

Administrators and Teachers' Perceptions of their Quality and Skills in Educational Action Research

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ABSTRACT

Action research in education is a study that educational practitioners carry out with the aim that they will be able to make better judgments and take better actions in their respective fields of competence after completing the study. When teachers completely comprehend their students' thoughts and feelings, they can communicate more effectively with their students. One of the key objectives of this study was to examine how teachers and administrators perceived their quality and talents in educational action research in order to improve their practice. The survey process for this study included 245 administrators and instructors from 11 high schools in Binh Duong City, Vietnam, who answered questions about their experiences. The findings presented above are critical for school administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders to consider developing methods to improve the quality and capacities of teachers involved in educational action research and reflect on their perceptions. These findings contribute to the action of applied scientific research in Vietnam. This will enable educational science research in Vietnam to become more and more practical.

Keywords: Action research, Education, Quality, skills, Teacher.

INTRODUCTION

As Pipere and Salte (2006) point out, action research encompasses a wide range of topics, and each study can only focus on a single aspect of it. Action research is a disciplined process of inquiry undertaken by and for individuals taking action to help the "actor" improve and/or refine his or her actions (Sagor, 2010; Appiagyei, Fenyi and Awogya, 2022). The definition provided by Sagor (2010) was taken into consideration in this investigation. Some studies suggested that students' knowledge and skills are crucial factors in determining their satisfaction with their practicum or internship were important factors in determining their satisfaction with their practicum or internship (Huang et al., 2019; Le and Tran-Chi, 2019). Action Research in Education is a guide that should be required reading for any lecturer, teacher, or student-teacher who is interested in conducting research (Baumfield et al., 2012; Mirici et al.).

Forecasting and forecasting the performance of educational activities is a vital competence in education, and teachers and administrators must be proficient in this skill in order to develop an effective approach for educating their pupils (Kho, Ling, & Studies, 2017). Research in the pedagogy field, on the other hand, has five basic goals, which are as follows: forecasting difficulties, correcting mistakes, explaining, describing, and fixing problems (Kho et al., 2017). Educational action research is a technique that can be used to anticipate the pattern of student learning. It should be carried out within the disciplines that have been identified throughout the study's course of action. (Kho et al., 2017).

Teachers who conduct educational action research gain a greater understanding of what is going on in their students' thoughts, which leads to more effective communication between teacher and students. (Kho et al, 2017). A further advantage of undertaking action research is the opportunity to network with other dynamic and attentive educators (Hadley, 1997). Teachers and administrators, on the other hand, can find it challenging to conduct educational action research. It was discovered by Mukrim (2012) that students' insufficient comprehension of classroom action research principles, a lack of mentorship, a lack of teamwork, and time constraints impeded their capacity to do action research.

According to the findings of a study conducted by Khiat et al. (2011), lecturers evaluated educational action research as being beneficial in educational activities such as teaching and learning. A similar pattern of results was achieved in the

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study conducted by Ho, Woods, Aziz, Sin, and Capital (2013), which claimed that all lectures were clear on what it meant to be a researcher and what it meant to be a participant in a research project. In contrast to such findings, Lertputtarak (2008) discovered that the majority of Chulalongkorn University's lecturers lacked the information, talents, experience, and resources essential to do research in their areas of specialization. Tran-Chi et al. (2019) found that students who had gone under the study showed a positive attitude to research, and they would be interested in performing research.

Despite the large amount of research that has been done on university lectures, only a few studies have focused on the perceptions of professors and administrative staff. As a means of bridging this gap, this study was carried out, with its primary goal being to assess teachers' and administrators' perceptions of their own competence and talents in the field of educational action research as a whole.

Seider and Lemma (2004) found that action research was so influential for some teachers in their study that the teachers maintained the 'inquiry mindset' they gained while learning the processes associated with action research and continued to use aspects of the process; however, new projects were less likely to be initiated. Even after many years had passed, the teachers' sense of professional competence was boosted. (3) Action research has immediate benefits for students, but its long-term benefits are unknown. Teachers believed undertaking action research was professionally beneficial, despite its difficulty. Teachers said that administrators, although supportive, played passive roles during the design and implementation of their projects, whereas colleagues were more collaborative. Teachers characterized suitable school environments for action research as those that provide mechanisms for teams to collaborate on shared objectives and are backed by strong administrative leadership.

METHODS

Participants

The quantitative approach was used in this investigation. Using a convenience sampling technique, study participants were recruited for the study's participants (Martínez-Mesa et al., 2016). There were 245 teachers and administrators who participated in the survey process for this research, with 16 administrators accounting for 6.3 percent of the total and 239 instructors accounting for 93.7 percent of the total. An My high school, Binh An high school, Hung Vuong high school for the gifted, Le Loi high school, Long Hoa high school, Minh Hoa high school, Nguyen Dinh Chieu high school, Tan Phuoc Khanh high school, Thuong Tan high school, Trinh Hoai Duc high school, and Vo Minh Duc high school were all involved in this study, which took place in 11 high schools throughout Binh Duong Province, Vietnam. Each participant signed an informed consent form before taking part in the study.

Measurement

The questionnaire is designed for teachers and administrators who are directly working at high school. The following phases are involved in the development of this questionnaire: The first stage: We developed an open-ended questionnaire based on the study's literature review on the teachers' and administrators' quality and skills criteria. Next, we ran a pilot survey of 20 instructors to gather data for the official questionnaire. Second stage: The official questionnaire is designed based on the most expected quality and skills regarding conducting educational action research.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was utilized for data analysis. The coding procedure was performed as follow: 1 = Bad, 2 = Below average, 3 = Average, 4 = Above average, 5 = Good. To convert discrete data to rankings, the distance value was computed as $(\text{Maximum} - \text{Minimum})/n = (5-1)/5 = 0.8$ (16). Hence, the rankings were deemed to have the following meanings: Bad (1.0 – 1.8), Below average (1.8 – 2.6), Average (2.6 – 3.4), Above average (3.4 – 4.2), Good (4.2 – 5.0). The internal consistency for assessing the recorded quality and skills reliability by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.965, which is a high value (Bowling, 2014).

Procedure

Participants volunteered to take part in the study and later signed consent forms clarifying their rights following the conclusion of the investigation. Participants must first complete the General Information form, which asks for information such as their job title, work unit, and whether they have participated in any training programs relevant to educational action research or conducted any action research prior to the workshop. Afterwards, the questionnaire's instructions were distributed to teachers and administrators to ensure that they were familiar with the survey. Responding to and completing each question on the basis of their own personal experiences was the assignment assigned to them.

RESULTS

A descriptive analysis was performed to evaluate the mean scores of the participants' perceived quality and skills related to educational action research. The mean score for the total sample's perception of their quality and skills in educational action research was 4.48 (SD = 0.91). It means that they viewed their quality and skills in educational action research as good, as shown in table 1.

The mean scores of those qualities and skills were all above 4.2, considered good. However, 20% of the administrators and teachers still perceived their quality and skills as average. This suggests that more training programs on educational action research are needed, focusing on the bottom four skills that they were bad at, respectively (1) *Present the proceeding at a conference*,

(2) Choose the study design, (3) Collect the literature review and data (research method), and (4) Write up the research proposal.

An independent Sample T-Test was conducted to ascertain the difference between teachers and administrators who had not taken any training programs related to educational action research ($M = 3.67$) and those who took at least one such training program ($M = 4.16$). The result reported that there was a significant difference between those two groups of participants ($p = 0.001$).

An independent Sample T-Test was conducted to ascertain the difference between teachers and administrators who had not conducted any educational action research ($M = 3.69$) and those who conducted at least one educational action research ($M = 4.21$). The result reported a significant difference between those two groups of participants ($p < 0.001$).

DISCUSSION

This study examines the perceived quality and skills of the administrators and teachers, which refers to educational action research. There are three main results of this research, including (1) The participants perceived most of their quality and skills related to educational action research as good, (2) there was a significant difference between the administrators and teachers who have taken training programs and those who have not taken any, (3) there was a significant difference between them regardless to their experience of conducting any educational action research. This is congruent with what Seider and Lemma (2004) discovered for teachers and administrators who assessed the majority of their educational action research-related quality and skills as improving.

The difference in their perception, which referred to training programs, shows that training on educational action research worked for the participants. Training programs positively affected them and helped them boost their quality and skills in action research. It requires more training programs for the administrators and teachers to enhance their quality and skills related to educational action research.

Similarly, the experience of conducting educational action research left a positive effect on the teachers and administrators. It handed them the opportunity to enhance their practical quality and skills. Administrators and teachers need encouragement to conduct more educational action research to expose themselves in a practical context and improve their quality and skills through this circumstance.

In terms of the limitation of the study, it suffers from the main limitation associated with the sample. The participants in this study were not evenly distributed; in fact, the number of teachers taking part in the survey outweighed administrators. Moreover, the administrators play a vital role in encouraging teachers to conduct educational action research. However, the perception of a small proportion of them was recorded in this study.

CONCLUSION

The majority of participants rated their quality and abilities connected to educational action research as excellent. There was a considerable difference in the percentage of administrators and instructors who had participated in training programs vs those who had not. Regardless of their prior experience performing educational action research, there was a substantial difference between them. The findings above are critical for school administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders to reflect on their perceptions and develop methods to enhance the quality and capacities of educators involved in educational action research.

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