

Educator's views regarding integration of Educational videos and games into social studies teaching; A Qualitative inquiry

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to know the educators views about their experience of using educational videos and games into teaching-learning process at elementary level. The usual approach to teach social studies as a subject to students was traditional lecture method. In this intervention, two head teachers & four teachers from two government secondary schools of Islamabad observed first time teaching of abstract concepts of social studies, through educational videos and games. Their views and opinions regarding the use of educational videos and games were considered important. Activity theory was utilised as a theoretical framework. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with the educators of both schools. Semi-structured interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. The data was analyzed manually through coding and thematic analysis, based on the theory. Findings show that educators were satisfied with the use of educational videos and games as it helped in making their teaching interesting, and encouraged students' involvement. According to them, government had provided ICT facilities in schools, and teachers can provide effective learning experience to students through it. This experience creates awareness among educators about the utilization of educational videos and games in order to make teaching learning process more fruitful.

Key words: ICT, Teaching & learning, Educational videos and games, Social Studies.

Introduction

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is helpful for teachers in a way that by the presence of this facility; they know well how to prepare lesson for teaching with the help of modern and innovative technology (Ali, Haolader, & Muhammad, 2013). Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) e.g. computer and internet etc, in the classroom help students to learn new concepts. Research show that the number of instructors who used educational videos and games to improve and increase learners' understanding and information in Social Studies, is limited (Hutchison, 2007). Educators' well-resourced

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preparation by technological tools and services are a major part in the success of technology-based teaching and learning (Ghavifekr & Rosdy, 2015). ICT provides a new chance to fulfill the desired learning outcomes. It was found that teaching through educational videos and games is limited in Pakistani classroom. So, an effort was made to fulfill this gap by conducting a study about the head teachers and teachers' perspectives and experiences for the use of educational videos and games in the subject of social studies in schools. Following research questions were formulated.

Research questions

- What are the views of head teachers towards teaching of social studies through educational videos and games at elementary level in schools?
- What are the views and opinions of teachers towards the use of educational videos and games in their teaching of social studies at elementary level?

Literature review

Use of Information and communication Technology

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays an important role for the better understanding of the students. Now, almost all countries around the world have the realization to accept the emerging opportunity of ICT in their national and global development process and also helpful in teaching and learning (Buabeng-Andoh & Issifu, 2015). The promotion of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into education needs proper planning, organization and well established structure (Erkunt, 2010). Irfan et al. (2017) emphasized the role of information technology to attract students. Yusuf (2005) highlighted that the progress in the field of research, education and teaching-learning process is affected by ICT. It plays an essential role in teaching and learning process and has got a lot of importance at secondary school education. The use of different ICT tools such as computer, laptops etc care helpful for students in their academic achievements (Al-Hariri & Al-Hattami, 2017).

Importance of educational videos in Teaching-learning

Teaching through educational videos gets more consideration in learning. Different researchers and educationists use this tool positively in teaching-learning process so that learners' involvement and participation in the learning sessions could be made sure (Yang, Huang, Tsai, Chung, & Wu, 2009). Currently, the use and application of different ICT tools like educational videos and games relevant to the subject under study and most importantly according to the level of students, work best to increase the learning of students (Sedaghat, Mintz,

& Wright, 2011). Teaching through educational videos is considered as an effective experience as it results in developing a sense of achievement and bring a positive change in students.

The basic purpose of teaching through educational videos in the present classroom is to fulfill the needs of today's learners. It is because one of the teachers' objectives is to prepare competitive future learners. Teaching through educational videos also tends to be very helpful for teachers to adopt new and innovative ways of teaching, and to address the challenges of various learning styles of the students (Gaudence, Too, & Nabwire, 2013). It also increases the modes in which the young learners connect, absorb, understand and easily reach toward new information.

Use of educational videos games in teaching and learning

The meaningful and influential learning occurs through the use of educational videos and games (Prensky, 2006). From the past twenty years, educational videos and games are practiced analytically in teaching-learning process. Sardone and Devlin-Scherer (2010) considered educational videos and games, responsible for the development of critical thinking abilities among students and to the success of teaching and learning process. These educational games are considered as new instructional technology with great potential. It provides a chance for learners to get knowledge and improve their academic achievements. Educational videos and games are helpful for students to enhance their knowledge and also responsible to motivate them to learn through these educational games as compared to non-gaming approach (Papastergiou, 2009). Educational videos and games keep learners in virtual worlds in which they try to apply their previous knowledge relevant to the content material, enhance their practice and thinking skills in a fail-safe setting (Ruggiero, 2013).

Role of Head Teacher for the use of educational video and games

Head teacher's role is very vital in providing encouragement, guidance and the environment which contribute towards the increased use of computer technology in teaching (Muthomi, Mbugua, & Githua, 2013). Those head teachers who have broad thinking and make the ground smooth to utilize educational technology in teaching learning process, are a great benefit for teachers and students. The integration of educational technology in schools become susceptible unless the head teachers of the schools become energetic and a visionary technology leader (Muthomi et al., 2013). The dream and aim of schools to keep them align with the demands and challenges of twenty first century, can only be achieved through readiness, willingness and commitment of head teachers of schools towards technology (Muthomi et al., 2013). In the

educational institutions, the role of head teacher is very important and central in order to provide direction, inspiration and situations essential to increase the use of computers in teaching (Muthomi et al., 2013). ICT tools are helpful in the whole education system particularly to do the managerial work and administrative work by staff and head teachers at schools (Buabeng-Andoh & Issifu, 2015).

Role of Teachers in the use of educational video games in classroom

Educational videos and games assist to achieve the desired learning outcomes in studies. Ruggiero (2013) claims that educational videos and games are used as engaging tools to develop interest among students. These videos and games also help learners to enhance their knowledge in all subject areas, instead of playing just for fun. Technology as a tool is helpful for teachers to teach in all subject areas (Buabeng-Andoh & Issifu, 2015). Different subject teachers utilize educational videos and games into the classroom environment to enhance problem solving skills, content reinforcement and imitate genuine learning circumstances (Ruggiero, 2013). Teacher can teach efficiently with the help of educational videos and games, especially for the concept clarity and better understanding of the abstract concepts of social studies.

Theoretical background of the Study

Activity theory was used as a theoretical framework for this research study. It is a theoretical framework developed for the socio-cultural preparation in Russian thinking. Its basic roots come from German philosophy and later on it has its roots in Russian psychology of the previous century. The central thoughts and indications of activity theory approach were first expressed in Russia, by straight orientations to their German colleagues (Kaptelinin, 2005).

Activity Theory model is the mixture of combined activity system using the components of subject, object, tools, rules, division of labor and community. Vygotsky with his student Leontiev, worked on Activity Theory in the 1920s, it gives the lens to find and comprehend human activity. The relationships between subject and object are the core of activity theory (Helen Hasan & Kazlauskas, 2014).

Head teachers and teachers shared their views and opinions about the academic importance of using educational videos and games in teaching-learning process. The entire activity theory has three main components; tool, subject and object. The subject was considered as the persons who were studied e.g teachers and students. The object are the planned activities e.g teaching through educational videos and games, and the tools e.g educational videos and games are the intervening tools, and in the light of these tools the action is implemented (H Hasan, 1998).

After the open coding and analytical coding, the Activity Theory (AT) was applied to describe the data drawn from open coding and analytical coding. Thematic analysis was carried out in the light of theory.

Methodology

Methodology is a theoretical structure and basic belief of research that relates the full procedure of research study (Creswell & Clark, 2007). The methods of research are different strategies for gathering the data and get findings of research study after data analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This research study was experimental in nature. An experiment was conducted in two different public schools of Islamabad with grade eight students. After the experiment, qualitative data was collected from head teachers and teachers to know their views and opinions about the use of educational videos and games into the teaching of social studies at elementary level.

Data sources

There were two Semi-structured interviews conducted from the head teachers of both schools. For the semi-structured interview, an interview guide was prepared. The focus of the semi-structured interview was to ask head teachers about their efforts and support for the integration of ICT i.e. educational videos and games, into teaching-learning process. There were 12 questions in the interview guide for head teachers. Furthermore, Semi-structured interviews were conducted from subject and class teachers who were teaching social studies to the students of 8th class. They were asked for their views about the importance and usefulness of educational videos and games. Semi-structured interview guide was prepared for subject teachers also. There were 17 questions in the interview guide.

Procedure of Data collection and Analysis

Semi-structured interviews of head teachers and teachers were audio recorded and transcribed. The data was analyzed manually through open coding, analytic coding, axial coding and selective coding. Coding is the type of labels which we add to the segment of the data that shows what each part of the data is about (Charmaz, 2006). Thematic analysis was done in the light of theory. The focus of the semi-structured interviews from head teachers was to know about their efforts and support for the integration of ICT i.e. educational videos and games into teaching-learning process at schools. The focus of semi-structured interviews from teachers was to know the views and opinions of the teachers regarding the use of videos and games into teaching learning process in classroom.

Participants

Two head teachers and 4 teachers from two public schools of Sihala sector Islamabad, were the participants of the study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with head teachers and teachers to know their views and opinions about the use of educational videos and games for the teaching of social studies at elementary level.

Inter-rater reliability

The reliability of the qualitative data was obtained through inter-rater reliability. The audio recordings of interviews were transcribed, then coded through open coding, analytical coding, axial coding and then selective coding. After completing the coding process, another researcher was consulted and given the original transcripts of semi-structured interviews. That researcher coded some parts of the qualitative data, and then codes were compared to check out the reliability, coding of that researcher matched well except a few differences. This yielded an inter-rater agreement of approximately 95%. The differences in coding were resolved through discussion.

Qualitative data analysis

The qualitative data of current research paper was the semi-structured interviews of head teachers and teachers. Head teachers and teachers shared their views and opinions about the importance of educational videos and games in teaching learning process. Thematic analysis was done in the light of Activity theory. There are six themes of activity theory and the data was analyzed accordingly.

The first research question: *what are the specific views of school head teachers towards the teaching of social studies through videos and games at elementary level in schools?* was answered through the qualitative data. To get the answer of this research question, semi-structured interviews were conducted from head teachers. They highlighted the benefits of educational videos and games for administration and also for the whole teaching-learning process and mentioned some challenges also regarding ICTs facilities. Head teacher 'A' mentioned,

'ICT not only facilitated the teaching-learning process but was also very helpful for administrative tasks.
(Head teacher; Semi-structured Interview)

Head teachers appreciated this experiment because it was an interesting and innovative way of teaching and learning and they also mentioned that it was the need of the young learners. Furthermore, she explained that this type of experiment have played an important role in the teaching learning process.

Head teacher 'A' mentioned,

'The experiment of teaching with ICT should be practiced off and on in schools because teacher and students get chances for better Teaching and learning'. (Head teacher A; Semi-structured Interview)

Head teachers said that if the teachers teach students different subjects with the help of modern technology, the learners would be attracted by it and get involved in learning actively.

Head teacher 'A' said,
'Students became happy and seemed relaxed during learning through games mode. Eventually they were attracted towards learning instead of considering it a burden'. (Head teacher A, semi-structured interview)

The other head teacher also appreciated the use of educational videos and games. She mentioned that;

'Student learnt well during experiment with educational video and games. It

was a two way process as the students learnt and enjoyed as well.

They take it as a fun and learned well about different concepts'.

(Head teacher B, semi-structured interview)

The head teachers said that they were using computer only for the administrative purposes and for the teaching computer subject only. The head teacher B said,

'We can use educational videos and games as audio-visual aids for teaching

students in classroom.' (Semi-structured interview).

Head teachers highlighted some practical constraints as well in the implementation of ICTs. They exclaimed that they had limited authority for the promotion of ICTs and budget is one of the major challenges. It was difficult for them to manage ICT related facilities according to the strength of the students with in the limited resources.

The head teachers told that they personally liked the integration of educational videos and games in teaching-learning process and they allowed all teachers to use computer labs for the teaching of any subject through educational videos and games.

Head teacher B said,

All available ICT resources were provided to teachers

For making teaching learning process more effective and better'.

(Head teacher B, semi-structured interview).

The second question was ;*what are the views of teachers towards the use of videos and games I in their teaching of social studies at elementary level?*To get the answer of this particular research question, semi-

structured interviews were conducted from the selected teachers. The teachers encouraged the use of educational videos and games. They showed their full interest for the use of educational videos and games in the teaching because it is innovative method. This finding was supported by a research study conducted in Turkey to know the perceptions of teachers about the use of ICTs in the subject of social studies at school level. The results showed that teachers were willing to use ICT into teaching of Social studies(Gulbahar & Guven, 2008).

Teachers gave educational videos and games a lot of importance because of its vast uses in the teaching of Social Studies for the concept clarity and better understanding of the students. For example teacher A said:

'I taught the students in a better way with educational videos and games as compared to the lecture method'. (Teacher A, semi-structured interview).

According to their view point, educational videos and games play a very important role in teaching the subject of Social Studies. As number of concepts related to this subject can be conveyed to students very easily through visuals. Teacher 'A' remarks,

'I will teach the topics of cyclones and desertification through videos and games because I found it too much difficult to teach by lecture method'. (Teacher A, semi-structured interview)

Teachers could motivate learners with the help of this tool e.g educational videos and games because it was very interesting tool for teachers and students in the subject of social studies. Teachers demanded ICT related facilities for the integration of ICT in teaching-learning process.

Teacher 'B' argued,

'There are different abstract concepts in Social Studies that are difficult for teachers to teach through traditional method in front of the class e.g. 'the inner side of the earth's surface' couldn't be taught verbally only through lecture. Students need to watch educational videos and play games related to this topic'. (Teacher B, semi-structured interview)

The teachers found educational videos and games as effective tools while teaching. It is helpful for their better understanding. Educational videos and games are playing an important role in teaching learning process. Moreover, Teacher 'A' emphasized the importance of educational videos and games in the following manner:

'There are different concepts in Geography and History e.g. distribution of maps which can better be comprehend by students with the help of educational videos and games'. (Teacher A, semi-structured interview).

Educational videos and games were used as a tool for better understanding and concept clarity of students.

Teacher B said;

'I like and found educational videos and games as an innovative tool in teaching'. (Semi-structured Interview).

Discussion

Findings of this study indicate that head teachers and subject teachers appreciated the use of educational videos and games in teaching. This innovative method of teaching supported the teachers to make their teaching more meaningful and effective. Head teachers also seemed positive about this experiment because introducing educational videos and games in teaching was an innovative idea. It helped to improve the outcomes of the students and met the expectations of the teachers and the administrative office of the school as well.

Head teachers were satisfied with the use of educational videos and games in teaching learning process. The satisfaction of head teachers was also a strong proof of the success of this novel integration at grade eighth in schools. Moreover, different ICT related facilities i.e. computers and projectors etc. existed in schools that could be used for students' learning. Head teachers allowed teachers to use all available ICT tools and resources to make their teaching more meaningful. It was optimistic that teachers took initiatives on their own to increase the students' knowledge about different abstract concepts of Social Studies with the help of videos and games.

Additionally, head teachers observed and appreciated students' interest and the mutual collaboration of teachers and students in learning through educational videos and games. According to head teachers, educational videos and games proved very effective tools to improve the results of students not only in schools but in federal board results too. ICT related facilities were not only helpful for students but also very helpful for teachers and school administration. It is the technological era, where ICTs are essential and basic tools that are very helpful in overall teaching learning process. Students get bored, learning only through lecture and traditional methods but educational videos and games gave chance for them to remain active and learn with full interest and attention.

Educational videos and games are not only beneficial for pupils but also helpful for the teachers to switch to modern and current ways of teaching and enhance their professional skills. Learning through educational

videos and games help students to be constant learners. Educational videos and games should be integrated from bottom to top level with the aid of other educational equipments into teaching learning process. They gave permission to teachers to use educational videos and games through all ICT related available facilities within the school. In this way students become able to transform theory into practice through experimentation in the classroom.

Furthermore, teachers also remain active while searching different educational videos and games related to the students and subject needs. Teachers get more command on their subject and they taught the students with more ease and comfort as compared to the conventional and passive teaching methods. Those methods were basically lecture methods which can be termed as teacher-centered methods, while teaching through the incorporation of videos and games is student-centered technique which turns the passive learners to active and participative ones. Learning by doing is easily possible by the integration of educational technology because it involves students' practicality rather merely theoretical memorization of the subject. Previously, teachers did not use educational videos and games into their teaching primarily due to non-supportive school administration.

Teachers were very happy because educational videos and games helped them in teaching as a significant audio-visual aid. These tools were also very helpful for them as a teacher for effective and better teaching and for outstanding performance of the students as well. Educational videos and games were considered as an essential tool to teach different subjects at different levels in school. Teachers said that educational videos and games facilitated in teaching in multiple ways. The ambiguous concepts regarding social studies become clearer through the use of educational videos and the whole teaching scenario was found interesting as compared to the previous conventional methods of teaching. It was too difficult for teachers to teach students the abstract concepts of Social Studies without educational videos and games. Social studies subject teachers and class teachers were impressed by the incorporation of these videos and games into the teaching of Social Studies. This was very good experience for them, they learned a lot from this experience because they came to know the importance of the use of educational videos and games practically. Furthermore, they felt positive and were confident to see the excitement and interest of students in learning through ICT and could predict the bright future of students. It was very helpful and time saving strategy for them.

ICTs also provide a chance for teachers to increase their computer skills by searching the internet. Teachers managed to create a

comfortable learning environment for their pupils and they found no difficulty in motivating them to participate in the classroom activities. Teachers found themselves easy in delivering the up-to-date and relevant information to their pupils. There were different topics like cyclone, desertification and inner surface of the earth etc. which needed practical experimentation to be understood by students'. Educational experts repeatedly made comparisons between teaching through educational videos and games and teaching through the conventional lecture method using book as the only aid. Consequently their views favoured toward teaching through videos and games.

Teachers did not totally deny the importance of lecture and teaching through books but the integration of educational videos and games into the teaching of Social studies was remarkable. Now, they did not only rely on lecture method but alternatively use educational videos and games for their better learning. The interest level of teachers was remarkably high with the incorporation of educational videos and games in teaching-learning process. Though it was a new technique to be used by the selected teachers even then they willingly adopted that novel way of teaching and demanded resources related to ICT in their classrooms. Their willingness showed their motivation and interest too.

Learning through educational videos and games was considered and termed as lifelong learning. The integration of educational videos and games into teaching has made teaching meaningful and effective. The prior quantitative research proved that when teachers use educational videos and games into teaching, it brought positive effects on students learning. Grade eighth teachers were motivated and excited to use educational videos and games in their teaching. Subject teachers explained that teaching with educational videos and games helped to increase students' lifelong learning. There were different topics that demanded the use of educational videos and games into teaching for the better understanding of the learners. Moreover, educational videos and games proved helpful for teachers to teach students the abstract concepts of difficult subjects specially the Social Studies. There were many benefits of videos and games for teachers. First of all, it was a teaching tool for teachers with a lot of new knowledge and up to date information for teachers. Different activities can be planned by teachers with the help of videos and games for the success and progress of teaching-learning process.

When teachers use educational videos and games into teaching, it helped in seeking the attention of students towards learning as active learners. After that particular experience, the teacher made some future plans about the use of videos and games into their teaching for the

betterment of the learners. Furthermore, they would use computer labs for teaching purpose and they also planned to use multimedia into teaching in future for the concept clarity and better understanding of the learners for different abstract concepts of social studies.

Teachers' willingness and urge for spreading knowledge can also be gauged by the observation that they bring their personal laptops in schools for showing educational videos and involving students in playing games during the class for the subject under study. The school administration also planned to introduce multimedia in the classrooms in future. Hence, the overall improved future plans were made through the incorporation of educational videos and games into teaching learning process.

Conclusion

The integration of information and communication technology (ICT) in teaching-learning process becomes the essential component of twenty first century teaching skills. This research study was conducted to know the views of head teachers and teachers for the use of educational videos and games into teaching and learning. The integration of educational videos and games into teaching and learning process depends upon the willingness of head teachers in the educational institutions and the understanding of teachers. Teachers are the change agents they can bring the revolution in teaching by the integration of ICT into teaching. The major findings of this study show that head teachers and teachers (educators) find this intervention useful for whole teaching and learning process. They said that the integration of educational videos was helpful as a teaching tool. Head teachers assured that they will provide all available ICTs related resources to teachers so they can easily utilize all these resources to improve their teaching. This study concluded that educational videos and games are helpful for teachers to make their teaching innovative, effective and meaningful because it is the basic requirement of the twenty first century.

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