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Experiential and inquiry-based learning approaches; correlated exploration on usage in selected secondary schools in Bugiri District, Eastern Uganda

Muweesi Charles^a, Kintu George^a, Disan Kuteesa Mugenyi^b, Kaweesi Muhamadi^a, Sserwadda Lawrence^c, Judith Nabateregga^c, Lou Shizhou^c, Anthony Muwagga Mugagga^d and Kaahwa Yuda Taddeo^d

^aFaculty of Science and Education, Busitema University, Kampala, Uganda; ^bSchool of Education, Kyambogo University, Kampala, Uganda; ^cInstitute of International and Comparative Education, Zhejiang Normal University, Jinhua, China; ^dSchool of Education, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda

ABSTRACT

This study intended to investigate the effectiveness of experiential and inquiry-based learning approaches in secondary schools around Bugiri District in Eastern Uganda with a focus on whether inquiry-based teaching techniques were being used to support student learning based on evidenced experiential education as well as challenges encountered when utilizing these methods. This narrative cross-sectional survey study employed a qualitative approach using interview responses attained from key informants. Findings indicate that through an inquiry-based approach, students are urged to study the subject, ask questions, and exchange ideas rather than have the teacher dictate what they should know. In inquiry-based learning, small-group discussions, guided learning, projects, and hands-on investigation take precedence over lessons. In addition, teachers are typically better at spotting errors in students' work than they are in their own. It is crucial to ensure students' learning by giving them high-quality information. Some children learn best by looking at visuals, others by listening and some by reading and writing. Teachers should promote "learning by doing" and also take the lead and create a forum where students can express their opinions and experiences.

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KEYWORDS

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Background

Uganda has seen a lot of reforms in its education system. These reforms range from nursery pedagogy and content to the new lower secondary school curriculum. The reforms were a result of complaints by various education stakeholders. There was a complaint that the entire education system right from pre-school to university is theoretical. Generally speaking, Uganda is divided into six major regions namely central, western, northern, south-west, Eastern and west – Nile regions. This study and the resultant article were centred on Eastern Uganda. The 2014 census revealed that Eastern Uganda was comprised of 9,042,422 persons (UBOS, 2014). Eastern Uganda borders Kenya and is the home of one of the economically poorest performing parts of Uganda with very low academic performance at all basic levels of education (UWEZO, 2014; NAPE, 2018). Eastern Uganda's Performance in science education is extremely low. This study takes Chemistry as the least-performing

CONTACT Muweesi Charles  cmuweesi@gmail.com  Faculty of Science and Education, Busitema University, P. O. Box 236, Tororo, Uganda

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