

Voices in Education

Student Success: A National Focus

Journal of Bermuda College
Volume 1 • June 2015



VOICES IN EDUCATION
A Bermuda College Publication

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Student Success: A National Focus

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Aims and Scope

Voices in Education is a scholarly journal that serves as a voice and resource for students, researchers, educators, and the community. It contributes to the realisation of Bermuda College's vision by addressing "the diverse needs of the community through research."

The aim of this publication is to heighten awareness of current trends, to encourage discourse and practice, to challenge thinking, and to widen and strengthen the scope of research in education. It serves local and global audiences in academia by providing peer-reviewed, multidisciplinary articles.

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Minister's Remarks



It is my pleasure to congratulate Bermuda College on the publication of its first academic journal for educators, *Voices in Education: A Bermuda College Publication*. I commend the college for this valued undertaking, and particularly its keystone theme, “*Student Success: A National Focus*.” The journal is timely and critical, and provides an appropriate platform for scholarly dialogue for those who can offer perspective and keen insight.

Bermuda is neither atypical nor alone in its student success efforts. Educating citizens for the 21st Century is imperative for most countries. Students must be properly prepared to move from primary school to middle school; to senior school; and then on to post-secondary education. An important measure of student success is having the young, and not so young, well prepared to enter the workforce.

The Government of Bermuda is pleased to support Bermuda College in making this publication a respected forum for local educators and academic professionals. It is my hope that *Voices in Education* will quickly become a scholarly focus for those seeking to engage in this important discussion.

I offer my thanks and best wishes.

R. Wayne Scott, JP, MP

Minister of Education

President's Remarks



I can think of very few comparable pleasures as President of Bermuda College than to be offered the opportunity to provide a few thoughts on the significance of the launch of this publication during this 40th anniversary of Bermuda College. *Voices in Education: A Bermuda College Journal* has been more than two years in the making. I heartily commend Ms Lynette Woods and the Bermuda College Publication Committee for both the vision and the fortitude to make this a reality for Bermuda College and for Bermuda.

It is fitting that the tagline for the first edition of *Voices in Education: Journal of Bermuda College* is “Student Success: A National Focus.” This is significant as it aligns with Bermuda College’s mission of Setting Bermuda’s Students on the Paths to Success. All of the articles are original, and they perspicaciously examine the elusive ideal of student success through a kaleidoscope of perspectives. And, as it is an academic journal, one can be confident that the topics have been rigorously researched and defended, and are proven academically sound.

Certainly, when we engage in discussions about student success as a national focus, we would, of necessity, need to be as encompassing or inclusive as possible. And this journal wonderfully and solidly supports that perspective. We ought to claim student success for the traditional and non-traditional students, for workforce development students and university transfer students; as well as for those students with special needs. An encompassing conversation about student success cannot simply include the higher education end of the process, but must include the entire education process, as students move from pre-school to primary, from middle to high school and from high school to tertiary education. As such, we cannot have a conversation about student success without including retention as an inherent part of the equation.

Undoubtedly, this journal will contribute to an ongoing dialogue among educators and, optimally, the broader community regarding student success. It must, if we are to realise a local definition with global significance, to service all of Bermuda’s students.

I wish every success for *Voices in Education: Journal of Bermuda College*. It’s time has come!

Duranda Greene, EdD
President, Bermuda College

Foreword

Phyllis Curtis-Tweed, PhD

Lynette Woods, MA

Co-Editors

Context and History of the Journal

In 2011, Ru-Zelda Severin, senior lecturer, and Lynette Woods conceived the idea of developing a Bermuda College journal. By December 2011, Ms Woods, the special projects assistant to the president, formed a committee with Evelyn James Barnett, communications director, and Nikkita Scott, counselling and student services director, to investigate the possibilities of a publication. The seed was planted for a publication that would provide a scholarly platform for educators and a resource for students and researchers. The project mushroomed and expanded into this Bermuda College journal, *Voices in Education*.

From this point, the committee expanded to include individuals with varying expertise. They were Ru-Zelda Severin, senior lecturer in music and education; Barrington Brown, professor of computer information systems; Karmeta Hendrickson, assistant director, information technology services; and Annette Gilbert, cataloguing and user services librarian. Sandra Dill, a former employee, replaced Nikkita Scott, and Jennifer Williams, faculty tutor for reading, later replaced Sandra Dill.

Meetings occurred once a month except during July and August. The committee's initial discussions were very broad, but subsequently focused on identifying the target audience, initial authors, journal theme, title, guidelines, and timelines. The committee decided to issue an online publication with limited hard copies. Through 2013, the committee conducted research into journal publishing, reviewed educational journals, and contacted universities that were publishing journals to gather information.

Relying on whiteboard notes, electronic exchanges, and other processes, the committee worked to ensure the journal would have wide enough appeal to educators at home and abroad. The goal was a journal that would focus on Bermuda but have international appeal, and would provide an avenue for publication for Bermudian educators, who otherwise might have no opportunity to publish.

On 24 April 2014, Bermuda College launched the idea of the journal during a reception at ACE Group, Bermuda College's corporate partner. Invitees included prospective authors, the Editorial Board, the Bermuda College Publication Committee, the Bermuda College Board and the Bermuda College president, Duranda Greene, as well as the junior minister for education, Leah Scott, JP, MP. After the launch meeting, the committee invited article submissions by placing an advertisement on the Bermuda College website and portal, in the local newspaper, and by disseminating information to educational organisations. The submission deadline was 17 October 2014.

By the deadline, a total of 11 articles had been received. These were disseminated to the Editorial Board for review and feedback. The co-editors then reviewed the Editorial Board comments and made the final decision as to which articles to accept. They met over two months to edit articles, which were then sent to the authors for final revision.

The revised articles were then forwarded to Peter Colenbrander, managing editor, for a final edit. He had been recommended by an academic editor at a university elsewhere in the Caribbean region. After speaking to Mr Colenbrander by phone, the committee determined he would be the right choice for the journal. He has provided input and advice and talked generally about the journal and his role in the publication. In these conversations, we also confirmed timelines for submissions, reviews, and final publication.

Overview of Voices in Education: Student success

This inaugural issue of *Voices in Education* comprises nine articles. While each addresses distinctive considerations and concepts, they collectively fuse around the notion of student success.

In the first article, Joseph Christopher provides a brief history of education in Bermuda from the perspective of a participant observer. He details student success in the Public School System from 1950 to 2003. He shows that, over time, the school system developed expectations for student success based on the provision of the right educational structures.

This article follows with a treatise by Mellisa Gibbons Tankard on the importance of understanding and using cultural considerations to inform pedagogy. Pedagogy will be more meaningful to students and more effective in practice if it is culturally sensitive. Dr Llewellyn Simmons looks to Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory to establish links between student success, culture, and education. He cautions that reliance on conflated concepts can lead to false narratives, which result in sociopolitical paradigms that limit the prospects of student success and student outcomes.

Traver Alexander examines the key role of the insurance industry in Bermuda by discussing the relationship between employment and capital. He examines the rapid employment of individuals in the industry from 1993 to 2009 and the cognitive disconnect that seemed to arise in the wake of the emergence of the international reinsurance centre. He stresses that capital is a necessary but insufficient condition for employment. If employment is considered a marker of student success, then Bermuda must analyse and understand employment patterns in order to close gaps and provide employment to eligible graduates.

The next two articles focus on improving educational outcomes for urban youth. The seven authors of "Conversation on the Literacy Development of Urban Poor Youth: Perspectives from the Classroom, Neighbourhood, and University" view student success from the perspective of translating positive intentions into positive outcomes. They use a method similar to Conversation Circles to dialogue about educators' understanding of literacy development in urban youth. John E. Duncan discusses the constraints on the academic and social success of Black males in middle school. He advocates educational reform that will focus on the particular needs of males to facilitate the development of marketable skills that will empower these males to be successful locally and globally.

Student-centered learning is the focus of Renee Faulcon's article on the use of simulation teaching strategies in nursing education. She shows that simulation increases students' critical thinking skills and improves patient outcomes. Lee-Ann Liles discusses the importance of information and library literacy and describes initiatives undertaken in this area at Bermuda College. The final article by Barrington Brown provides a definition and discussion of the skills graduates need in the 21st century to be marketable and successful.

In sum, all the authors stress the importance of understanding education and defining student success in the following five contexts:

- History: Understanding our history, making secular changes over time to remain relevant, and employing the best educational structures;
- Culture: Recognising the importance of linking culture and pedagogy to develop strategies that speak to the particular needs of urban youth and of Black males in particular;
- Political agenda: Resisting educational approaches overly defined by current political ideologies that limit options for success;
- Employment patterns: Analysing employment patterns to understand deficiencies and identify opportunities;
- Required Skills: Providing needed skills by offering student-centred learning opportunities that use state-of-

the-art equipment and best practises; promoting literacy in constantly changing technology-driven areas ; and remaining current by addressing the needs of employers.

Student success is broadly defined as any number of achievements and other markers associated with positive outcomes for individuals in an educational programme or setting. The path towards achievement must be intentionally developed by educators and other stakeholders to elicit desirable outcomes. As such, both contextual barriers and the unique strengths of constituents must be considered in the provision of educational opportunities.

Acknowledgment and Thanks

Thanks are due to Bermuda College Publication Committee members for providing the stimulus and motivation to produce this inaugural journal. The editors also extend their gratitude to the authors who submitted articles to *Voices in Education*. Without those articles, there would be no journal. Your articles will be excellent resources for research both nationally and internationally. Additionally, we thank the Editorial Board, whose members gave of their time, knowledge, and expertise, thereby enhancing the excellence of this publication.

Historical Context of Education in Bermuda: Perspectives of a Participant Observer

Joseph L. Christopher

Abstract

During the 20th century, government education policy followed a utilitarian philosophy, providing only those facilities, programmes, and changes considered necessary at the time or for improved educational outcomes in the near future. Some people and schools reacted with an elitist response. They separated their children, on the basis of family wealth or prior achievement, and sent them to schools that usually followed different curricula and assessments they considered to be internationally superior.

KEY WORDS: *Bermuda, education policy, utilitarian, elitist*

Introduction

During the first half of the 20th century, the structure of the education system in Bermuda remained relatively static. School attendance was compulsory between 7 and 13 years of age. Only a small proportion of the school population was in post-primary education – 11.2 per cent in 1949 (Gilbert 1949).

The economy of the island was based on agricultural exports with a small, but viable tourist industry serving clients who arrived on the island via ocean liners that docked in Hamilton. However, after the Second World War and the construction of the airport at Castle Harbour, the relative ease of overseas travel resulted in rapid expansion of the island's economy.

Before 1950, all schools were segregated on the basis of race and all schools were fee-paying. Some, but not all, schools received financial assistance from government. A few schools had higher than average fees and tended to utilise competitive admission examinations, especially for post-primary facilities.

It should be noted that all schools for white children that provided post-primary education provided primary education as well. There were several white schools that provided only primary education, and parents would seek to gain admittance of their children into the post-primary section of other white schools. These conditions influenced the educational environment of Bermuda in the second half of the century.

There were three occasions in that period when government determined there was a need for change in the structure and/or operation of its education system.

Structural changes, 1950-59

In the aftermath of the war, the new airport at the eastern end of the island was used by tourists wishing to holiday in Bermuda. The resulting enlarged clientele was drawn mainly from the northeastern United States, a relatively wealthy and populous area situated close to Bermuda. In addition (1946), the prohibition on motorised vehicles

on Bermuda's roads was lifted. Both factors required workers who were trained beyond what was needed in an agricultural economy.

Gilbert's (1954) education report noted that primary schooling had been made free in government schools in 1949. It also mentioned that there were plans to provide two vocationally/technically oriented post-primary schools in the near future, along with additional secondary schools. The following actions came out of this report.

The Bermuda Technical Institute and the Bermuda Hotel School (1955) were established as desegregated schools. The Technical Institute was designed to prepare master craftsmen for the automotive and construction industries, as well as for general maintenance in the expanding business and tourism economies. The Hotel School was designed to produce master chefs, hotel operational staff, as well as managers for the tourism industry.

St George's Secondary School (1955) was established for Black children only in the parish of the same name. The Prospect Secondary School for Girls (1958) and the Prospect Secondary School for Boys (1959) were established for Black children only on the Prospect plateau.

There was general acceptance of the changes. Students were proud to be enrolled in the Technical Institute as well as in the Hotel School. Enrollment in the three general secondary schools was taken up readily. Williams (1959) reported an increased proportion of the school population – 19 per cent – in post-primary education.

Structural changes, 1963-84

The increasing sophistication of the island's economy, along with the political changes following the 1959 movie theatre boycott, led to the appointment of a commission to investigate the training needs of Bermuda. This commission recommended that a suitably qualified educationist from the United Kingdom be invited to examine and report on the quality of education in Bermuda. As a result, the Houghton Report (1963) was prepared.

This report, which was presented to government, stated that schools for black children were provided with inadequate buildings, instructional material, and financial support compared to schools for white children. It criticised the segregated school system and recommended desegregation. The report proposed that primary school admission be based on school zones and proximity of residence to school. No government school should provide both primary and post-primary education. It suggested the use of a common selection entry examination for all post-primary government schools, which would prepare students up to the Ordinary-level examinations. A Sixth Form Centre would be established to prepare students for Advanced-level examinations.

In response to the Houghton Report, many changes were enacted.

- Bermuda High School for Girls (1963) and later Saltus Grammar School (1971), historically white schools, decided to forego government assistance and become fully private schools. They increased their school fees in order to compensate for the loss of income from government.
- The Education Act was amended in 1965 to lower the start of compulsory education to five years of age and to raise the ending of compulsory education by one year on each succeeding alternate year until it reached a maximum of 16 years of age in 1971. It also required the creation of a common entrance examination for government secondary schools, the Secondary School Entrance Examination (SSEE), which started in 1967.
- In 1968, the Academic Sixth Form Centre was established on Roberts Avenue, and Warwick Secondary School was established on Middle Road, Warwick Parish.
- The Education Act (1971) made it illegal for any school in Bermuda, either government or private, to base admission on race and also separated the primary and secondary sections of government schools.

- In 1974, the Bermuda Secondary School Certificate (BSSC) programme commenced. The education minister required government and private secondary schools to participate in the BSSC assessment programme. Bermuda College was established as a single institution to incorporate the Bermuda Technical Institute, the Bermuda Hotel School, and the Academic Sixth Form Centre.

As a result of these actions, there was a further separation between private and government secondary schools. As noted Bermuda High School and Saltus Grammar School, formerly part of the government system, decided to become private schools. These schools introduced bursaries following public concerns about the impact of the sudden increase in school fees on students. Both Blacks and whites were admitted to Saltus with bursaries, as the law did not permit racial discrimination in admissions processes. Both schools offered significant bursaries based on test performance to students from less wealthy families.

For those secondary schools that remained part of the government system, the SSEE was used as the filter for students who applied, in effect stratifying students by prior achievement. Those government secondary schools with higher reputations for excellence accepted students who performed at a higher level on the SSEE. The BSSC provided some level of comparability across all secondary schools in terms of curriculum and assessment, despite the nature of the admissions process. By 1983, the minister of education rescinded the requirement for all private secondary schools to participate in the BSSC, and the BSSC became a certification programme for government secondary schools only.

Structural and organisational changes, 1987-2003

During much of the 1980s, the business community expressed concern about the lack of local staff with the technical skills required to support business infrastructure. In addition, there was a paucity of local staff with the intellectual development and work ethic required of effective employees in the offices of international businesses. See Table 1 for an indication of the change in occupational demand from 1970 to 1991.

Table 1: Flourishing of International Businesses

Occupation	1970	1980	1991 Bermudian	1991 Non-Bermudian
Accountant	306	809	463	433
Lawyer	41	82	98	66
Craftsmen	1,553	1,055	952	101

Note: Data provided by the Department of Statistics from census records. Bermudian status was not recorded before 1991. The craftsmen category does not include all crafts, but the selection of crafts is consistent across censuses.

The minister of education (1987) appointed an Education Planning Team (EPT) to examine the situation regarding intellectual and technical skills development and to make recommendations on the way forward for public education. The EPT report recommended the following:

- Reorganisation of the school system: establishment of middle schools, abolition of SSEE and addition of a 13th year of schooling. This set of recommendations was designed, inter alia, to improve racial and economic diversity in each government school.
- Enactment of a new Education Act with the inclusion of mandatory services for children with special needs;

- Introduction of programmes to meet the needs of functionally illiterate adults;
- Implementation of a more effective programme to identify and meet the needs of students at risk;
- Improvement of school facilities and equipment; and
- Improvements in curriculum and assessment at all levels, particularly the secondary level.

As a result of these changes, the Montessori Academy (1991), now Somersfield Academy, was established as a private school. Warwick Academy (1993), an historically white school, decided to forego government financial assistance and become a fully private school. Thus two additional private schools were made available. All private schools used tests as part of the admissions criteria.

The Education Act was finalised in 1996 and formalised the EPT recommendations that were accepted by government, including the following:

- Students transferred from primary to middle school based on the location of the primary school they attended, using the “Family of Schools” concept;
- Tests were eliminated as part of the admission criteria for all government schools;
- The new middle school system started in 1996;
- A new senior school, CedarBridge Academy, started in 1997;
- A new senior school certification programme, the Bermuda School Certificate (BSC), started in 1999; and
- A second new senior school building (2003) was completed and housed the Berkeley Institute.

Bermuda College

Bermuda College is not part of the system of compulsory education. It has been consistent in assuming two roles as the focus of its operation. The core role is the provision of a liberal arts education terminating in an associate’s degree for those students wishing to pursue further education overseas at a four-year college. In this role, articulation agreements have been finalised between the college and overseas universities/colleges for students who wish to gain specialist qualifications in education, business, advanced technical areas as well as other areas of study. The college continues to pursue additional articulation agreements.

Senior school graduates have always had the option of attending Bermuda College before going overseas for post-secondary education. Enrollment at Bermuda College over the decades appears to have varied within narrow limits based on anecdotal evidence. However, Table 2 shows that the percentage of utilisation by public school graduates decreased from 36 to 30 per cent, while utilisation by private school graduates decreased drastically from 30 to 6.3 per cent from the 1990s to 2000s.

Table 2: College Admittance by School Type

School Type	College Admittance	Senior Enrollment	Percentage Admittance
Admission Year - 1996			
Government	122	337	36
Private	62	207	30
Admission Year - 2006			
Government	88	293	30
Private	13	207	6.3

Note: Data on senior school final year enrollment obtained from Ministry of Education and college admissions from Bermuda College

The second major role, in consultation with local employer organisations, is to provide skills-upgrading courses for current employees and appropriate entry-level training to potential new employees.

It can be seen from these two roles that the college aims to serve the total needs of the community. First, it aligns students via a liberal education with higher education goals. Second, it prepares students to maximise opportunities for career success.

Conclusion

This historical overview of Bermuda's education system from 1950 to 2003 shows that the changes in that period were consistent with the political trends of the time. This is evidenced by the focus on utilitarianism and elitism, followed by a focus on desegregation, and finally an emphasis on reorganising the structure of education.

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The Importance of Acknowledging Cultural Orientation to Guide Pedagogical Practices

Mellisa Gibbons Tankard

Abstract

Understanding culturally affirmative pedagogical preferences and practices requires a working knowledge of the influences on individual behaviour. Such knowledge extends beyond skin colour, geographical location, birthplace, and socioeconomic status. This article demonstrates the importance of and challenges to remaining flexible when teaching a diverse population. It acknowledges the difficulty of defining culture and of interpreting the characteristics of learners of more progressive nations and dominant cultures. It also examines the possible implications for interpreting behaviour and learning style in the classroom and community. The literature is discussed as it relates to how to include learning preferences from a cultural perspective in instruction. The essay concludes with thoughts about the implications for pedagogical practice of the interweaving of global influences into the classroom culture.

KEY WORDS: *Culture, cultural affirmation, culturally relevant teaching*

Many in society presume that most educators know of the importance of culture and its impact on learning, even if their application of this knowledge is not apparent during instruction. Evidence of this can be seen and heard in the requests and discussions by parents of school-age children who have a range of needs relevant to their culture and social background: e.g., dietary restrictions, prayer or worship requests, and social needs. According to the online Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2015), the term culture includes the beliefs, thoughts, and customs of a particular society, group, place, or time. Anita Woolfolk (2014) uses a broader definition by including concepts such as attitudes, traditions, and values. She further proposes all of them allow groups to solve problems of living in their environment. Hence, culture and how it is demonstrated and manifests itself through behaviour can vary across and within populations (Marsella 2013).

A 2014 search of a major research database (Educational Resources in Education) yielded 25 terms under the descriptor of culture. These included African-American culture, African culture, American Indian culture, Asian culture, foreign culture, Hispanic-American culture, Islamic culture, Korean culture, middle class culture, popular culture, Spanish culture, student subcultures, and urban culture. All these cultural expressions may be present in the typical classroom at some time or other over the span of many educators' careers. Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) highlights the importance of culturally relevant pedagogy in her work on culture and teaching African-American children. She describes this practice as an example of good teaching and acknowledges that culturally relevant teaching requires that teachers attend to students' academic needs and simultaneously allow students to maintain some cultural integrity so that they have a desire to learn. Thus, it is important that educators be aware and respectful of the unique cultural practices different groups exhibit, as this can play a major role in whether a teacher "reaches and teaches" or "ignores and disregards" a student. Such student is placed at risk of failure merely by the level of engagement that occurs and the level of interaction with the teacher.

According to one of the school reform models that has demonstrated success in working with culturally diverse student populations, the Capstone Institute's Talent Quest Model (capstoneinstitute.org), all students can learn in demanding settings with high academic expectations when seven recommended principles are considered. These principles include building on assets and focusing on educating the whole student as well as providing multiple pathways to success and an emphasis on continuous improvement. In order to do this effectively, demonstrating some knowledge and understanding of the most meaningful cultural influences on students is essential.

Defining “culture”

Culture matters. It helps to shape and define who a people are and what is important. Definitions of culture cover a wide range of perspectives and have done so for decades. According to Woolfolk (Module 6-5 2014), culture includes the knowledge, skills, rules, traditions, beliefs, and values that guide behaviour in a particular group of people. Everyone is a member of many cultural groups, defined in terms of geographic region, nationality, ethnicity, race, gender, social class, and religion, and wide variations may exist within each group.

Even within apparently homogeneous groups, there are classifications beyond culture – such as different behaviours and expectations of people of various skin colours or complexions, economic levels, and social standing – that are not clearly identified when collecting data on various populations (Boykin and Noguero 2011; Ladson-Billings 1994). Such variations within this construct further complicate the ability to clearly define and hence measure culture and its impact accurately. Nevertheless, culture continues to be an essential determinant of human behaviour (Marsella 2013). In 1980, Colleen Moore published research that covered a wide range of definitions of culture. Some of the suggested definitions that Moore adapted from a 1950 paper by Kroeber and Kluckhohn include historical, normative, psychological, and genetic perspectives of this construct. The diversity of perspectives highlights the prolonged difficulty of obtaining a reliable definition of culture, but the root of the term includes both “tillage” and the concept of “raising” (Sheehan 2008).

Cross-cultural equity in education and any other undertaking is an unrealistic and unreasonable challenge from a practical and historical perspective. Definitions of concepts vary across populations, and it is readily accepted by proponents of global equity in education that educational equity and excellence have multiple meanings (William 2006). Hence, creating a linear, one-size fits all notion of equity in a pluralistic, constantly changing society is an unnecessarily tedious task. When teachers know their group and the intimate dynamics of the cultural variations within it, some semblance of equity can be achieved, but the approach may vary across tasks. More recent attempts to produce homogeneous, culturally harmonious systems have failed to produce excellence in education, in part because there is no uniform and culture-free approach to evaluating performance and embracing everyone in all systems.

It is the author's observation that articles on approaches to teaching such as differentiated instruction focus primarily on different learners and learning styles, but frequently ignore the cultural persuasion of students (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education 2008). This can impact the effectiveness of the programme if the teacher is not knowledgeable about the cultural backgrounds of the students within the classroom and the school. Furthermore, promoting culture as an abstract concept causes problems in describing the complex whole and all the finer aspects of the gestalt of this concept (Moore 1980). From a psychological perspective, Vygotsky's (1986) sociocultural approach highlights the importance of culture infused with language and its influence on behaviour (Woolfolk 2014). Most ethnic groups have their own social and psycholinguistic nuances and cultural practices that highlight the various microsystems and macro systems within normative practices. Therefore, trying to create an operational definition (a hallmark of a sound research project) requires time and energy that could be better used in focusing on practical, evidence-based strategies for working with ethnically diverse populations. This article focuses on the latter perspective in addressing the wide range of challenges and possibilities in working with a diverse population.

Cultural interpretation of behaviours in the classroom and community

Observing and measuring the learning styles of diverse populations is often tainted by the subjectivity and cultural persuasion of the observer or researcher. Proponents of the concept of WorldView such as Reginald Jones et al. (2004) support the notion that identifying one's own worldview is generally the first step in embracing and respecting the diversity of others. Additionally, culture has both external and internal representations. Marsella (2013) describes artifacts, roles, activity, context, and institutions as external representations and values, beliefs, attitudes, patterns of consciousness, and personality styles as internal. Comparisons between orientations and the relevance of important concepts and expectations of various ethnic groups highlight constructs such as affect, social time perspective, linear approaches to instruction as well as learning and even spirituality (Boykin 1994; Gibbons Tankard 2000). Even though research does not consistently support significant gender differences in learning abilities (Bruer 1999), the evidence pointing to cultural differences in learning is a relatively new area of exploration.

Consequently, there are a range of challenges impacting the collection and interpretation of data. This helps to explain the inconsistency in outcomes when working with diverse populations. Other factors such as parental work status, socioeconomic status and location of residence (for instance, urban versus rural) have, according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's 2012 PISA report, been proven to have an impact on performance. Even in top performing school systems, the learning styles of various ethnic groups have been noted and documented. For example: "Hong Kong shares Confucian heritage culture with Mainland China, but the strong influence of British colonisation makes its culture and educational system relatively different from that of Mainland China" (OECD 2012). Although the research is limited in Eastern cultures, research databases such as Ebscohost and the ERIC online resources reveal that more emphasis has been placed on the learning styles and preferences of African-American and ethnic minority students living and being educated in the US. Once again, the challenges of this research are apparent, as it is becoming increasingly evident that there is no homogeneous description of African-American due to factors such as socioeconomic status, family background as well as immigrant status and in-group variations, including skin complexion. Another compounding factor is the difference between students from dominant cultures versus those from smaller or less represented cultures. Students from the latter groups tend to question their importance and learn about their culture from parents and family members as opposed to from the school (Jones 2001). Boykin (1994) has recognised this challenge among African-American urban students and describes this as a triple quandary (when students have to manage and negotiate among the expectations of the home, school, and community). It has also been noted that urban students in Eastern communities generally perform better than rural students, but in the US this pattern is reversed (OECD 2012).

However, smaller countries such as Bermuda do not formally record or publish the demographic profiles of the various ethnic groups in the school system. Numerous attempts by the author to secure such information from public sources and Ministry of Education officials resulted in no concrete data and minimal relevant information. Consequently, addressing the cultural nuances of the student population and effectively evaluating growth and improvement as well as differences in learning style cannot be included in a conversation about meeting students' needs. Bermudan practice is not aligned with the practices and focus of more progressive educational systems, which appear to recognise in theory, practice, and research the importance of the cultural variations within the student population (OECD 2012). PISA is a triennially produced document used to measure the effectiveness of educational programmes internationally and identifies similarities, differences, and changes in performance. In developing the assessment tool, considerable effort was made to "achieve cultural and linguistic breadth and balance" (p. 19). The 2012 PISA document provides data that suggest the highest performing school systems tend also to allocate educational resources equitably between advantaged and disadvantaged schools and grant autonomy over curricula and assessments to individual schools. It also provides tracking information related to changes in the state of education across the globe and supports the use of this information to support policy change and improved outcomes.

The behavioural repertoire of students ranges across cultures and varies widely. This is evident in their learning styles in the academic setting. Unfamiliar or unpopular behaviours can be affirmed or rejected based on the reaction of the instructor and possibly other students as well. For some ethnic minorities, this can have a detrimental impact on their performance (NBCDI 2013). Given that the impact of cultural orientation is being embraced by professionals more readily, it is evident that the interpretation and measurement of behaviour can be tainted by the cultural orientation of the observer and consequently impact the outcome or performance of the observed student. Marsella (2013) looked at individual and group preferences and priorities and revealed that it is through socialisation that these are rewarded or punished and, consequently, cultural constructions of reality (behaviour patterns and values) are modified or promoted.

The late Asa Hilliard III, who published numerous articles on culturally affirmative learning and teaching styles, stated that “misunderstanding of cultural behavioural style has been shown to lead to errors in the estimation of a student’s or a cultural group’s intellectual potential, learned abilities or achievement in academic subjects such as ‘reading’ and language abilities” (1992). This has implications for outcomes and student performance at various levels. Students from cultural groups with a high need for affect may be disadvantaged or placed at risk by systems that are less affirming and more linear and rigid in instruction or climate. More recent attempts to improve outcomes and future options for Black boys in particular include former President George Bush’s “No Child Left Behind” initiative, and this objective has remained a priority right up to the current administration of President Barack Obama (APA 2012; Boykin and Noguero 2011). A casual Internet search of the behavioural and learning styles of different ethnic groups indicated that research related to African-American and European students was considerably more abundant than research related to European-American, Bermudian, and Caribbean students. For example, in February 2015 the Education Resources Information Center recorded 15 studies on African-American students and 32 studies on European students, whereas only three were recorded for European-American students, two for Caribbean students, and none for Bermudian students during that period. A further search revealed that since 2011, a total of 2,412 articles were written about African-American students and 1,831 about European students, whereas 188 were about European-American students, 72 about Caribbean students, and two were about Bermudian students. Such inconsistency and unavailability of information suggests that instructors were charged with collecting the information related to the cultural nuances and expectations from their students themselves. This may be a better approach than relying on subjective interpretations of cultural values and behaviours, which may not be reliable indicators. Collecting information related to student preferences, contrived reinforcers, and matters of significance during less formal learning experiences can assist in minimising cultural misunderstandings between teachers and students. Students who select reinforcers that are most important or meaningful to themselves and perform specific behaviours in exchange for “goods” are more willing to perform the expected task, when natural consequences are deferred or perhaps not as appealing. This is aligned with the research related to operant conditioning as described by B.F. Skinner (1982).

A range of research related to the behaviours and cultural practices of learners exists and is summarised in Table 1 below (Boykin 1994; Gay 2000; Griggs and Dunn 1996; Guild 1994; Hui-Michael and Garcia 2009; Jones 2001; Ladson-Billings 1995; Quinton 2013; Tripp 2011; Yale University 1988). Common behavioural characteristics of learners from various cultural groups need to be considered in order to ensure optimal performance and success of different learners.

Table 1: Characteristics of Learners

	Ethnic/cultural group			
	African-American	European-Americans	Asian-American	Latino
Teacher relationship	Affective learner; positive relationship with teacher is critical to success	Views teacher as expert	Highly respects knowledge of teacher, will not disagree	Seeks contact and personal relationship with teacher
Movement level	Strong preference for movement	Prefers routine and less kinesthetic instruction	High level of concentration when working	More hands-on, active learners but generally not high movement expressive
Time perspective	More focus on social time perspective	Very time oriented/conscious	Conforms to rules such as time constraints	Prefers routine and structure
Interaction with peers	Very communal learning style	Independent learning preferred	Prefers indirect and nonverbal communication; minimal body contact preferred	Benefits from group activities and community support
Academic competitive level	Group competition preferred, e.g., team work	Individualised competition; improvement preferred	Individualised: High level of self-discipline, persistence, motivation and self-control	Communal preference for learning and achievement
Orality/ communication	High preference for conversation/ dialogue during instruction	Prefers to work independently in a controlled setting/silence	Nonverbal preference during instruction; possible language barriers in some subgroups	Prefers discussion and modelling of strategies

Common Learning style characteristics

Note: This does not imply that these characteristics are demonstrated by all learners within these ethnic groups.

Teaching in the cultural diverse classroom

Teaching and learning cannot occur when the divide between instructor and student is too great or blurred based on affect, inappropriate expectations, or cultural biases. Accordingly, Quinton (2013) highlighted the importance of teachers recognising culture in order to make students feel valued. However, Quinton noted that in order to accomplish this task, teachers have to confront painful realities about American culture and sometimes their own biases and perspectives. Hilliard III (1992) noted that the most significant feature of discussion of style and learning (as it relates to African-American, Hispanic, and European students) is that it provides the opportunity to raise issues pertaining to general pedagogy that would not otherwise be raised. Even though the initial approach is

generally deficit centred, that is, focuses on what is not working or why these students are traditionally performing lower than their European counterparts (a trend that still exists as students move up the educational ladder), more progressive and affirming approaches are being looked at by research agencies such as the Capstone Institute (which uses a more asset-based perspective). Keeping the spotlight on diverse populations and ensuring that effective and appropriate practices are put in place to instruct and educate ethnically diverse student populations is of benefit to all communities.

Implications and considerations for pedagogical practices

Culture matters but varies in strength and impact based on the learner's context and environment. Additionally, different cultural contexts create different realities (Marsella 2013). This is not a problem when students are respected and their views and values are formally and informally represented in the learning environment. However, penalising students for expressing their cultural variations within the classroom may hinder their ability to perform optimally and disrespects that which may be very important to many ethnically diverse children. Incorporating students' experiences and perspectives when teaching; encouraging the sharing of cultural experiences (for example, during holiday periods) in a manner that is affirming and accepting of differences; providing examples of other perspectives when introducing concepts; having open and written discussions about familiar and less familiar cultural practices; and providing opportunities for students to express themselves in culturally affirming patterns are some practical and easy-to-adopt practices that educators can use when working with a culturally diverse population.

With a closer eye on accountability and outcomes, future directives will need to focus on ethnic and cultural groups and performance in different settings as variables of significance. Collecting clear data that recognise these variables and making the necessary adjustments and accommodations to ensure success and excellence can aid in ensuring optimal achievement for a wide range of students who do not readily embrace mainstream teaching strategies. Also, in a global world where cultures are expected to coexist, instructing students while attempting to minimise the importance of their cultural ethos to their behaviour and performance is unaligned with the global acceptance of expression and learning that exists in progressive school systems. Teaching children in a way that embraces their learning style and cultural nuances is essential in helping them reach their highest level of brilliance within and outside the academic setting.

THE DRUM

Daddy says the world is a drum

Tight and hard;

And I told him, I'm going to beat out

My own rhythm

Nikki Giovanni

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National Development: Conflated Concepts as False Narrative

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Abstract

This article critically analyses national development, a false narrative for the establishment of national literacy, a national math strategy, and national identity plans for student success. The danger and power of false narratives of national development are analysed, especially when subscribed to by formal colonial educational institutions like Bermuda College and the Bermuda Public Education System. The paper characterises the strategies and initiatives that belie island-wide student success. The use of concepts such as national focus, national literacy, national reform, etc. by colonised educational institutions to achieve student success resonates with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory regarding the interaction between developing educational institutions and people within the culture in which they live.

KEY WORDS: *critical analysis, national development, false narratives, Vygotsky*

Introduction

This article discusses the relevance of Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory as the basis for a theoretical framework that helps to explain that conflated concepts like national development, national literacy, national math, national identity, and national reform are false narratives used to induce student success. Before we explain the concepts within Vygotsky's sociocultural theory in the context of national development, it is important that we answer the following questions.

What are conflated concepts? What is a false narrative? Conflation occurs when two or more concepts share some characteristics and take on a single identity. The merging of two distinct concepts into one term, national identity, conjures up potential misunderstandings in the relationships between the two concepts and this can in turn lead to the construction of a false narrative.

According to Philips (2014), a false narrative is one in which a complete narrative pattern perceived in a given situation is not an actual narrative at work in the situation. The perception in a false narrative can be due to insufficient or inaccurate information or to insufficient or inaccurate assessment.

The purpose of this article is to describe Vygotsky's sociocultural theory in the context of national development, and to speak to the danger and power of false narratives derived from these conflated concepts. At the same time, questions will be raised as to how insufficient assessments are made in delivering national development towards student success because of the misunderstanding or misuse of the concept "national."

Vygotskianisms

According to Lantolf and Pavlenko (1994), Vygotsky's idea of development occurs with the transformation of inborn capacities entangled with socioculturally constructed mediational means. "Through this transformation or internalisation, an external operation is internally reconstructed" (Blanton et al. 2001: 228). The foundational premise of sociocultural theory is that learning is social in nature and that language plays a key role in learning. Language concepts like national focus, national identity and national culture are what students learn and use as mediators between their thoughts and other's interpretations of their actions. Mediation between education institutions and other's understandings is the function of adult education policymakers and of students. Moreover, this theory emphasises the role of mediation in the interaction between novice and expert in the process of learning (Allahyar and Nazari 2012).

In colonial educational institutions such as Bermuda College and Bermuda public schools, learning plays out on two levels discussed by Vygotsky. Learning is first through interaction with others and then integrated into the individual's mental structure. Currently, Bermuda's education reform places emphasis on the student at the centre of learning. With curricula that are student-centred, cooperative, and collaborative, the learner should be treated as one who brings knowledge and experience. The learner should not be treated like an empty vessel to be filled. Unfortunately, with many educators it is at the first level that conflated concepts like national development, national identity, and national culture are espoused, before the intra-psychological process whereby the individual or student mentally internalises and embraces concepts as part of his/her cultural development. The conflated concepts, in other words, are nothing more than symbolic communicative utterances unravelled and given meaning based upon interactions with teachers, who impose on students their socio-cultural experiences as learners.

With the second Vygotskian process or principle of learning, the "zone of proximal development" facilitates the student's potential for cognitive development and meaning-making of the conflated concepts. This zone is an area of exploration for which the student is cognitively prepared, but requires help and social interaction to develop fully (Briner 1999). The developmental and empowering narrative potential is only there provided education institutions like Bermuda College and Bermuda's public schools and, more specifically, teachers progressively move students towards a stronger understanding of what these concepts mean. Educational exploration should be designed to cultivate in students an empowering narrative towards independent learning of what constitutes national development and national culture. For example, regarding national literacy, the expectation would be for educators and policymakers, as experts, to guide every student during the exploration to successfully collaborate and develop a national literacy plan that engenders a move towards national development. An aspect of this is that students, especially adolescent learners, must have encouragement to develop differentiated literacy skills. Because the best-positioned people to apprentice students in meaning-making within their disciplines are subject specialists like English literature teachers, this literacy development work cannot be the sole purview of the reading or language art teachers. "All teachers need to be able to demonstrate and make visible to students how literacy operates within their disciplines, [thus] helping adolescents learn how content experts use language in characteristic ways to present information, engage in interpretation, and create specialised text" (Fang and Schleppegrell 2010: 591). This quotation helps us understand the detrimental impact of the characteristic usage of conflated terms such as national literacy and national identity. Teachers (educational institutions) may consciously or unconsciously, in a social and cultural context, give different kinds of meanings to conflated concepts like national focus and national culture for different purposes. It is in this sense that we see how easily conflated concepts as false narratives can be present as a danger and power in education and affect student success.

Danger and power of false narratives in education

When we use the concept "national," the explicit meaning is nationhood, nationalism, or a unified body moving towards a common aim and objective. For example, in England they have a national curriculum designed and

developed to convey a common language across all subjects of learning, akin to having everyone communicate the same focus towards learning. In the US, you see a plethora of organisational bodies identified as national associations. With these postcolonial nations come the ascribed and conflated concepts of national identity, national culture, and national development. These are all terms engendering nationalism, engendering nationhood. Worsley (1984: 247) states:

NATIONALISM is also a form of ethnicity, but it is a specific form. It is the institutionalisation of one particular ethnic identity by attaching it to the state. Ethnic groups do not necessarily act together except when they have a special interest to secure. When those interests are to obtain a state of its own (or part of the state) the group becomes a nationality.

It is on this premise that the conflated concepts of national identity, national culture and national focus are dangers in the institutionalisation of student participation in their success. Simply stated, if we are to use the concept of national, implying nation, then one would expect we are evoking the concept of nationalism towards your country. That is problematic for Bermuda, as a colony, as an island, and not a nation.

These concepts, when used to advance educational agendas in Bermuda, raise questions in the classroom, during the teaching and learning process, and when we inquire about knowledge and student success deriving from such ascribed concepts. For example, when educational institutions like Bermuda College and Bermuda's public school system disseminate knowledge about having a national focus or a national agenda, is it knowledge as information or as concept formation? When the Department of Education labels a literacy or math initiative (or a blueprint for public education) as "national" for the purpose of communicating a framework, without engaging all the stakeholders in society, then it is merely conveying knowledge as information. The department is telling the public what it wants the public to know about literacy or math. There is no explanation or description to what the concept of national literacy or national mathematics means to all teachers, public or private, or to all persons in Bermuda.

Vygotsky prompts us to inquire into the nature of knowledge used in the classroom, for example, knowledge as information versus knowledge as concept formation. His theory makes us aware of our vision of students – for instance, children defined by their age and IQ versus culturally and socially situated learners. It forces us to formulate our ideal of a teacher, such as role model versus source of knowledge versus mediator, and so on (Kozulin et al. 2003). With the understanding of the teacher as a resource to enhance student success by being a role model and source of knowledge, the expectation is for the teacher to disseminate accurate knowledge. In the Bermuda context of colonial education, conflated concepts espousing "national" anything set up a false narrative for a national focus, therefore communicating inaccurate knowledge and concept formation.

In essence, usage of the conflated concepts of national focus and national reform by colonial educational institutions like Bermuda College and the Bermuda Public School System creates the danger of a false identity. The result is deception of people, who believe there is a unity among and of the people in achieving national student success. It cannot be a national focus if the focus does not include all the nation's peoples. All the nation's educational institutions working towards a common national literacy, national math, and a national focus make for a cultural politics of education towards student academic success. This cultural politics sets up the power of a false narrative.

It is evident that any movement towards a national agenda or national focus, with insufficient information as to the meaning or purpose behind the focus, leads to an inaccurate presentation. Individuals who do not provide sufficient ongoing clarification may unintentionally present a false narrative (Phillips 2013). The same applies to educational institutions. The power of conflation to create a false narrative lies in the perception that the account about national focus or a national agenda also amounts to the politicisation of education. By applying these conflated concepts and attaching meaning to them, you want students to derive meaning from the definitions of these knowledge concepts as a way of controlling the knowledge as information. According to Giroux (2004), "politicising education is grounded in a combination of self-righteousness and ideological purity that silences students [and] imposes

‘correct’ positions” (p.73). Authority in this perspective rarely opens itself to self-criticism or, for that matter, to any criticism, especially by students. Politicising education cannot discern the distinction between critical teaching and pedagogical terrorism. Advocates have no sense of the difference between encouraging human agency and social responsibility and moulding students according to the imperatives of an unquestioned ideological position. Giroux (2004) found that “politicising education is more religious than secular and more about training than educating; it harbors a great dislike for complicating issues, promoting critical dialogue and generating a culture of questioning” (p. 73).

The politicising of educational concepts like national focus and national literacy is a form of language usage that sets up a false narrative when used by educational institutions like Bermuda College and the Bermuda Public School System. The purpose is training students to accept the status quo and not to question the purpose and function of education. For the purposes of training students to see these terms in the context of their academic success, there is power in this false narrative.

The root of the danger and power of the false narrative is in the use of language to shape student thinking and action towards their success. Both narratives are within the zone of proximal development spoken of by Vygotsky. While there is exploration of the conflated concepts, most of it is done by adults, namely teachers in the classroom, as agents of the education institution imposed upon students and their thinking. This power ascribed to teachers creates the danger of a false narrative about what constitutes knowledge as formation and knowledge as concept formation. In other words, there is student subjugation to a politicising pedagogy. Students think as adults do: that is, they think as a teacher tells them to think about what these concepts mean in the context of literacy, mathematics, identity, and culture. The presentation of conflated concepts like national focus and national reform often occurs in classrooms where there is no explanation of the political meaning behind nationalism, nationhood, or national. Student success in the context of engaging with their learning, critically interrogating it, and questioning teachers and the institution is discouraged as a national focus. National development is for students, in this case public education students, to find their “voice.” Public and higher education may be one of the few sites available to learn about the limits of commercial values, address what it means to learn the skills of social citizenship, and learn how to deepen and expand the possibilities of collective agency and democratic life (Giroux 2004: 72).

In a colonial education system, is nationalism to be taught as a statement of loyalty to country, or loyalty to postcolonial influences? When we identify educational initiatives as national, do we genuinely mean this is as initiatives inclusive of all the people’s voices? By communicating national development, are we devising a plan for student success, or student conformity? In a colonial educational construct when we propose a national development towards any educational agenda, the aim should be a collective identity where all the people of the nation are in a position to communicate using a common language with one another. With this purpose, we will produce a national development indicative of a collective identity for student success. The collective identity, as well as the single identity, emanating from a common liberating language of questioning and independent learning experience opens up empowering narratives in schools about learning. Our school leaders, in this case the teacher, must decide whether or not they want democratic and liberating places of learning, or schools that are oppressive, non-critical places of education conformity.

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A Bermuda Equation: Reconciling the Contribution of the Bermuda International (Re)Insurance Centre to Bermuda's Employment Landscape

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Abstract

This article explores the origins of an identified cognitive disconnect between Bermudians and the International (Re)Insurance Centre after the latter's establishment in 1993. Quantitative analysis is used to map the relationship between employment and capital growth. It shows that capital growth is not a sufficient cause of employment growth. The way in which capital is deployed seems to determine the relationship. This article follows the sudden and unexpected change in capital deployment beginning in 1993. This change saw rapid capital growth in Bermuda, paired with employment growth. This period closed in 2009, and now appears exceptional. This paper suggests that considering the employment-capital relationship over time allows for an understanding of the cognitive disconnect as an unfortunate but unintended consequence.

KEY WORDS: : reinsurance, employment, capital, public policy, international business

Introduction

Recent commentary on sustainable development in Bermuda has identified, when the island de-centred or shifted from its “tourism heritage” in the early 1990s to accommodate “the unfamiliar world of re/insurance and finance,” a “breach between Bermudians and their new economic reality.” The breach is understood as a cognitive disconnect but not, it seems, a participatory one: “we were caught” in the new world and did not “understand” it (*Royal Gazette*, August 2014). This kind of disconnect has been noted, if not addressed, in central pieces of public policy (Government of Bermuda 2006) and in at least one major public-private partnership (Bermuda First 2009). The research presented here was first intended to specifically address this disconnect. Instead, it turned into something different, both more and less than its original intention. More, in that it developed into a study of the breach itself: how did it come into being? A quantitative analysis of the relationship between international (re)insurance capital and international business employment in Bermuda is the entry point of the article. Less, since it is more concerned with understanding the origins of the problem, it only goes a small way towards confronting it.

The variables used in this research are publically available data produced by the Bermuda Monetary Authority and the Bermuda Government Department of Statistics relating to (1) employment in the international business sector and (2) international (re)insurance capital. The rationale for using them is twofold. First, they form a reliable dataset. Levels of capital are catalogued from 1981 in the Ministry of Finance's annual National Economic Reports,

¹The views expressed in this paper are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Association of Bermuda Insurers and Reinsurers or its member organisations.

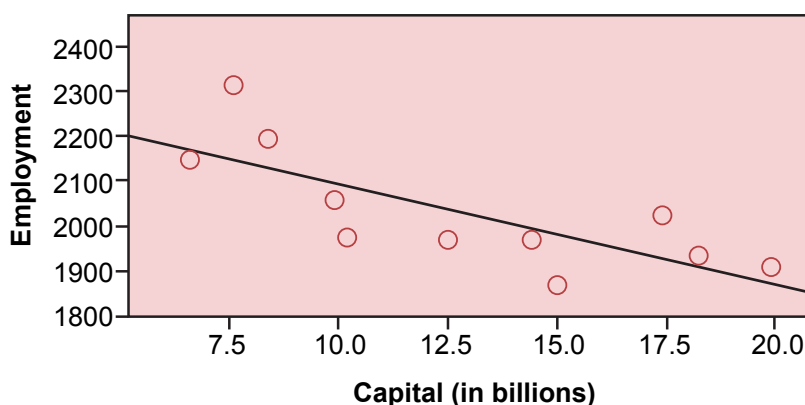
and, similarly, employment levels from 1981 have been recapitulated in reports commissioned by the Ministry of Finance. Second, international (re)insurance capital is a truer measure of local economic impact than say, exempt company formations, since many will have no physical presence in Bermuda, limiting their impact to the provision of services such as legal representation. The drawback is that international insurers and reinsurers are a subset of international business, so employment figures for the latter are not a one-to-one match with the former. However, with this methodological handicap noted, the study makes a compelling case that the two are intimately bound. Through analysis of their relationship, it is hoped that an understanding of the widely identified cognitive breach between the industry and the Bermudian public will be developed.

The employment and international (re)insurance capital relationship (1981-2008)

The relationship between employment levels in Bermuda’s international business operations and international (re) insurance capital can be broken down into two periods: a) 1981-91 and b) 1992-2008.

Period (a) was characterised by falling levels of international business employment and consistent international (re) insurance capital growth. Annual employment rates were negative in seven of the 10 years, while capital contracted in one year only. Overall, by 1991 employment was at 89 per cent of its 1981 level and capital had grown 201 per cent. In what might appear a strikingly counterintuitive formulation, the covariance between the two variables was negative in period (a): that is, as capital increased, employment tended to decrease (shown in Figure 1). Against the background of market maturity, technological innovation that reduced the level of support staff was cited as the primary suppressor of employment growth at the time (Premier’s Task Force on Employment 1992: 8).

Figure 1: International Business Employment and International (Re)Insurance Capital: 1981-91



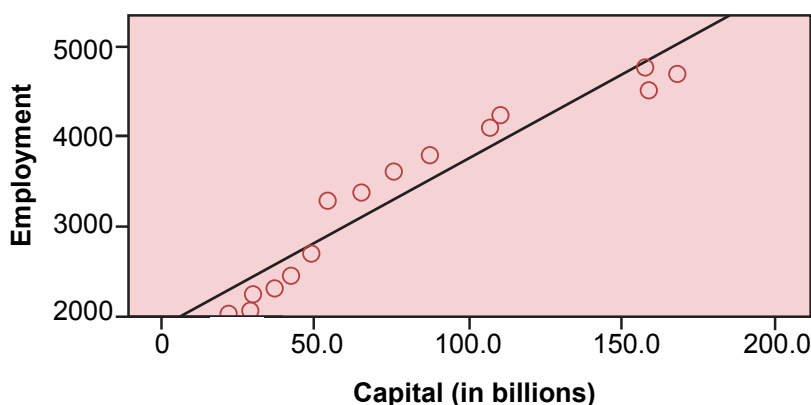
A Pearson Correlation analysis confirms the visual representation of the relationship in Figure 1. Capital and employment levels correlate significantly, $r(9) = -.76, p = .006$. This establishes that capital formation on the island and employment levels negatively correlate with some strength in period (a).

No wonder then that in its 1992 report, the Premier’s Task Force famously cautioned against future employment growth in the local and international insurance industries. Not only was there little supporting historical evidence on which to build an optimistic case, but the catastrophic events that provided the original conditions for a major reinsurer presence on the island could not have been foreseen. In fact, the Task Force observes positive conditions for the formation of new excess and financial reinsurance companies, giving the industry a “new lease on life.” But for reasons that persist in contemporary commentary – the overall maturation of the market and technological

innovation – new market entrants are forecast to be “small employers” (p. 8). Otherwise, incoming capital during period (a) was largely used to form captive insurers, the employment impact of which is not nil, but since they are predominantly managed by third parties, they are not often themselves substantial employment vehicles.

As is well known Bermuda experienced a rise in international business employment in the early 1990s. Beginning in 1992 and not ending until 2009, international business employment increased continually at an average of 6 per cent year on year. International (re)insurance capital grew from \$21.9 billion in 1992 to \$156.8 billion in 2008, declining only once. Employment and capital still tended to move together, but positively instead of negatively. The inversion of the relationship is so complete that the presentation of covariance forms an almost perfect linear visualisation, as displayed in **Figure 2**.

Figure 2: International Business Employment and International (Re)Insurance Capital, 1992-2008



A Pearson Correlation analysis shows significance again, $r(15) = .96$, $p = \text{nil}$. In contrast to period (a), however, period (b) displays positive correlation, and the correlation is of notably greater strength.

This analysis has shown that capital and employment related, albeit differently, over periods (a) and (b). Some subjectivity impacts the boundaries of the relationship. One year could be added or subtracted without entirely destabilising the outcomes. So, noting this caution, a change in the relationship is observed beginning in 1992. For one, the value of the variables greatly increases (a change in magnitude), without which it would not be possible to speak of a “shift” in employment generation from tourism to international business by 1994 (Bermuda Employers’ Council 2008). The other change, one of kind, does not establish a causal relationship between capital and employment as if the former simply generates the latter. The configuration of the relationship in period (a) should temper that conclusion. This simple fact means that the analysis is incomplete: it is illustrative but not definitive. There are intervening and affecting variables. The 1992 occurrence of Hurricane Andrew, of course, and the following influx to Bermuda of property catastrophe reinsurers in the summer of 1993 coincides with the change in the employment/capital relationship. The 1994 Northridge, California earthquake was the second paradigm-shifting United States catastrophe in two years.

The answer to the question of “Why Bermuda?” has been widely canvassed. Much less well documented locally are the original conditions that are the answer to “how do catastrophe specialty reinsurers form at all?” In local markets, insurers work to diversify risk by accepting different types of risk – travel, home, motor, marine, etc. – from many policyholders. So long as losses affect only a small number of policyholders in a single market, statistical independence is achieved, and diversification by means of local insurance works. Catastrophes, however, disrupt statistical independence by distributing loss to many policyholders in a single event (Cummins 2007). The unprecedented severity of insured loss inflicted by Hurricane Andrew revealed the under-preparedness of many

insurers for large natural catastrophes. This resulted in at least seven US corporate insolvencies and many other insurers received capital injections from their parent companies to meet policyholder obligations. One outcome of Hurricane Andrew was the increased use of reinsurance (McChristian 2012), and, in Bermuda, this translated into the creation of the first significant catastrophic reinsurance market (Duffy 2004), prompting an “emancipation from the niche” of captive and specialised liability insurers (Holzheu and Lechner 2007: 893). The underlying logic of reinsurance is that it reinstates the primary principle of diversification, that is, a global reinsurance market spreads risk in a way that primary insurers cannot achieve alone. Put differently, “risks that are locally dependent may be globally independent” (Cummins 2007: 183) through global reinsurance markets. Bermudian catastrophe underwriters, as part of an increasingly global network of suppliers, help ensure the insurability of some of the most catastrophe-exposed regions of the world.

The \$4.8 billion in new capital attributed to the 1993 startup of reinsurers in Bermuda after Hurricane Andrew (Cummins 2007) was the then largest annual influx of capital of any kind into Bermuda. The overall increase of 32 per cent that year has only once been surpassed, in 2006, after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita of the previous year. The influx was qualitatively different. From the formation of captives and a limited number of specialty liability insurers, this capital introduced the island to major international (re)insurance operations adequate to underwrite large natural catastrophic risk.

Underwriting is a persistent, physically present constituency of Bermuda's international business sector and not simply a rhetorical device: participating reinsurers in the Association of Bermuda Insurers and Reinsurers' (ABIR) Economic Impact Survey (2014) put underwriters at 24 per cent of their workforce. Extrapolated from the survey sample to all industry players, this count of underwriters would exceed official statistics. The correct reading of the two outcomes is to accept both counts as true, that is, as internally consistent. While some underwriters are classed in other occupations officially, likely in senior roles as managers, executives, and so forth, the industry, left to a method of self-identification, (re)allocates greater numbers to underwriting. This, by itself, is an insight into the Bermuda market. Anecdotal evidence also reinforces the importance of underwriting in the market. According to a Bermuda Human Resources Association survey (2013), underwriters are one of three roles critical to business operations currently and in the next three to five years. The other two roles – actuaries and senior qualified financial experts – are also centrally related to the operations of locally based reinsurance operations.

We can now deepen the effect of Bermuda's canonical experience of 1993. Its impact on the employment/capital relationship appears in the form of magnitude, in the sense of expanding already existing quantities: large deployments of capital were matched with more people to manage and deploy it. But more, it should also be understood as a radical intervention that reversed the course of international business in Bermuda: it is the original means by which period (a) became period (b). Seen from this angle, a cognitive breach is an unfortunate but wholly unintended consequence. Industry practitioners shared the surprise at Bermuda's early success in attracting new reinsurers following Hurricane Andrew (Duffy), together with the Task Force, which was forced to recalibrate its proposals. Later commentary concluded that due to the island's “size constraints” further market expansion would “likely take place overseas” (Higginbottom 2003). Made after the Bermuda reinsurer class of 2001 but before 11 large reinsurers formed on the island following the historic natural losses of 2005, the prediction testifies to how period (b) tended to evade even the most considered and experienced attempts to anticipate its limits.

Lessons for today and conclusion

Today, the intimate links between international business employment growth and international (re)insurance capital growth experienced between 1992 and 2008 have completely fallen apart. If this is experienced as disorientation, it should at least be one without claims to novelty, given the jurisdiction's recent past. Between 1981 and 1991, capital was able to increase, as today, without being associated with increases in international business employment. It should be noted that today, reinsurers have kept employment levels more stable than the total international

business sector. An ABIR sample of 16 reinsurers showed an employment level of 1,494 in 2008; the same 16 reinsurers employed 1,404 at year end 2013, a 6 per cent decline. The overall employment level in the international business sector fell 20 per cent over the same period. From 2008 to 2012 international (re)insurance capital increased 23 per cent to \$193 billion.

The analysis of the capital/employment relationship offers one firm, if modest conclusion: if capital is a necessary condition for employment, it is not a sufficient condition. Capital infusions into the island for large underwriting operations, exemplified in the reinsurer class of 1993 and the following classes of 2001 and 2005, are now increasingly deployed in qualitatively different ways. Bermuda government statements (*Royal Gazette*, February 2014) and industry commentary (Artemis 2014) agree that innovations among third party capital managers and insurance linked securities do not support the number of jobs their more traditional reinsurer relatives had. In the new business model, the same number of underwriters can manage the risk for multiple capital providers, leading to fewer employees overall than if the capital providers had established separate legal entities.

Period (b) has left a legacy that we have perhaps not fully appreciated and understood. It might be viewed as an interruption, in the form of a new international reinsurance centre, despite government forecasts and established industry thinking, which seemed to support nearly two decades of uninterrupted employment growth. Now, the International (Re)Insurance Centre remains in Bermuda, as does something of the original cognitive breach. There is an opportunity, based on 20 years of experience of an established phenomenon, to honestly address the disconnect.

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A Conversation on the Literacy Development of Urban Poor Youth: Perspectives from the Classroom, Neighborhood and University

Ty-Ron Douglas, James F. Baumann, Adrian C. Clifton, Lenny Sánchez, Veda McClain, Pamela Ingram, and Ellis A. Ingram

“Urban education” means something different to everyone based on their gender, race, sexual orientation, nationality, culture, socioeconomic status, age, or profession. In every definition, it is a juxtaposition of positive intentions and negative outcomes. (Kress 2006: 324)

Abstract

In this article, we address various complexities associated with teaching and the literacy development of K-12 youth in urban poor school and community contexts. As such, we consider various conceptions of urban education through an honest conversation on the vexing issues and questions facing teachers, students, and families who work and live in urban poor communities. Drawing on a conversation circle of seven educators, the authors seek to move beyond the “positive intentions” of educators and move towards a (re) conceptualisation of what “positive outcomes” and success in schools and communities can look like.

KEY WORDS: *critical analysis, national development, false narratives, Vygotsky*

Introduction

Although there is no dearth of research and theory on urban education (e.g., Khalifa, Dunbar, and Douglas 2013; Kincheloe et al. 2006; Pink and Noblit 2007), nor certainly on urban literacy education (e.g., Compton-Lilly 2012, Kinlock 2011; Lee 2007; Li 2007; Morrell 2007; Neuman and Celano 2012; Wilkson et al. 2008), there is little consensus on what it entails, as Kress (2006) notes (see above). What seems clear is that discourses and the harsh realities related to urban education in the US disproportionately affect students of colour, to the extent that little has changed since Kantor and Brenzel (1992) made this disturbing observation:

After two and a half decades of federal, state and local efforts to improve urban education for low-income and minority children, achievement in inner-city schools continues to lag behind national norms and dropout rates in inner-city high schools (especially among African-American and Hispanic youth) remain distressingly high, while many of those who do graduate are often so poorly prepared they cannot compete successfully in the labor market. (p. 279)

In Bermuda, despite the reality that class-based borders and boundaries influence who occupies and has access to particular geographical and educational spaces (Douglas 2012a; Mincy et al. 2009), the language of urban space,

urban education, or urban literacy education is far less common than in other countries and regions. Instead, particular neighbourhoods, locales, and school names have become polite – yet still problematic – indicators or labels of inequity.

Notwithstanding the growing body of scholarly research on Bermudian education in general, gaps remain. Scholars have certainly captured important elements of Bermudian history, culture, and education (Bernhard 1999; Burchall 2007; Butler 1987; Caines and Caines 2014; Christopher 2009; Douglas, in press; Douglas 2012a, 2012b; Douglas and Peck 2013; Hodgson 1997, 2008; Hunter 1993; Jackson 1991; Matthews 2003; Musson 1979; Packwood 1975; Robinson 1979; Swan 2009; Zuill 1999), but not necessarily explored the dynamics of literacy development in the context of Bermuda's unique cultural, social, and geographical constructs. We recognise, though, that attention to relationships between the nature of knowledge, identity, and race have been considered and cannot be absent from research in schools (Douglas and Peck 2013; Matthews 2003). In truth, this article does not attempt to fill this gap, but our desire is to share and bridge an all-too-common conversation between educational stakeholders in Bermuda and the United States to spur on conversation about similar realities, challenges, and opportunities. As educators and scholars, one of whom attributes his academic and professional success to the sound educational experiences he had in Bermuda's public schools and Bermuda College, we recognise that we can no longer talk in silos about issues that are just as common in Columbia, Missouri as they are in Compton, California, and Cottage Hill, Hamilton Parish. Furthermore, continuing the rich legacy of Bermudian scholars who contribute to national and international conversations, this article reveals how the voice of a Bermudian academician can be embedded in and enhance international discourses.

In this article, we address various complexities associated with teaching and supporting the literacy development of K-12 youth in urban poor school and community contexts. In so doing, it is our intent to address diverse conceptions of urban education, but more importantly, it is our hope that through an honest conversation about the vexing issues and questions facing teachers, students, and families who work and live in urban poor communities, our "positive intentions" and those of other literacy scholars can be (re)directed toward "positive outcomes" and success in schools and communities such as in Bermuda and the US.

The structure

We seven coauthors are educators and community organisers with diverse backgrounds and experiences. We are collectively interested in enhancing the literacy development, life aspirations, and achievement opportunities for children and adolescents in urban poor school and community contexts. In this article, we draw on the concept of a Conversation Circle (CC) to raise questions and issues that intersect with our various contexts concerning urban literacy education. In a CC, participants convene in a circle, acknowledge one another as equals, invite inquiry, respect questions or confusion, suspend assumptions and certainty, are mindful of judgments, listen more than talk, accept the messiness of discourse, speak the truth from their experiences, and think together to create new knowledge (Roche 2013). Roche argues that CCs are much akin to an "elder's council, leadership circle, campfire circle, [or] roundtable" and that they are "embedded in our memes and maybe even our genes." In CCs "the question is more important than the 'answer'" (Roche 2013: 1).

Drawing on this structure, we first center the voice of Ty-Ron Douglas by sharing a vignette that describes his selected personal experiences and concerns about literacy development. Next we include excerpts from an "open" CC dialogue that occurred with a public audience during a professional conference. We conclude with an appraisal of what we uncovered and is yet-to-be understood about promoting the literacy development of youth in urban poor settings through "the power of thinking together" (Roche 2013).

A personal sharing

If the term “urban” were more common in Bermuda, it could be used to describe the neighbourhoods in which I, Ty-Ron Douglas, was reared. Growing up, my parents helped ensure I knew literacy mattered. To promote my literacy development, they purchased many books, National Geographic magazines, and a word of the day calendar. I read few of the books, occasionally scanned pictures in the magazines, and learned one word from the calendar, “facetious.” Undoubtedly, my parents’ influence was important but insufficient in my literacy development. In truth, school and community-based educators helped buttress my development in this regard. I remember the day my affinity for words was sealed: it was the afternoon I unleashed “facetious,” in context, on my unsuspecting Primary 3 teacher (Ms Rochelle Furbert) as she sought to reprimand me for talking too much. Rather than punish me, Ms Furbert inquired if I knew how to spell and define the word. I certainly did, gladly taking the opportunity to display my vocabulary skills in front of my classmates. She then affirmed me for my mastery of a word above my grade level, which buoyed my confidence and left a distinct impression upon my literacy development.

Other community-based pedagogical educators impacted my journey and literacy development (Douglas 2014; Douglas and Peck 2013). One such educator was my barber, Ricky Spence. For over 30 years, Ricky’s Barbershop has served as a hub – a classroom – for working class Black males for fellowship, sharing and learning. Ricky promotes literacy by purchasing the daily newspaper for his patrons to read and discuss. He has facilitated the literacy and educational development of thousands of Black males by moderating robust, culturally relevant barbershop dialogue that is often instigated by the print and digital media materials he makes available. Certainly, my career and commitment to literacy development and leadership have been shaped by educators like Ricky and Ms Furbert. We would do well to recognise and maximise the pedagogues and pedagogy of leaders in spaces inside and outside the traditional schoolhouse (Douglas 2014; Douglas and Peck 2013).

The conversation

Building on this vignette in what follows, we highlight three themes we believe are important for augmenting our understandings of literacy development for educators of urban youth across various locales: overcoming barriers to learning, transformative engagement and moving towards action. These themes emerged from a cross-narrative analysis of the topical impulses that developed from a face-to-face dialogue with the other educators at the 63rd Literary Research Association Conference who joined us in question-posing, experience-sharing and problem-solving centered on the topic of literacy in the urban context. Some of their voices are recognised in the following sections by the name “Conversation Member.”

Overcoming barriers to learning

A question from Ms Ingram: How do we negotiate cultural and environmental barriers to learning – such as family dysfunction, community violence, fatherlessness, poverty, abuse, incarceration – that some children bring into the classroom to enable them to actually “hear” and learn?

Dr McClain: We must do so gingerly and respectfully. Our urban poor cut across racial and cultural lines, and what has become more apparent over the past few years is that many families do not know how to stop the generational dysfunctions that prohibit and inhibit learning for their children. Parents at my school have begun to seek assistance from the school so they can learn what they need to do as parents to promote academic success. We share strategies and activities they can use at home with their children as well ways to interact more positively with teachers.

Ms Clifton: It is necessary to address the issues Pamela notes both inside and outside schools? I also challenge pre-service and in-service teachers to volunteer in their students’ communities. They must be a light in the darkness

and a part of the village that raises a child.

Conversation Member: As Ms Ingram suggests, we must establish permanence with our children and families so they can rely on us. They wonder: “Are you going to be there tomorrow? When I turn 12? At Christmas?”

Dr Ingram: I have found this to be so very true with our outreach programmes. When a person volunteers or provides service outside the classroom, the families are watching very closely to find out how long you will be there. It probably took us a few years to gain that confidence from our students and their families.

Dr Douglas: I think we must carefully analyse how we see young people. We must beware of deficit-based approaches that position students, their neighbourhoods, and their culture as half-empty. Certainly, family dysfunction, community violence, fatherlessness, poverty, abuse, and incarceration are real. Still, using an anti-deficit lens, I wonder how we can (re)frame these challenges as pedagogical infrastructure so the process of “hearing” and learning can be more reciprocal between the children, teachers, and leaders.

Dr Sanchez: Teachers certainly play a tremendous part in this process. A good friend of mine serves as the principal of an alternative high school. At this school, teacher meetings consist of check-points where they can share struggles and successes, as well as opportunities to enter into conversations about what it means to be a compassionate, respectful, truthful, and responsible teacher. She provides them multiple opportunities through course design and co-teaching, for example, where they can nurture personal passions so these interests seep into the energy of students’ learning.

Dr Baumann: Our discussion makes me think of the large-scale studies conducted in the 1970s and 1980s on what was called “teacher effectiveness.” That research demonstrated that successful teaching and learning occurred in classrooms in which teachers had high expectations; believed in students’ abilities; and had a confident, optimistic “can-do” attitude. I believe that David Berliner used the word *convivial* to describe these environments. The research also demonstrated that effective teachers had a sense of humour, provided praise and communicated to children a sincere sense of caring – these were happy classrooms where students felt secure and valued.

Ms Clifton: Yes, we must be there with encouragement, a smile, and a hug – understanding that outside the school walls is where the real war is taking place.

Transformative engagement

A question from Dr Sanchez: How can literacy be used to affirm and reflect students’ lives? When do literacy practices and pedagogies promote or prevent children and youth from transformatively engaging with their world?

Dr Sanchez: We know that literacy is tied to social and economic opportunity and that it should not be taken lightly. Literacy is, after all, a regulation of access to particular subjects, forms, and ideas; and schools can either work to maintain or disrupt the advantage of these purposes. For literacy to affirm and reflect students’ lives, teaching and learning must value students’ experiences, desires, wonderings, and needs so that those become what is important in the classroom. This means we cannot let standards or prescribed curriculum take away the skills and knowledge students have.

Conversation Member: I have been a teacher in schools identified as “urban” or “serving diverse populations” and have invested in social justice and critical pedagogy. I believe in acknowledging, affirming, and building on students’ literacy practices and the texts they use and generate at school, in their homes, and around their communities.

Dr Sanchez: Jabari Mahiri (2004) uses the term “street scripts” to describe the kinds of texts students produce, perform, and publish in their everyday interactions. Examples include video, rap, spoken word, art-making, and any type of written or spoken language fashioned to express or expose daily experiences. In Valerie Kinlock’s (2011) book, *Urban Literacies*, teacher educators, researchers, and scholars share similar ideas for how students can

use pop culture, digital media and other forms of multimodality to fine-tune literacy skills that also promote varied ways of researching their communities. What all of these concepts have in common is that literacy instruction becomes transformative for a student when teaching and learning are rooted in the students' sociocultural and historical understandings of themselves and their communities. The goal for the teacher is to work towards utilising instructional designs of agency that encourage students to be creative, innovative and responsive to their needs and those they learn about.

Moving towards action

A question from Ms Clifton: How do we move towards action when confronted with research that shows our urban children as failing and after conversations like these, where the issues are highlighted even more?

Dr McClain: One action is to engage and partner with parents in helping them to understand the varied literacies children need to be successful in schools and in pursuits after schooling.

Conversation Member: I think that action largely depends on hope. I recall a powerful presentation at AERA by Sean Ginwright, who suggested that present-day children of poverty lack hope. When we can help instill a sense of hope, many changes are possible.

Dr Ingram: This is so true. It is so important to help students think through their own challenges and set goals based upon expectations set by themselves and others. I sincerely believe there is a unique brilliance in each and every student: we need to help them see it.

Dr Douglas: I agree, but we don't need to just move towards action; instead, we need to engage in reflective, thoughtful action. It's a cyclical process, where reflective action is partnered with critical reflection and strategic collaboration with other stakeholders.

Dr Baumann: This discussion reminds me of the qualities of teacher researchers, who possess an insider, or emic, view of teaching and learning, and who mix theory and practice, or praxis. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) argued that we must find a way to add a critical dimension in which teachers move "between their classrooms and school life as they struggle to make their daily work connect to larger movements for equity and social change" (p. 291).

Ms Clifton: For me, I move towards action by waking up each morning and taking personal responsibility to walk what I talk.

Afterword

What can we conclude from our CC and "the power of thinking together"? We recognise that each of us has different experiences, different perspectives, and different points of view on the literacy development of urban poor youth. That is neither surprising nor unfavourable, although at first blush this may not seem like "thinking together." Yet we do see commonality in our beliefs and convictions reflected in our conversation. Across the spectrum of our conversation, we see potential in our three cross-cutting themes (overcoming barriers to learning, transformative engagement, and moving towards action) and want to make clear they are undergirded by anti-deficit conceptualisations of literacy development for urban youth. We believe any solution to educational reform or dilemma must "sing the praises" of youth and honour their linguistic, cultural, and intellectual resources. This means literacy teaching and learning must invoke the virtuosity of youth while taking into consideration any political and cultural ideologies connected to the students' schooling context that may be rooted in prejudice or stereotype. Said another way, there is a need to build on and create bridges between the background knowledge and skill-sets urban poor youth bring to the classroom and the new knowledge and skills educators seek to impart.

In regard to broadening how pre-service teachers see and experience urban space, we ask university education programmes to consider how they might broaden the scope of their curriculum to include dimensions of community attachment. This includes service opportunities, but also examining the social and political capital of a particular community. The goal of this type of work would be to understand what it takes to significantly alter the life chances of an individual from a low-resourced community. We know communities have the capacity to change the conditions impacting their members. Pre-service teachers, in-service teachers, and teacher educators alike must look within communities to examine how community citizenship, for example, is promoted and encouraged and determine ways to make the schooling curriculum responsive to a community's needs.

Lastly, to reiterate our CC, we recognise there is an ongoing need to (re)evaluate our motives, expectations, and methods towards the instigation of a socially just movement that will lead to more equitable opportunities and outcomes for urban poor youth. While student success in Bermuda or the United States is grounded in our willingness as educators to better understand the unique context of the geopolitical and educational urban terrain in our jurisdictions, we cannot lose site of the larger regional, national, and global discourses that unify us as pedagogues and leaders. Rather than working to write a single story of what it means to teach "urban poor youth" across (inter)national and (sub)urban borders, our students often have much in common, despite their diverse needs. Our responsibility is to not only engage in conversations with and about similarities and differences, but to then work to find culturally relevant solutions to our localised and global educational challenges that can necessitate change beyond the borders that most closely surround us.

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The Academic Achievement and Social Success of Black Males at Select Middle Schools in Bermuda

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Abstract

This article examines the factors that facilitate and impede the academic achievement and social success of Black males in middle schools in the Bermuda Public Education System. Over the past decade, marginalisation, victimisation, and stigmatisation of this population have resulted in subpar academic and social success during adolescence. Fifty per cent of Black males fail to graduate from high school. It is imperative to heighten stakeholder awareness to ensure Black males are provided with educational and social opportunities that foster academic and social outcomes. Such opportunities will provide transferable skills to enable Black males to compete in the global market and to make meaningful contributions.

KEY WORDS: *academic (under)achievement, Bermudian Black males, marginalisation, middle school, peers, social success*

Introduction

For centuries, best practice has dictated that educators provide a classroom environment conducive to the academic proficiency and social success of students. Currently in Bermuda, there is a looming crisis among the Black male student population at the middle school level. Many Black males in the Bermuda Public Education system have been marginalised. As a result, they lack the requisite academic skills to matriculate from high school successfully (Mincy 2007). The marginalisation of this population has resulted in the widening of the achievement gap between Black males and their same-aged peers.

In 2007, Dr Ronald Mincy conducted a study that indicated that 50 per cent of Black males who enroll in high school fail to graduate. This statistical revelation is problematic, as Bermuda has witnessed an increase in crime, an expansion in its gang culture, and an escalation in incarceration that is adversely affecting many Black males. The ubiquitous marginalisation of Black males is significant, as the adolescent years are a challenging transitional period in their development.

Methodology

Data were collected using a qualitative phenomenological research design. A total of 60 participants contributed to the study. School personnel (two middle school principals and one school administrator) were involved in formal interviews and 13 middle school teachers, 37 Black male middle school students, and 7 Black adult males from the community participated in focus groups. Data sources were analysed using the Glasser and Strauss Method (1967, 1994). This method entails examining, comparing, conceptualising, and categorising data to obtain central themes. Triangulation of data was formed as evidenced by interviews with school personnel, Black male middle school students from M1, M2 and M3, and Black male adults in the community.

Findings

The following major findings were revealed:

1. School personnel perceived peer pressure, internal and external distractions, domestic disengagement and insufficient role models as factors that impede the academic achievement and social success of Black males.
2. Black males perceived unfair categorisation and treatment, internal and external interferences, an apathetic learning environment, and disregard for learners' needs as factors that impede their academic achievement and social success.
3. School personnel reported that factors such as parental support, purposeful engagement, valuing education, and teacher-student bonding facilitated the academic achievement and social success of Black males.
4. Black males reported that extracurricular opportunities, positive influences, support systems, and high expectations were factors that facilitated their academic achievement and social success.
5. Black males defined success as the attainment of personal goals: (a) obtaining a lavish house (b) acquiring good health (c) cultivating a spiritual foundation (d) possessing a satisfying family life, and (e) enjoying an overall quality of life that makes them happy.

Why focus on Black males?

The academic achievement and social success of Black males were worthy of examination because many African-American boys lag behind their peers in the classroom by the time they reach 4th grade (Fremon and Hamilton 1997). From the outset, education was structured to prevent Blacks from receiving an optimum education, as people would generally pacify Africans with an education that allowed them to acquire minimum-level vocational skills (Hilliard 1998). Unfortunately, the achievement gap Black males experience in the United States is comparable to the achievement gap for Black males in Bermuda. A survey on adult literacy and life skills by the Department of Statistics in Bermuda, as reported by Mincy (2007), indicated that the literacy and numeracy skills of Black males between the ages of 16 and 30 fell below the minimum standard. This research is significant, as the educational inequities in graduation rates and the achievement gaps impacting Black males are national and pervasive (Jackson 2008).

Education researchers, psychologists, criminologists, sociologists, and economists have attempted to keep the study of Black males isolated within a specific discipline. Unfortunately, research suggests that it is difficult to study one phenomenon (such as Black male achievement in middle school) without taking into account the fact that Black males are experiencing challenges in all aspects of society (Roach 2011). The Schott Report on Public Education and Black Males (Jackson 2008) indicated that Black males have been systematically at a disadvantage in terms of their social, economic, and educational status. Additionally, they are likely to attend the most segregated and least resourced public schools.

According to the prison statistics of the Bermuda Police Service, approximately 98 per cent of Bermuda's prison inmates are Black. The average age of incarceration is 35 years, and incarcerations cost the Bermudian public an estimated \$50,000 per annum per inmate. Jack Harris, the founder and director of the Christian Ministry Fellowship in Bermuda, indicates that inequity is one of the fundamental reasons that many Black males turn to crime and engage in anti-social behaviours. Harris (2009) indicates that Black males fundamentally believe that a dichotomy exists in the academic and social opportunities afforded them, as compared with their peers. Consequently, this perception inexorably obstructs their social success in society.

The perpetual concern about the academic and social development of Black males is a worldwide phenomenon

(Noguera 2002; Kinjufu 2009). In 1993, a voluminous study on the socialisation of Black males was conducted in Jamaica. “This study emerged out of a deep concern that males were being marginalised, especially in the education system” (Gayle 2001: 13). According to Gayle (2001), although this marginalisation is a perpetual issue, research into it has been inconsistent. The marginalisation of adolescents in Jamaica is systemic and structural. Evans (1999) discovered that “boys had different needs than girls in the Jamaican school system” (Evans 1999: 57). Gayle (2001) highlights that Jamaican schools have not been male-friendly and the data collected by the University of the West Indies from 1990 to 1998 substantiate the conclusion that “Jamaican schools have failed our boys” (Evans 1999: 57). Evans indicated that adolescent Black males in Jamaica are marginalised and discriminated against in school in numerous ways, including:

1. Teacher-student interaction
2. Gender stereotyping of behaviour
3. Academic expectation
4. Corporal punishment
5. Curriculum design
6. Methods of teaching

From his research, Parry (1996) discovered that Black adolescent males in Jamaica displayed “an anti-academic sex/gender identity which was not felt to be compatible with either diligent study or good grades.” Parry indicated that both teachers and boys viewed masculinity as incompatible with academic achievement as “education is not macho and is dismissed by male students as effeminate and ‘nerdish’” (Parry 1996: 59).

In a study conducted by Duncan (2012) in Bermuda, unfair categorisation and treatment had an adverse impact on how Black males engaged in the classroom at middle school level. Black male students from middle school A and middle school B reported incidents of bullying that culminated in fighting and led to suspension. In addition, they admitted that they disliked being pulled from their “regular” classrooms to attend special classes because they felt self-conscious about their academic propensity to learn. The majority of Black adult males from the community also reported that they were often taunted for aspiring to be “bright.” As a result of this ill treatment, they were labelled with names such as a “geek” or “nerd.” These labels fostered inconsistencies in their academic studies and much social discomfort. According to Kunjufu (2009), failure to understand the cultural and developmental needs of Black children is the problem. He further substantiates Parry’s observation that public schools have failed African-American males, as well as males of other races and ethnic groups.

In 2009, Dr Chris Spence, director of education for the Toronto District School Board, revealed that Black males were at the forefront of all negative aspects of schooling. He indicated that over the last six decades, six Black males had entered prison for every Black male enrolled in college in the United States. Additionally, it is predicted that by 2020, 65 per cent of African-Americans between the ages of 20 and 29 will be involved with the criminal justice system. According to Goldstein (2008), 40 per cent of Canadian youth in Toronto do not graduate from high school. Codjoe (2006) attributes this disparity in academic achievement between Black students and their peers to systemic racism in Canadian society. Dr Spence (2009) indicates that Black males are most likely to be suspended and expelled, drop out of school, be placed in special education programmes, be under-represented among school personnel, and be missing from gifted and advanced placement programmes.

“To say that black males are performing poorly in school is a gross understatement” (Whitaker 1991: 17). This pervasive trend has global implications. Weathersby (2007) argues that the marginalisation of Black males has extended to countries outside the United States, including Canada, the UK, Jamaica, South Africa, and Brazil. It is on this premise that Weathersby contends that stakeholders should not solely discuss strategies to address the

current academic and social plight of Black males, but must implement, execute and evaluate these programmes to ensure sustainability over time.

Black males and learning in the classroom setting

The social success of Black males is contingent on the support structures provided for them. Black males experience social success differently from other ethnic groups, because individuals from African-American backgrounds are more prone to jeers, discrimination, and unfair treatment (Morris 2007). Current research emphasises that mentoring programmes and positive role models are significant in facilitating the positive growth and development of Black males (Bell 2010). In some cases, Black males are unable to execute simple tasks such as raising their hands to be acknowledged or following the directions of the classroom teacher. Therefore, they are often negatively labelled as displaying behavioural challenges. Duncan (2012) suggests that Black males must disassociate themselves from disruptive behaviours that place them at risk academically in the classroom.

According to Thompson and Lewis (2005), motivating Black males in middle school is a critical issue. During early adolescence, many Black males find the content in the classroom uninteresting, and as a result, they are often disengaged. Duncan (2012) conducted a study of Black male students at two middle schools in Bermuda (at M1, M2 and M3 grade levels), and Black adult males who were employed in the Bermudian workforce. The data revealed that 78 per cent of Black male middle school students identified an apathetic learning environment as a factor that adversely affected their academic performance. This study by Duncan (2012) further indicated that 29 per cent of Black adult males reported an apathetic classroom environment as prohibiting their academic success. The statistical difference between Black male students at the middle school level (78 per cent) and Black adult males (29 per cent) denotes that instructional modalities catering to the needs of these students have not been implemented in classrooms on a consistent basis. As a result of the absence of best practices, the academic achievement and social success of Black males has deteriorated in Bermuda since the implementation of middle schools and the restructuring of senior schools in 1997.

Conclusion

Scholars and researchers universally understand that environmental and cultural dynamics have a profound influence on human behaviour (Noguera 2002: 16). Noguera (2002) contends that the processes and influences involved in framing the identities of Black males should become the core of analyses of academic performance. The academic achievement and social success of Black males is interconnected with various factors. According to Duncan (2012), to ensure that Black males in the Bermuda Public Education System reach their full potential (at the middle school level), educational stakeholders must ensure that:

1. The classroom environment promotes active engagement through communication, experiential learning, and hands-on activities that are culturally relevant;
2. Classroom teachers are sensitive, build relationships with students, and are cognisant of Black males' needs and feelings;
3. A rigorous and exploratory curriculum that caters to the diverse and unique learning needs of Black males be implemented;
4. Mentors and role models must become a viable part of Black males' academic and social development;
5. Structured sports and extra-curricular activities must be designed for Black males to develop transferable skills such as self-discipline, self-confidence, responsibility, and a work ethic;

6. There is a positive male presence in the classroom, and the school environment must be promoted to support the academic and social development of Black males

Understanding the academic achievement and social success of Black males is complex. Nuart (2008) acknowledges that a blueprint to ensure the social success of Black males does not exist. However, he emphasises how important it is for Black males to develop a positive identity, as society often devalues them through negative stereotypes. When Black males are equipped to cope with their emotions and the pressures placed upon them by society, their self-esteem and mental health will resonate positively in all situations, but most importantly in the classroom.

It is of paramount importance that the Bermuda education system engage in educational reform that will address the plight of many Black males in public schools. A more deliberate approach to addressing the academic and social success of Black males in Bermuda will undoubtedly create individuals who are equipped with the skills to make meaningful contributions to our community and world-wide. No child deserves to experience marginalisation in a classroom setting where low expectations are the norm. Instead, they should be inspired and challenged to excel in every aspect of their academic and social development. The current downgrading of Black males will only change when all stakeholders assume the power to change this situation. Educators must strategically implement policies and procedures that will eradicate the causative factors that negatively impact the advancement of Black males in our society.

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Innovative Teaching Strategies with Simulation Technology in Nursing Education

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Abstract

Developing innovative teaching methods by using simulation technology in nursing education requires the improvement of strategies and a shift from teacher-centered to student-centered learning. Using simulation technology promotes critical thinking and clinical reasoning skills in nursing education. Although most nurse educators value student-centered learning, they often rely on familiar teaching strategies and methodologies that are focused on teacher-centered learning. Identifying the challenges with simulation in nursing education can lead to the development of a framework for the design and implementation of newer methods to improve learning outcomes. Evaluating these methods will validate the effectiveness of simulation technology.

KEY WORDS: *simulation technology, teaching methods, student-centered learning*

The function of a simulation experience in nursing education is to use innovative teaching methods to create a shift from teacher-centered to student-centered learning. According to Scheckel (2012), activities that are learner-centered encourage the student to participate in the design of learning tasks while acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to meet the curriculum outcomes. Teacher-centered learning is a form of passive learning, where information is presented to the student in a lecture format and evaluated using formal testing (Schaefer and Zygmunt 2003; Scheckel 2012).

Simulation technology is a teaching method based on student-centered learning activities, where the learner is allowed to function in an environment similar to the real world of healthcare (Scheckel 2012). As nursing faculty integrate simulation technology into the curriculum, the advantages and challenges of this approach are considered to evaluate whether learning outcomes are being met. Thus, this article seeks to (1) identify challenges with simulation technology in nursing education in achieving learning outcomes; (2) discuss innovative teaching methods using simulation technology to promote student-centered learning; and (3) explore methods of evaluating the efficacy of student learning in a simulated environment.

Nurse educators use patient simulation as an innovative teaching method to reinforce healthcare concepts and adaptation to technology. The goal is to transform nursing pedagogy by moving away from traditional methods of teaching to active learning that is student-centered (Jeffries and Clochesy 2012). Simulation provides an opportunity for the learner to think critically and problem-solve using clinical reasoning in an environment that is non-threatening. The teaching and learning methods used in the simulation lab are intended to improve student learning outcomes and patient safety in the clinical setting (Jeffries and Clochesy 2012).

There are various types of simulators, ranging from low fidelity simulators with body parts, such as an arm, to learn intravenous insertion, to high fidelity human patient simulators with technologically advanced interactive

mechanical simulation mannequins (Campbell 2010). In, February 2014, Bermuda College opened the Patient Simulation Lab to provide a sophisticated means of practice-based instruction using high fidelity mannequins to enhance student learning. The purpose of the laboratory is to provide for practice in a safe, non-threatening environment, where errors can be detected without harm to a client. Integrating simulation into the curriculum provides an opportunity for Bermuda College to be competitive in nursing education by demonstrating a working knowledge of current trends in the delivery of innovative teaching methods and active learning strategies.

Simulation as a learning activity in nursing education allows the facilitator to provide scenarios that mimic the reality of the clinical environment. Unlike the traditional classroom setting, where instruction is teacher-centered, simulation is student-centered, with the teacher in the role of facilitator in the student's learning process (Jeffries 2005). Simulation encourages the student to develop psychomotor, cognitive, and affective skills prior to entering the real-world clinical setting. The nurse educator becomes the facilitator and has the opportunity to assess and evaluate the student's skill level and ability to meet learning outcomes. Remediation of the student can occur almost immediately, potentially leading to decreased errors in the real world.

Scenarios can be developed by the nurse educator or purchased from a company that develops scenarios specifically for the human patient simulator. Scenarios provide an opportunity for the learner to implement psychomotor skills such as vital signs, health assessments, wound care, intravenous therapy, tracheostomy care, and so much more. The student is also exposed to cognitive and affective domains of learning such as patient safety, mental illness, therapeutic communication, documentation, grieving, death and dying. Depending on the type of simulation, the student may receive the scenario ahead of time to review and prepare for the simulation. The scenario will consist of a brief synopsis of the client's condition along with a list of objectives (Campbell 2010). The mannequin and the environment will complement the scenario, thus requiring the student to reflect on the patient holistically and not just focus on the diagnosis. To be successful, each student must be self-motivated and self-directed to learn during the simulation once the rules have been discussed. As stated, the nurse educator is the facilitator of learning and the responsibility for learning lies with the student (Jeffries 2005).

The framework utilised by Bermuda College for simulation includes the following:

1. Preparation stage, when the simulation begins with a discussion of the scenario, a review of the roles of each student, and review of the skills the students need to perform during the simulation.
2. Implementation stage, when the student completes the scenario by performing the skills and achieving the objectives.
3. Debriefing, a crucial stage, where the facilitator provides an opportunity for guided reflection of the simulation (Campbell 2010).

Evaluation of the simulation has multiple components, as each phase from design to debriefing must be reviewed to ensure that the simulation reflects the students' performance, is effective, and that learning outcomes have been met (Campbell 2010; Jeffries and Clochesy 2012). When evaluating students, it is important to assess whether learning has taken place, and assess the students' ability to demonstrate critical thinking by identifying the knowledge and skills needed to achieve the objectives during the scenario.

Simulation offers the nurse educator methods of instruction to meet the needs of the student by providing interactive, practice-based instructional strategies (Jeffries and Clochesy 2012). However, these methods can be a challenge to nurse educators who are not familiar with the design, implementation, and evaluation of the instructional strategies used to improve student learning outcomes. The challenges include (1) nurse educators relying more on teacher-centered learning methods; (2) difficulty with creating scenarios for simulation; (3) developing an appropriate framework for simulation instruction; (4) student perceptions of simulation; and (5) using an appropriate tool to effectively evaluate the instructional methods and student outcomes.

For simulation to be effective as a student-centred learning activity, nurse educators must adapt to this teaching style and instructional method. Schafer and Zygmunt (2003) postulate that student-centered learning promotes independence in learning, problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and lifelong learning. The study compared current teaching methods to the nurse educators' philosophy of teaching. The participants included 187 faculty members teaching the Baccalaureate of Science in Nursing on average for 14 years. Analysis of the participants' written philosophy of teaching in the study reveals that although the teachers value the concept of student-centered learning, they actually employ more teacher-centred strategies. The implications for practice include providing interventions to improve the climate of learning, nurse educators sharing effective teaching methods that are student-centered, and balancing the faculty with educators, nurse clinicians, and researchers (Schafer and Zygmunt 2003).

Writing, designing, and implementing clinical scenarios using complex technology are tasks unfamiliar to some nurse educators. Waxman (2010) proposes that clinical scenarios be based on researched evidence with clearly written objectives and guidelines using a template to help implement the teaching/learning methodology.

Thus, simulation is a vital teaching tool for educating nurses in the complexities of nursing practice. Additionally, the increased focus on patient safety and lack of clinical site availability make simulation a crucial resource for clinical education and learning (Waxman 2010; Berndt 2014). The design of the simulation scenario must be appropriate and support the goals, competencies, and outcomes of the course, with specific attention to objectives, planning, fidelity (authenticity), complexity, cues, and debriefing (Jeffries 2005).

Another challenge with using simulation is developing a framework design that will operate across the curriculum and meet the learning outcomes for each nursing course. The lower level course outcomes may require a basic health assessment, and the upper level course may require the student to analyse patient data to resolve a complex issue. Jeffries (2005) proposes a framework that includes the design, implementation, and evaluation of a simulation scenario. The student is responsible for the learning and the nurse educator remains the facilitator, providing a few prompts to maintain the momentum of the scenario during the implementation phase. Students are placed in roles as the registered nurse, part of the healthcare team, or a family member and must demonstrate psychomotor, communication, and critical thinking skills. Placing students in these roles may be a challenge for the nurse educator, who may not have the experience with evaluation of students during simulation.

To address the problem of nurse educators struggling to evaluate the effectiveness of simulation, Foronda et al. (2013) have undertaken an extensive literature review regarding mannequin-based simulations in undergraduate nurse education to provide evidence of student evaluation of simulation activities. Five themes emerged from this review: (1) anxiety, (2) interdisciplinary experiences, (3) satisfaction, (4) confidence/self-efficacy, (5) skills/knowledge. Students were satisfied with simulation as a teaching method for clinical education, stating it increased their confidence level. However, it also caused an increase in anxiety. Students noted the value for interdisciplinary experience and acquisition of knowledge and skills. A recommendation for evaluation is to use mixed methods when evaluating the effectiveness of simulation as an instructional method (Foronda et al. 2013).

When evaluating the students individually, there are various tools such as checklists, rubrics, rating scales, or any form of scoring that is used to align with the clinical outcomes. Video-recording or using a Smartphone video camera to record the simulation and for playback allow for immediate feedback regarding the students' actions, knowledge, and skills. Simulation software may allow the nurse educator to type comments and provide feedback as the scenario progresses, keeping track of the student's actions, which can be reviewed during debriefing (Campbell 2010).

Quantitative and statistical analysis and evaluation can include a pretest and post-test, asking the same questions prior to the simulation and after completion. Lewis and Ciak (2011) used this evaluation method with a diploma school of nursing using a pretest and post-test devised in conjunction with the simulation lab to measure changes

in knowledge in the cognitive domain. The tool was developed by the National League for Nursing (NLN) to assess student satisfaction with simulation as an education strategy and how confident nurses felt about applying the skills learned in the lab to the clinical setting. The results showed a significant gain in student knowledge, but there was no definite conclusion on critical thinking,

Simulation in nursing education is certainly an innovative teaching method used by nurse educators to inspire student-centered learning, while increasing the student's knowledge, skills, and abilities regarding patient care. Future implications for simulation will depend on evaluation and research methods to analyse statistical data to validate each phase of the simulation process from design to debriefing and how it impacts student learning outcomes. The results of the statistical analysis will assist in improving the standards for simulation in all nursing programmes and ultimately influence improvements in patient care and safety.

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Library Literacy in the Community College Setting

Lee-Ann A. Liles

Abstract

This article explores the role of the instruction librarian as an equal player in higher learning initiatives, and focuses on student motivation, information literacy, activity and assessment, and collaboration. Library literacy is a major component of student success in community colleges, but the role of the instruction librarian is often undervalued. Current research points to the need for strengthening college research and writing and it is now being recognised that library literacy programmes are needed more than ever to facilitate this process. This paper also looks into information literacy sessions at Bermuda College that mirror this shift in education and are beneficial to strategic planning and the accreditation of community colleges in the US and Canada.

KEY WORDS: *library literacy, information literacy, student-centered learning, teacher and librarian collaboration*

Introduction

In recent years, paradigms in education have shifted, promoting information retrieval at a rapid rate. Information literacy programming must meet these challenges. According to Reitz (1996), information literacy (IL) can be defined as

Skill in finding the information one needs, including an understanding of how libraries are organised, familiarity with the resources they provide (including information formats and automated search tools), and knowledge of commonly used research techniques. The concept also includes the skills required to critically evaluate the information content and employ it effectively.

IL programming serves the twofold purpose of helping students to become information literate and efficient in the research process. Programmes must be assessed on an ongoing basis to ensure they engage first-year college students, and stakeholders in institutes of higher learning have prioritised the implementation of IL programming in all facets of the college curriculum. Studies show that community colleges now account for 45 per cent of US graduates and there is a great responsibility on these institutions to provide IL in the early stages of community college education (ACRL 2014). There has been a shift whereby more high school graduates in the US enroll in community colleges prior to Baccalaureate programmes. However, many students will be detained in remedial courses during their community college experience, and almost half of the first-year community college students will drop out. Transitioning from an authoritative educational environment to an autonomous one places more responsibilities on students and can be problematic, and student engagement is necessary to meet the challenges of student retention (Gibson 2006).

Some creative approaches to meeting this challenge have involved closing the gaps between curricular and co-curricular skills. What this means is that core courses and library literacy can be amalgamated as shared skills. At California's Fullerton College, a research component was paired with an ethnic studies course and is receiving

positive feedback for its successful information retention rates (Warren 2006). Another college, Earlham, has paired first-year Humanities core courses with library literacy, embedding the core topics into the IL lesson and creating library research relevant to the course (Budd 2012). Many colleges and universities have now included their IL component as a credit course, and have extended library instruction from one hour to five to eight classes over a semester. Studies indicate the need for new and innovative avenues for accountability in student success, and libraries must be seen as equal players in order to foster a cohesive learning experience and student success at community colleges (Green 2014).

Bermuda College background

Bermuda College is the only tertiary level institution of higher learning in Bermuda. It has an average enrollment of 1,300 students per year and a total of 35 information literacy classes per year, mostly requested by the Humanities courses. One-shot instruction sessions can last between 60 and 90 minutes and are often modified according to the college curriculum. The main goal of such library instruction is to enable students to find, evaluate, and use information resources effectively. These skills are tied-in with course information to make for a broader and more meaningful information experience. Library instruction for first-year students encompasses a library tour, an introduction to the library homepage, and searches on how to retrieve books and database articles. Topics range from information ethics to copyright and privacy issues. Projectors, online interactive tools, and library databases tailored to specific research are used to keep students engaged, and initiatives such as the text-the-librarian service offer a quick response to requests for appointments and reference questions. Instruction on the best apps for higher learning and using social networking tools facilitate learning by adding new dimensions to information literacy at the Bermuda College Library, and go beyond the traditional “sage on the stage” classroom experience. Instruction sessions provide the instruction librarian with opportunities to connect with students. Students are also encouraged to enhance their library literacy skills through subsequent library sessions in upper level courses, and Bermuda College Library is promoted for its lifelong benefits beyond the classroom.

A variety of challenges arise in the design and application of information literacy sessions, particularly by presenting materials incongruent with needs of the class, so the focus should be on adequate preparation in advance of the IL session. A key to lesson planning is the use of materials appropriate to the course level and course curriculum, and according to lecturer specifications for the lesson. Understanding the needs and expectations of both students and lecturers, and the core principles of the coursework, are critical to the effectiveness of IL programming at Bermuda College.

It is never assumed that high school students entering Bermuda College have adequate research skills and they must be transitioned into the college programme with this in mind. Senior high schools like Berkeley Institute, Bermuda High School, Cedarbridge Academy, and Bermuda Institute have taken advantage of the opportunity to prepare their students early for college through Bermuda College’s IL tours and instruction sessions. The Bermuda College dual enrolment programme assimilates high school students from Cedarbridge Academy and Berkeley Institute into the post-secondary level English and Mathematics courses as well as other courses at college level, thus giving students advanced placement to add five credits towards a college degree, while still attending their respective high schools. (*College Impressed with Record Number of Dual Enrolment Students* 2014). The factors that promote student success are teacher and librarian collaboration, lesson planning, using appropriate presentation methods for information sessions, and assessment of input and output measures. Setting students tasks using the materials presented allows them to truly test their skills. Students are asked to navigate the databases at the end of an instruction session by conducting brief topic searches. This allows the instruction librarian to see how students manoeuvre through the databases and to redirect students in their searches. Emmons and Martin (2002) state that “students come to campus highly computer literate, not realizing they were information illiterate” and it is the goal of IL sessions to make these distinctions clear and assess how to bridge the gaps.

Motivation

In Green's (2014) account of her experience in motivating first-year college students at Plymouth State University, she points to "pathways" or "desire lines," which are logical entry points for student searches. She found that most students use Google as a starting point for a topic search and, rather than be dismissive of this, Green used Google Scholar to instruct them on navigating the university's online catalogue. Green was thus able to align Google Scholar's similarities with Plymouth's online catalogue. The use of pathways in this student-centered approach to learning is important in enabling students to navigate searches and to return to and revise those searches at a later date. Whatever path is used to instruct students, the outcome should be demonstrated in their ability to locate, evaluate, and effectively use the information needed (ACRL 2014).

Finch and Jefferson (2013) believe intrinsic motivation can benefit students' receptiveness to the material in literacy sessions. Intrinsic rewards involve incorporating the value of the materials presented in a way that is meaningful to students, making this knowledge its own reward. Extrinsic rewards are tactile and less meaningful, like giving praise or high grades. Understanding the factors that drive students' database searches and what might inhibit searches is part of lesson planning. Often students are unsure where to start their research and are stumped by the research process. Budd (2012) notes that when both problem and desired outcome are not obvious, there is likely to be difficulty in arriving at a strategy for solving the problem. Kuhlthau's theories on motivation in information science research explore the "feelings and attitudes of students as they proceed through the research process" (Small et al. 2004). Students might display levels of "uncertainty" and "incongruity" in their searches that either inspire curiosity or cause them to have research paralysis. Librarians must recognise a student's difficulty in knowing where to start research and find unique and creative ways to build on this experience: doing this in a short span of time can be challenging for librarians. Factors that contribute to the engagement of students include opportunities for student participation and interaction; relevant content; the use of humour; instructor enthusiasm; and a variety of teaching methods (2004).

Learning theories that are adapted to library instruction can help to engage students and motivate them to approach information from varying perspectives. Current learning theories used in IL are student-centered, allowing the instruction librarian to follow students' examples in learning. Active learning, also known as experiential learning, keeps students engaged in the instruction process by using participation and reflection activities that promote critical thinking. Active learning is at the forefront of IL theory, using "real world" activities such as CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) training that involves resuscitating a mannequin connected to a computer. It uses motivation to keep students interested during instruction sessions, and this can also improve students' understanding and retention of information (Wyess 2005).

Blended learning allows students to get the best of both worlds by experiencing face-to-face classroom interaction with online learning environments, supported by educational platforms such as Moodle and online tools like Pinterest. Blended learning can be synchronous or asynchronous, providing the "live" time in peer discussion, or allowing for completion of a quiz in the student's own time (Rodrigo and Nguyen 2013). Lecturers at Bermuda College have the capability of using Moodle, on which they can post additional readings, provide e-mail or chat communications, or open a drop-box for assignments.

Project-based learning makes students accountable to themselves and a team through group work. Bell (2010) explains that students drive their own learning through inquiry, as well as work collaboratively to research and create projects that reflect that knowledge. Such learning has been applied to certain English classes at Bermuda College. Students are able to formulate their own questions about the materials and reach new conclusions from these inquiries. The Bermudian Literature course and the second-level English courses at the Bermuda College have successfully heralded a paired research component using the primary resources found in the Brian Burland Centre for Research. In a project-based learning environment, students are given collections to report on, with a list of questions that assist in the analysis of the materials. Local author Brian Burland's collection of photographs,

journals, letters, sketches, scrapbooks, novels, manuscripts, notes, and outlines are housed in archival boxes. Students answer a range of questions about the boxed materials they choose to investigate. One group might be interested in Burland's correspondence and another in his journals. Students explore and report on the life of the author, his spirituality according to his works, and aspects of his fiction that provide factual details of his own life. Based on observation, students are curious about the materials, and this curiosity ignites discussion that inspires research topics. The Bermudian Literature course demonstrates the critical thinking and investigative learning that allows the library's special collections to be used as a tool for bridging the ACRL IL standards and core research skills in English. Giving students the ability to control what is being learned and how they learn is the foundation of student-centered learning, which is quickly becoming a hallmark of college retention and success.

Activities and assessment

There are many tools that can help students develop their research and writing skills. Guidelines that have been excellent in breaking down the goals and skill sets for assessment are the *American Association of School Librarians: Standards for the 21st Century Learner* (2007) and the *Association of College and Research Libraries: Standards for Libraries in Higher Education* (2014), which are widely used in technology for education. The AASL standards are for K-12 and involve the use of skills, resources, and tools to think critically, create new knowledge from old, share acquired knowledge, and to pursue personal and aesthetic growth. Further subsets of these goals help to break down these components into smaller, attainable tasks for students. Similarly, the ACRL standards set the college and university level benchmarks, and place academic libraries as joint partners in community college success by guiding IL programming. The ACRL standards (2014) follow emerging trends and demonstrate the importance of pedagogical practices, including research-based learning and inquiry-based learning, to increased student success and graduation rates. Student engagement features prominently in the ACRL standards and demonstrates how students grow by being immersed in library resources and library literacy programming.

An effective approach to IL assessment is by creating summative and formative assessments in tandem and correlating the information gleaned from the sessions with the needs for future literacy learning. In order to gather information on Bermuda College students' self-assessment of their IL skills and assessment of the IL session, the author provides a hard-copy at the end of an IL session. The survey comprises four questions through which students self-assess their research capabilities before and after an information session. The subsequent four questions focus on the librarian's performance and the IL resources. One question provides students with a box to tick if they require further information. This is followed by a comment box at the very end.

Between September and November 2014, 59 surveys were completed. Students rated themselves on a scale of 1-4, from "I'm lost" to "very confident": 85 per cent indicated they were comfortable using the library for research purposes. On the librarian performance questions, the lowest score was for the final question, "The librarian who led this class encouraged the students to participate," with 76 per cent agreeing. This score in itself demonstrates students' desire for more active learning in IL sessions beyond the "sage on the stage." Comment boxes provide further information on student satisfaction (Liles 2014).

A discipline-focused summative quiz helps to emphasise students' understanding of subject-specific library resources. The outcome of all the assessments is regular improvement on the current IL lesson by incorporating new technology and resources where possible.

Collaboration

It is advantageous to students and for the success of library literacy programmes when teachers are part of the instruction sessions. With new database subscriptions and the application of new technologies (like e-book subscriptions in many community college libraries), teachers should be aware of the current resources available for

their coursework. Collaboration between educators and libraries, which unifies the ideas, theories, and outcomes the coursework means to accomplish, is sorely undervalued. Key terms and topics must be shared between teachers and librarians so that the teaching materials used in the classroom extend to the instruction sessions, and vice versa.

Often teachers are unaware of the benefits of collaboration. Firstly, teachers need a clear understanding of the curriculum and, secondly, understanding of the library curriculum. The latter, when paired with the content curriculum, will address some of the disconnection between teachers and instruction librarians (Montiel-Overall and Jones 2011).

Many of the critical thinking skills required for first-level English courses are the same as for information literacy in libraries. First-year students have not incorporated the skills of finding and using credible sources or of effectively citing and applying sources to avoid plagiarism. The responsibility for inculcating these skills is handed to librarians by teachers (Price et al. 2011). This can be viewed as a starting point for incorporating instruction sessions into the first-year English courses that are taken by *all* students.

Peer sessions are also a part of college coursework and are viewed as a major component of community college success. Learning communities can be a positive support system and a means for generating ideas for curriculum development, whether they stem from student interaction or teacher collaboration, and are also important to ongoing dialogue in the institution. Warren (2006) states that learning communities are one way for colleges to offer more engaging educational opportunities.

Discussion

Many community colleges and universities are designing IL credit courses to be offered in five to eight sessions. They recognise that information literacy must be implemented beyond the one-shot 60 minute session in order for students to make significant strides. In a study to “determine how IL courses were being presented and taught in academic settings,” researchers noted that IL courses have changed significantly by moving from database and periodical searches to addressing the overwhelming glut of information that is available on the Internet. Researchers studying the changes in IL programming noted that the current issues are misuse and abuse of information, leading to plagiarism and copyright infringements. Elrod et al. (2013) see the Internet as a boon to students in their research. It may also mean they avoid citations altogether. The Internet can be an invitation to student cheating, which can be inadvertent and stem from not knowing how to use information correctly. Students also experience information overload and become overwhelmed in the writing process, leading to incorrect citations. These are areas of need that are becoming apparent in IL, not just in North American colleges and universities, but at Bermuda College as well.

During my brief time as Research and Instructional Librarian, I have come to realise that Information Science is evolving rapidly and that education is shifting from the study of terms and concepts to the placing of students in active learning environments. With the ongoing changes in the digital landscape, IL should be moving towards the use of digital and online resources with integrity and responsibility. Teaching students to safeguard their information by developing strong passwords for accounts, exercising responsibility when sending emails and posting to social networks is advantageous to preserving the image left by the digital footprint. Students must regard the Internet as a permanent record-keeper and avoid turning-off potential employers by sabotaging their personal integrity.

Recently, the ACRL Committee has been called upon to update its standards to address the challenges presented by online information available through unfiltered sources via the community, media, and organisations on the open web (Banks 2013). Because of this paradigm shift, I anticipate an increased classroom and online presence in the near future with a focus on Internet open sources. A core requirement for IL is a basic introduction to library skills, which should form part of the first-year student orientation at Bermuda College. An invitation should also be sent to private and public high school seniors for IL sessions in basic library and online research skills. Bermuda College

might also require a credit course of at least six weeks, which should include modules on, but not limited to:

1. The Library and its Functions
2. Catalogue and Database Searches
3. Academic Integrity: Cheating, Plagiarism, and Copyright
4. The Digital Footprint: Exercising Online Responsibility
5. Citation Formatting: MLA and APA
6. Websites, Online Tools, and Apps for Higher Learning

This will be an opportunity for students to apply the *ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* (2014), which examines access to, evaluation, incorporation, use, and understanding of the information needed for the research. Courses should be assessed on an ongoing basis in order to improve content, presentation methods, and educational tools.

Bermuda College Library has provided a template for information literacy programming that is tailored to Bermuda's culturally unique demography and to fostering Bermuda's future leaders. This includes partnering IL with college courses in studying unique collections such as the Burland Collection. Students are thus able to draw their own conclusions from primary sources and write their own story by taking on the identity of the era and reporting on their understanding of those events. In this way, students can become an authority, as digital commons and works of scholarly communication are expected to rise on college and university campuses, making students the leaders of today, not tomorrow.

Librarians have a pivotal role in academic libraries, and have the ability to tie together elements of the curriculum. The success of the community colleges requires an earnest appreciation of the role of librarians and the deeper responsibility they have in ensuring that students adapt to new information sources in 21st century education. Colleges and universities are beginning to make information literacy a credit course. Gibson (2006) states that although librarians are key to student engagement, the literature and research has not highlighted this important role. It takes the entire college community to produce a liberally educated undergraduate. Getting students, educators, librarians, and other stakeholders to understand this concept and the importance of library literacy to student success will be a springboard to greater understanding of information literacy in the 21st century.

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Twenty First Century Skills: A Bermuda College Perspective

Barrington Brown

Abstract

Today's learners need 21st century skills. The current digital era has nuanced the skills required for post-compulsory education, the workplace, and active citizenship. Twenty-first century skills, however, are perceived differently in these contexts. Moreover, they are not always understood by the general public. This mini-study summarises the thinking in the literature on 21st century skills. A case study involving Bermuda College was used to gather information about which 21st century skills were viewed as important and why. Content analysis guided treatment of the data. The findings illustrate a unique and valuable perspective – a framework that depicts a number of skills important for 21st century Bermuda.

KEY WORDS: *Bermuda, 21st century skills and literacy, skills frameworks*

Twenty First Century Skills: What Might They Be?

For our people to succeed in the 21st century we must ensure that our people have 21st century skills. (Throne Speech, Bermuda, 2011)

Declarations similar to that made in the Throne Speech on the matter of 21st century skills have been made by numerous dignitaries and civil servants and can be found in education strategies in jurisdictions around the world. The importance of a country's populace possessing 21st century skills cannot be understated, not least because the 21st century is already here.

But what are 21st century skills? Ask this question of any two educators in Bermuda – and presumably educators the world over – and you could get very different answers. What of education ministers, curriculum developers, IT personnel in education, librarians, and counsellors? Would there be a broader range of answers? Arguably, one's professional responsibilities will shape the response(s) provided. That said, each of these roles is invested in learner success. Surely then, it is important to know which skills people in these roles consider important for the 21st century. Dr Derek Tully (in Hall 2012) hints at the importance of congruent thinking among people in key positions in education. He argues that “it is vital for us to ensure that our educational system is geared to producing the skills for our 21st century.”

Some idea of how 21st century skills are perceived in Bermuda can be found in several sources (MOED 2010a, 2010b, 2013; Hall 2012; NTB n.d.). These national reports and initiatives opine that 21st century skills are important to young people and adult learners, but stop short of describing the skills and their utility. Becky Ausenda (in Hall 2012) provides one possible reason for this. She asserts that “it's a tricky to deliver an education system that equips young people for the future when we don't know what the future holds.” Notwithstanding this caveat, several studies refer to 21st century skills as competency in one or more of the following: critical thinking; problem-

solving; communication; technical literacy; social and cross-cultural awareness; collaboration; and several other curricula goals and self-actualised outcomes (ATC21S 2013; Partnership for 21st Century Skills 2013).

To provide an additional viewpoint based in Bermuda, this mini-study targets the views of Bermuda College employees on the 21st century skills they deem important. The study begins by summarising the literature that defines and characterises 21st century skills. The review revealed a number of skills frameworks that listed similar and different skills. These frameworks are used as a backdrop against which to present a Bermuda College perspective. Two overarching questions frame the findings: 1) state three 21st century skills important for learners to acquire; and 2) provide a reason as to the importance of each 21st century skill. The findings brought into focus a framework that illustrates the skills important for 21st century Bermuda and reveals that the isomorphic views of Bermuda College employees are in concert with the thinking in the literature. In concluding, the suggestion is made that 21st century literacy can be viewed as a number of nuanced skills that are reciprocal relationships.

Defining 21st Century Skills

Leading up to the new millennium and since then, several large-scale initiatives and many independent authors have been active in making the case for 21st century skills. Yet a concise definition is difficult to find. The Great Schools Partnership (GSP n.d.) posits that a benchmark is still in the making. It continues that 21st century skills are not easy to define and have not been officially codified and categorised. The definitions in the literature, GSP argues, are fragmented and generally localised. Nonetheless, there is significant overlap in the many ways that 21st century skills are defined in the literature.

Some of the thinking in the literature aligns 21st century skills with building experience through discovery and exploration. Such definitions strike a chord with Kolb's Experiential Learning theory, in that a 21st century skill, once attained, can be applied to a range of similar situations. The category *Learning and Thinking Skills* in P21's¹ Framework for 21st century learning is a prime example, in that learners "*need to know how to keep learning – and make effective and innovative use of what they know.*"

Alternative thinking in the literature relating to 21st century skills leans towards competencies in technology, the workplace and as citizens. Sondra Stein, national director of Equipped For the Future (EFF),² ties 21st century skills to adults being able to "compete in the global economy, to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship" and "to participate fully in their children's education" (Stein 2001: 4). The US Federal 21st Century Workforce Commission (2000) identifies 21st century skills as thinking, reasoning, teamwork, and proficiency in using technology. For its part, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) associates 21st century skills with "a stock of information-processing skills ... and 'generic' skills ... and the ability to ... weather the uncertainties of a rapidly changing labor market" (OECD 2013: 46).

Both sets of thinking can be found in Bermuda's literature. The government's vision for the 21st century school leaver is that they "act responsibly as local and global citizens" and "be productive, act ethically, and be life-long learners in the 21st century" (MOED 2010a). The One-Stop Career Centre initiative aims to upskill Bermudians for the 'new realities' of 21st century Bermuda.³ The *new realities* spoken of by Minister Kim Wilson are defined more fully in the National Training Board's (NTB) National Training Plan. The report surmises that employers are looking for Bermudians that have "good interpersonal skills, and ... who are intelligent and analytical" (NTB n.d.: 13), and, can demonstrate "soft skills" (NTB n.d.: 14).

¹ *The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21)* was founded in 2002 as a coalition of the business community, education leaders and policymakers to position 21st century readiness at the center of US K-12 education and to kick-start a national conversation on the importance of 21st century skills for all students.

² *Equipped For the Future (EFF)* began as a National Institute for Literacy effort to improve the quality of and results from the adult literacy, basic skills and lifelong learning systems in the US.

³ <http://plp.bm/taxonomy/term/401>

This body of definitions – or characterisations – of 21st century skills seemingly translates into a range of cognitive and applied competencies that underline learning and performance in education, society in general, and the workplace. To accept one definition in place of another – or only part thereof – would: (i) distill the knowledge-set defining 21st century skills; and (ii) narrow the focus within which to identify the skills important in the 21st century. Both of these outcomes are pivotal to this study.

Skills for the 21st century

So, specifically, what is a 21st century skill? See Table 1 for a list and comparison of skills identified by a trio of initiatives that, when viewed collectively, span several jurisdictions and target school-age pupils, college students, and adults.

Table 1: Skills Frameworks

AT21CS	Partnership for 21st Century Skills	Content Standards (Stein)
ICT Literacy	Information Literacy	Learn through Research
Communication	Media Literacy	Use Information and Communication Technology
Citizenship	ICT Literacy	Convey Ideas in Writing
Life and Career	Communication and Collaboration	Speak so Others can Understand
Personal and Social Responsibility	Creativity and Innovation	Listen Actively
Creativity and Innovation	Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	Advocate and Influence
Learning to Learn	Initiative and Self-direction	Cooperate with Others
Collaboration	Flexibility and Adaptability	Read with Understanding
Information Literacy	Social and Cross-Cultural Skills	Solve Problems and Make Decisions
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	Productivity and Accountability	Take Responsibility for Learning
	Leadership and Responsibility	Reflect and Evaluate
		Guide Others
		Observe Critically
		Use Math to Solve Problems and Communicate Plan
		Resolve Conflict and Negotiate

With such demographics, one might expect to see life, curriculum, interpersonal, applied, vocational, and non-cognitive skills in the mix. The three skills frameworks exhibit differences in emphasis, but are generally consistent with each other.

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) identified 11 skills important for college and workplace readiness⁴(see Table 1). From among these skills, the team deduced a set of core competencies dubbed as the 4Cs: critical thinking, creativity and innovation, communication and collaboration. The 4Cs, P21 argues, exemplify the skills necessary to experience academic and life success (P21 2013). Several other articles refer to skills similar to the 4Cs in describing

⁴ P21’s skills framework and characterisation of 21st century skills are internationally acclaimed and widely used. Full details available at http://www.p21.org/storage/documents/p21-stateimp_curriculuminstruction.pdf

the competencies for success in the 21st century. Many of these are anecdotal rather than formal research-based studies. Generally speaking, however, references to communication skills emphasise writing for wider audiences and with a broader remit, thus using information and communication technologies in some way. Collaboration skills – usually for the purpose of developing collective intelligence – are mentioned in the context of assisting, suggesting, accepting, and negotiating through technology-mediated interactions with others. Critical thinking skills tend to be framed with the objective of processing, parsing, and creating hypotheses, generally using more varied information. Creativity and innovation skills are least often referred to in the 21st century skills literature. When they are, adding meaning through innovative design and using imagination to produce contemporary ideas with the aid of emerging technologies are the descriptors used.

Looking beyond the 4Cs, EFF identified a set of skills important for the 21st century workforce. Termed *content standards*, the skills reflect a general list of basic academic and applied competencies considered necessary for productive employees, and “the skills adults need to move themselves, their communities and the nation into the 21st century” (Stein 2001: 2). Testimony of the relevance of these skills is their presence in adult education and training programmes in several industries. In Bermuda, workforce development initiatives (e.g., Bermuda Employment Council (BEC) *WorkReady Programme*⁵, Bermuda Department of Workforce Development,⁶ Bermuda Hospitality Institute (BHI)⁷ and Cisco Academy at Bermuda College) have sought to incorporate many of the Content Standards. Cristina McGlew (2102) of Cisco asserts that “the Cisco Academy marks a major milestone by preparing students for 21st century opportunities” (CISCO 2012). Preparation for the 21st century workplace must equip new entrants with advanced skills such that they can be “*productive, creative workers*” (ATC21S 2010: 1). Local businesses in Bermuda will benefit from a 21st century workforce that is empowered to innovate and contribute to sustainability (Hall 2012).

The idea that new competencies are required for effective citizenry in the 21st century is recognised by the Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills (ATC21S) Working Group (see Table 1). Categorized as *Ways of Living*⁸ by ATC21S, the skills (citizenship; life and career; and personal and social responsibility) are intended to equip one to be able to address matters of concern in civic life. Civic competency is more likely to involve analysing economic and political information, assessing bias, interacting via digital forums on social agendas with diverse groups (ATC21S 2013). The idea of social accountability can be found in the profile suggested for the 21st century Bermudian, who will be a “responsible global citizen, risk taker, [and] ethical individual” (MOED 2010b: 37). Like ATC21S, however, P21 does acknowledge that fully functioning members of society must also be technically savvy. Digitised content and digital tools have contributed to the reimagining of citizenship skills, making 21st century civic life more nuanced (P21 2013). A case in point is *iLegislate*, a mobile app available in the App Store and used by the US government to connect and seek feedback from members of the community.

Overall, the literature reveals that there is a broad range of skills necessary for successful functioning in the 21st century. This study holds that there are good reasons to know which 21st century skills are perceived as important among Bermuda College employees: (i) to gain insight into the tacit beliefs about skills for success in 21st century Bermuda; and (ii) to present a 21st century skills framework that depicts a Bermuda College perspective.

A case for 21st century skills

With the goal of determining the 21st century skills deemed important by Bermuda College employees, a research design that is qualitative in orientation and has a case study as the main strategy was selected. A small⁹ group was purposely selected (e.g., lecturers, counsellors, line managers, human resources staff, librarians). Such personnel

⁵ <http://bec.bm/workready>

⁶ http://www.gov.bm/portal/index.pt/?open=512&objID=778&mode=2&in_hi_userid=2&cached=true

⁷ http://www.bhi.bm/website/?page_id=2318

⁸ <http://atc21s.org>

⁹ (n=15)

are deemed information-rich (Patton 1990). An interview or a self-report survey was used to gain insight into each respondent’s views relating to (i) three 21st century skills important for learners to acquire; and (ii) reasons for the importance of each 21st century skill.

The basic ideas of manifest content analysis guided treatment of the data. Emergent coding and category formation returned groups of skills that exhibited similar characteristics: most activities in life are the result of a culmination of skills and not independently applied skills. Coding for existence indicated the presence of salient notions amid each respondent’s reasons for why a 21st century skill was considered important. Neither latent meaning nor numerical significance was factored. Seated within Constructivist principles, the aim was to identify – but not postulate – connections between the symbolic messages among respondents’ views (Creswell 2003). Using manifest content analysis to identify and infer connections among discrete salient notions is perceived as less valid than applying latent content analysis. Zhang and Wildemuth (2009), however, argue that the strength of the coder’s¹⁰ existing knowledge of the coding process and subject matter increases the likelihood of validity of the findings.

Concerns about reliability can also be levelled against studies that use a small sample and rely upon a single research instrument. This study neither seeks to generate theory nor generalise the findings. The findings represent the thinking of Bermuda College employees and not the Bermuda educator community in general. The kind of knowledge generated by small-scale qualitative studies is significant in its own right (Stake 1995; Creswell 2003).

Table 2: Bermuda College 21st Century Skills Framework

Categories of Skills	Importance of Each Skill (Excerpts)	Categories of Skills	Importance of Each Skill (Excerpts)
Collaboration	Projects are no longer one man jobs Social graces, cultural knowledge Purposeful discussion Work effectively with others Contemporary education focuses on collaborative projects	Digital	Survival skill Productive and creative Embrace digital and open resources Learn through physical and virtual environments Research in real time
Social Communication	Interact socially with peers Articulate thoughts Functioning in real and virtual worlds Work in different environments Prepare a global employee	Problem-solving	Everyday life constant trouble-shooting Evaluate the options and choose the best approach Universal necessary skill
		Citizenry	Behooves everyone to use it with morality Awareness of the world For day-to-day affairs
Analytic and Critical Thinking	Draw new conclusions Use logic Build own knowledge Apply critical thinking skills Evaluate or assess	Teamwork	Team work transitions in the workforce Ability to work with others
		Information Handling	Properly research Understand the difference between a good or not so good resource
Financial Planning	Understanding opportunities and risks Understanding the relationship between money and personal goals	Discipline	It’s in the details You have to make time

¹⁰ The author has several years of successful teaching experience and a PhD in Social Science

The ten skills in Table 2 represent one possible skills framework to depict a range of competencies Bermudians must possess in the 21st century. The included excerpts dimensionalise the reasons why each skill is deemed important. In many noteworthy ways, the respondents' isomorphic reasons align with the ways in which 21st century skills are categorised and characterised in the literature, and with anecdotal evidence as well as skills frameworks derived from formal research (See Table 1).

Beyond dimensionalising each categorised skill, the respondents' excerpts offer clues as to how 21st century skills are in reciprocal relationships. For illustrative purposes, I use three skills and their associated excerpts (italicised below) from Table 2:

- (i) **Citizenry↔Collaboration:** Part of good **citizenry** is *awareness of the world ... for day-to-day activities*, which are likely to necessitate **collaboration** skills that promote purposeful discussion and showing *social graces* and awareness of *cultural knowledge*;
- (ii) **Collaboration↔Social Communication:** Etiquette such as *social graces* and *cultural knowledge* are deemed important **collaboration** skills and are also ingredients for *interacting socially with peers, working in different environments*, and *preparing a global employee*, for which purposes **social communication** skills are important; and
- (iii) **Digital↔Information Handling:** Effective **digital** skills means being able to *embrace digital and open resources*, for which a critical **information-handling** skill is being able to *understand the difference between a good or not so good resource*.

These three examples signal that successful functioning in the 21st century warrants a skill set that is multimodal in form and function: living in a contemporary society has created new literacy needs. Contemporary literacy is important to learner success and personal and professional development (ATC21S 2013; OECD 2013; P21 2013).

21st century literacy

Needless to say, leading up to and for the earlier part of this millennium Bermuda College employees have – either in a teaching or a supporting role – been equipping the student population with the necessary skills for success in academia, life, and for career advancement. Principally, this has meant focusing on numeracy and literacy, technology, speech, reading, writing, and critical-thinking skills. Since then, literacy demands have changed significantly. Today, some 15 years into the millennium, literacy requires applying a combination of more nuanced skills, as shown in Table 2. This study holds that the skills framework shown as Table 2 goes part way to delineating the scope of 21st century literacy in Bermuda.

To further understand the composition of 21st century literacy requires research that identifies the skills deemed important by the wider Bermuda community: the public and private schools; community education programs; employers; ministers; and national work development initiatives (e.g., Bermuda Hospitality Institute). Research of this nature may yield generalisable descriptions of 21st century skills, which in turn can be used to specify the cornerstones of 21st century literacy that reflects a Bermuda perspective. A national perspective of this order can further empower Bermuda's educator community to teach, produce policy, and devise curricula and training programmes for this millennium.

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