewirtz, 1995). Eurocentrism is their biggest flaw. So, many civilizations have developed methods for moralising youngsters.

To combat moral deterioration, Buganda Kingdom introduced ekisaakaate, an informal learning system (Segawa, 2012). In Buganda, Kabakas (King of Buganda), Chiefs (Abaami-ba Kabakas), and other high-ranking individuals acquire good values, disciplines, and traditions in Ekisaakaate, a fortified house. After the moral collapse, Her Royal Highness the Nnabagereka, Sylvia Nagginda of Uganda, realised that cultural values and beliefs were needed to restore the holistic generation. This paper accordingly reports on a survey on the relationship between "Ekisaakaate" living values-based contextual instruction pedagogy and early childhood moral learning Outcomes in Buganda Kingdom in Uganda.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Reasoning and Development (1958)

This study is based on Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development, which states that morality can be established both positively and negatively depending on how a person performs his job at each moral development stage. Moral development is linear and progressive, according to the notion (Power, 1989). Kohlberg believes moral reasoning develops in six steps. Kohlberg felt people progressed by mastering each stage and stages were unskippable. He believed that only moral issues and consensus democracy in small groups could promote growth through these stages. This paper uses Kohlberg's moralization and development theory (1958) to examine how ekisaakaate affects

Ugandan children's moral education. Therefore, this paper devoted itself to establish the relationship between “Ekisaakaate” living values-based contextual instruction pedagogy and early childhood moral learning outcomes in Buganda Kingdom in Uganda. Thus, the objectives of this study were to establish the relationship between active cooperative learning, problem-based approach to instruction, participatory learning and early childhood moral learning outcomes in Buganda Kingdom.

Active Cooperative Learning and Early Childhood Moral Learning Outcomes

Proactive cooperative learning involves peer and environmental engagement. This pedagogical method emphasises that pupils learn via social environments (Tsay & Brady, 2012). Many researchers have linked active cooperative learning to moral learning (e.g. Laguador, 2014; Schuitema, Geert & Veugelers, 2007; Hicks 2001). Active cooperative learning improves critical thinking and perspective-taking, according to Laguador (2014). Schuitema et al. (2007) found that collaborative learners must actively consider social issues and others' viewpoints. As Hicks, (2001) discovered, working in groups improves student interaction, communication, conflict resolution, and tolerance. On the other hand, the data presented above contains certain contextual holes that call for more exploration into the connection between active cooperative learning and moral learning outcomes. The study focused on western environments. Due to this void, an investigation was necessary.

Problem-Based Approach to instruction and Early Childhood Moral Learning Outcomes

Problem-based learning involves student teams solving professional problems. Problem-based learning fosters student self-regulation. Additionally, Domjan, 2010; Sue, 2010; Veugelers, 2000; Stefanou et al., 2013) have tried to link problem-based training to moral learning. Also, Domjan (2010) found that problem-based training helps students realise the gap between theory and practise, improving moral reasoning. Stefanou et al. (2013) found that self-study and group discussions create self-directed learning, interdisciplinary knowledge generation, and collaborative skills that promote morality. Problem-based learning promotes morality, according to Veugelers (2000). Veugelers found that problem-based learning engages students and improves their thinking, morality, and values. The above research was conducted in the West. Uganda's shortcomings necessitated this analysis.

Participatory Learning and Early Childhood Moral Learning Outcomes

Participatory training governs a group's action, impacted by their own reasoning and decision-making (Ibnouf, Sheqwarah & Sultan, 2015). Participatory learning offers ways in which students can help to prepare themselves for society. Several scholars (e.g. Eva, Jo, Cobb-Moore, Boulton-Lewis, Walker & Ailwood, 2011; Hedges & Cullen, 2012; Boulton-Lewis, Brownlee, Walker, Cobb-Moore, & Johansson, 2011 & Kangas, 2016) have tried to trace the influence of participatory learning and moral learning outcomes. In particular, Eva et al., (2011) in a study about practices for teaching moral values in the early years, the results indicated that the most prominent approaches to teaching moral values described by this group of Australian early year's teachers were engaging children in moral activities. Boulton-Lewis et al., (2011) in a study about moral and social development, revealed that one approach of enhancing moral development is involving the learners in all moral aspects. Kangas (2016) found that interactive pedagogy promotes moral qualities in youngsters. The above studies indicated a positive association between participatory learning and moral learning outcome, although none focused on Buganda Kingdom. As no previous researcher had done so, the researcher hypothesises that participatory learning predicts moral learning outcome to close these gaps. This allowed for a Ugandan investigation.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The cross-sectional research design was adopted. Cross-sectional research examines a population or subset at one moment to answer a study question (Olsen & Marie, 2004). Hence, the arrangement collected inferential and complete interpretations of the data.

Sample

Using a self-administered questionnaire (SAQ), data were collected from 159 ekisaakaate trainers. This population was selected because they it would provide explanation with respect to the responses provided by the learners. The parents were involved because they were the only ones who could provide information about their children's moral behaviours before and after ekisaakaate.

Instruments

The self-administered questionnaire (SAQ) was used in data collection. The SAQ was divided into four parts: A to D. Section A refers to the characteristics of the interviewees about parenthood. Sections B was on moral learning outcomes (DV). Sections C was on independent variable one (Active Cooperative Learning), Section D on independent variable two (Problem-Based Approach) and Section E on independent variable three (Participatory Learning).

Data Management

The data analysis at univariate level was based on percentages from the frequency tables and descriptive statistics, specifically the mean. At the multivariate level, a predictive model was built by regressing the numerical index on the dependent variable (DV) on the numerical indexes of the seven respective independent variables (IVs). The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) facilitated the data analysis.

RESULTS

Background Characteristics of the Respondents

The data on background characteristics of the respondents of the study in Table 1 show that a typical respondent was a female (64.2%); aged between 30 and 45 years (48.4%); with a Diploma (77.4%) and had been in service for a period below five years (50.9%).

Table 1: Respondents Background Characteristics

Item	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Age	Below 30 years	71	44.7
	Between 30 and 45 years	77	48.4
	Over 45 years	11	6.9
	Total	159	100.0
Sex	Male	57	35.8
	Female	102	64.2
	Total	159	100.0
Highest academic qualification	Certificate	33	20.8
	Diploma	123	77.4
	Bachelors	3	1.8
	Total	159	100.0
Length of service	Below five years	81	50.9
	Between five and ten years	45	28.3
	Over ten years	33	20.8
	Total	159	100.0

The Dependent Variable: Moral Learning Outcomes

The dependent variable, The DV, which measured the results of moral learning, was broken up into eight questions. For each item, the Likert scale varied from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with 1 being the least agreeable and 5 being the most agreeable (Strongly agree). The findings are presented in Table 2.

In Table 2, it is illustrated that the respondents overall rated themselves highest on the item “It is most fulfilling to me when I can comfort someone who is very distressed” (with cumulatively 158 respondents, 99.3%) corresponding to the fact that the majority of the respondents agreed with the statement; while they rated themselves averagely on item “My pupils tell the truth all the time” (with cumulatively 110 respondents, 69.1%). Such findings suggest that the majority agreed with all the 12 items that were used to measure moral learning outcomes.

The Independent Variables

The independent variables in the study were three constructs that defined ekisaakaate” living values-based contextual instruction pedagogy, namely; active cooperative learning, problem-based approach and participatory learning. Table 3 gives the resultant respective results.

From Table 3, referring to active cooperative learning, respondents overall rated themselves highest on the item “I avail proper time for discussion to pupils,” (129 respondents, 81.2%) and rated themselves lowest on the item “every pupil is made to participate in class activities,” (95 respondents, 59.7%). Such findings suggest that the majority of the respondents agreed with the issues in question. Focusing on problem-based approach to instruction, cumulatively, respondents rated themselves highest on item “I review the discussion made by the pupils,” (138 respondents, 86.8%) and rated themselves lowest on item “I take pupils outside the school to participate in community activities,” (122 respondents, 76.8%). Looking at construct “participatory learning context,” cumulatively, respondents rated themselves highest on item “I make pupils share experiences in class,” (136 respondents, 85.8%) and lowest on item “I organize pupils in class on the basis of interest and academic achievement level,” (111 respondents, 69.8%). The findings in Table 3 empirically imply that the majority of the respondents agreed with the items used to measure “ekisaakaate” living values-based contextual instruction pedagogy.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics on respondents' self-rating on moral learning outcomes

Statements on moral learning outcomes	SD n (%)	D n (%)	NS n (%)	A n (%)	SA n (%)
My pupils make effort to obey rules at school	2 (1.3%)	4 (2.5%)	2 (1.3%)	61 (38.4%)	90 (56.6%)
My pupils keep free from fights at school	3 (1.9%)	10 (6.3%)	2 (1.3%)	81 (50.9%)	63 (39.6%)
My pupils attend school every day without skipping	4 (2.5%)	9 (5.7%)	1 (0.6%)	81 (50.9%)	64 (40.3%)
My pupils tell the truth all the time	17 (10.7%)	26 (16.4%)	6 (3.8%)	60 (37.7%)	50 (31.4%)
My pupils are faithful not to steal anything that belongs to others		4 (2.5%)	1 (0.6%)	71 (44.7%)	83 (52.2%)
I help others even when no one is watching me	1 (0.6%)	2 (1.3%)		72 (45.3%)	84 (52.8%)
It is most fulfilling to me when I can comfort someone who is very distressed			1 (0.6%)	63 (39.6%)	95 (59.7%)
When people ask me to help them, I respond immediately		2 (1.3%)	1 (0.6%)	69 (43.3%)	87 (54.7%)
I think that helping others without them knowing is the best type of situation	4 (2.5%)	12 (7.6%)		77 (48.4%)	66 (41.5%)
I offer help to others without expecting help from them in the future	6 (3.8%)	31 (19.5%)	5 (3.1%)	64 (40.3%)	53 (33.3%)
I have developed friendship with my pupils		2 (1.3%)	1 (0.6%)	56 (35.2%)	100 (62.9%)
I initiate social interaction with pupils.		7 (4.4%)		78 (49.1%)	74 (46.9%)

Table 3: Descriptive statistics on respondents' self-rating on "ekisaakaate" living values-based contextual instruction pedagogy

Statements on "ekisaakaate" living values-based contextual instruction pedagogy	SD n (%)	D n (%)	NS n (%)	A n (%)	SA n (%)
Active Cooperative Learning					
Every pupil is made to participate in class activities	15 (9.4%)	28 (17.6%)	21 (13.2%)	53 (33.3%)	42 (26.4%)
I avail proper time for discussion to pupils	15 (9.4%)	10 (6.3%)	5 (3.1%)	51 (32.1%)	78 (49.1%)
I provide for pupils the opportunity to reflect the ideas discussed	22 (13.9%)	30 (19.0%)	16 (10.1%)	63 (39.9%)	27 (17.1%)
I review the discussion made by the pupils	7 (4.4%)	20 (12.6%)	21 (13.2%)	53 (33.3%)	58 (36.5%)
Problem-Based Approach to Instruction					
I set puzzles for pupils in class to solve	11 (6.9%)	13 (8.2%)	11 (6.9%)	43 (27.0%)	81 (50.9%)
I take pupils outside the school to participate in community activities	13 (8.2%)	14 (8.8%)	10 (6.3%)	71 (44.7%)	51 (32.1%)
I teach pupils about things taking place in our communities	10 (6.3%)	9 (5.7%)	7 (4.4%)	61 (38.4%)	72 (45.3%)
I use local materials as teaching aids	7 (4.4%)	9 (5.7%)	5 (3.1%)	71 (44.7%)	67 (42.1%)
Participatory Learning Context					
I involve pupils in group learning activities	7 (4.4%)	10 (6.3%)	9 (5.7%)	70 (44.0%)	63 (39.6%)
I make pupils work with each other in the class	10 (6.3%)	10 (6.3%)	9 (5.7%)	75 (47.2%)	55 (34.6%)
I organize pupils in class on the basis of interest and academic achievement level	16 (10.1%)	24 (15.1%)	8 (5.0%)	46 (28.9%)	65 (40.9%)
I make pupils share experiences in class	5 (3.1%)	12 (7.5%)	6 (3.8%)	37 (23.3%)	99 (62.3%)

Statistical Model for Predicting Early Childhood Moral Learning Outcomes Using Ekisaakaate” Living Values-Based Contextual Instruction Pedagogy

Early childhood moral learning outcomes were regressed on active cooperative learning, problem-based instruction, and participatory learning setting using SPSS. The dependant variable (DV) was favourably associated to the relevant independent variables (IVs) if any beta was positive, and negatively related if any beta was negative (IVs). Each beta has a p-value to indicate significance. SPSS calculated betas and p values. The three IVs explained that the "adjusted R square" was 0.687, which multiplied by 100 yielded the proportion of the DV. Table 4 lists betas and p values.

Table 4: Regression of early childhood moral learning outcomes on Active Cooperative Learning, Problem-Based Approach to Instruction and Participatory Learning Context

Independent variable	Standardized coefficient Beta (β)	Significance (p)
Active Cooperative Learning	0.552	0.000
Problem-Based Approach to Instruction	0.250	0.002
Participatory Learning Context	0.106	0.008

Table 4 shows that active cooperative learning has a positive beta (0.552) and a positive association with the dependant variable (early childhood moral learning outcomes). Nonetheless, the observed Sig. (p) of 0.000 was lower than the benchmark of 0.05, demonstrating a substantial connection at the 5% level. Table 4 shows that the second independent variable, problem-based approach to instruction, had a positive beta (0.250) and a positive correlation with the dependent variable (early childhood moral learning outcomes). Nonetheless, the observed Sig. (p) of 0.002 is significantly lower than the benchmark value of 0.05, demonstrating a substantial connection at the 5% level. Table 4 shows that the third independent variable, participatory learning context, has a positive beta (0.106), indicating a positive connection with the dependent variable (early childhood moral learning outcomes). Nonetheless, the observed Sig. (p) of 0.008 was lower than the benchmark of 0.05, demonstrating a substantial connection at the 5% level. Regression analysis confirmed all hypothesis.

DISCUSSION

The study supported the first research hypothesis (H_{01}) to the effect that active cooperative learning has a positive influence early childhood moral learning outcome in Buganda Kingdom. This finding was similar to findings by Laguardor (2014) who argued that active cooperative learning enhances learners' critical-thinking skills and perspective taking. This agreed with the finding by Schuitema et al., (2007) who revealed that learners working together have to think about social issues in an active way and consider others' opinions. Similarly, the finding is also supported by Hicks (2001) who found that working in groups' benefits the interaction between learners and helps in practicing communication skills, to resolve differences of opinions, and to tolerate disagreements.

The second hypothesis (H_{02}) that problem-based approach to instruction has a positive influence early childhood moral learning outcome in Buganda Kingdom. This finding was in agreement with the study by Veugelers (2000) who came to the finding that problem-based approach to instruction is a vital method of promoting moral values. The finding is in line with that of Stefanou et al., (2013) who established that the approach involves self-study and group discussions which develop skills, including self-directed learning, interdisciplinary knowledge creation, and collaborative skills

among learners which promote their moral abilities. The study finding also concurs with Domjan (2010) who revealed that problem-based approach to instruction helps learners to recognize the gap between practice and theory which enhances the levels of moral reasoning.

Conforming to the third hypothesis (H₃) that participatory learning has a positive influence on early childhood moral learning outcomes in Buganda Kingdom; the study established that participatory learning positively influences early childhood moral learning outcomes in Buganda Kingdom. The study finding is supported by Boulton-Lewis et al., (2010) who revealed that one approach of enhancing moral development is involving the learners in all moral aspects. The finding is also in agreement with Eva et al., (2011) who came to the finding and conclusion that the most prominent approaches to teaching moral values described by this group of Australian early year's teachers were engaging children in moral activities. Overall, the study came to finding that "Ekisaakaate" (Royal Enclosure) living values-based contextual instruction pedagogy has a positive influence on early childhood moral learning outcomes in Buganda Kingdom in Uganda.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This article examined "ekisaakaate" (Royal Enclosure) living values-based contextual education methodology and early childhood moral learning results in Buganda Kingdom, Uganda. Active cooperative learning, problem-based instruction, and participatory learning setting were tested to predict early childhood moral learning outcomes. This study addressed gaps in previous research, such as ekisaakaate in poor nations. Active cooperative learning, problem-based education, and participatory learning were likely conditions for early childhood moral learning outcomes, according to the study.

Implications: The findings of this study have practical significance to early childhood education managers in Buganda and other similar early childhood institutions of Uganda. Particularly, the findings that active cooperative learning, problem-based approach to instruction and participatory learning context were significant positive predictors of early childhood learning outcomes imply that they should be given due consideration in the teaching-learning process. Hence this study recommends that stakeholders such as early childhood education directors, teachers and parents in the respective early childhood centers should encourage the use of ekisaakaate pedagogy to enhance early childhood moral learning outcomes.

Limitations- In spite of its shortcomings, this study contributes to positive outcomes for early childhood education. Although the "ekisaakaate" living values-based contextual teaching technique was the only independent component considered in the study, there is evidence to suggest that a far larger number of factors may have been taken into account. In further investigations, other aspects need to be taken into consideration. Respondents were ekisaakaate trainers. Therefore, the findings should not be extended universally to organisations that provide early childhood education. It is possible that the positivist paradigm reduced the dependability of the findings; hence, future research should make use of a pragmatic paradigm in order to learn more about the variables that were analysed.

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