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Predicting Intention to Complete and Learning Outcomes in a Sample of Adult Learners

Abstract

Aims: This research investigates the relationship between Self-Esteem and completion/non-completion of tertiary qualifications for a sample of New Zealand adults, and explores the factors that may predict intent and learner outcome for these students.

Study Design: A descriptive and correlational research design.

Place and Duration of Study: Corporate Academy Group, a Private Training Establishment located in a low socio-economic area, Manukau City, New Zealand, between August 2009 and April 2010.

Methodology: The Theory of Planned Behavior was used to assess intent to achieve, and was extended to include the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale as a measure of Self-Esteem. Adult students (n = 211), 115 females and 96 males aged between 15 and 65, were assessed for intent to achieve and actual outcome (completers vs. non-completers).

Results and Discussion: Participant’s reports of attitude, perceived behavioral control and subjective norm, within the Theory of Planned Behavior, sufficiently predicted their intention to complete the course of study, and this prediction was significantly improved with the addition of their reported Self-Esteem level (P < .05). Furthermore, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale scores successfully predicted actual learner outcome, that is, completion or non-completion of the course, and was the only variable to do so (P < .05). Additionally, individual’s Self-Esteem levels were found to increase across two measurement points (t (205) = 4.59, p < .01), upon first enrolment and at the terminus of the training program.

Conclusion: Results indicate the value of using Theory of Planned Behavior and Self-Esteem measures to predict a student’s intention to complete their course of study and potentially their successful completion of that
‘Bricolage’ – Method of Reflexive Management Training for General Educational Institutions’ Future Leaders

Nemchenko Sergiy,
Ph. D., Associate Professor of Berdyansk State Pedagogical University, Ukraine, Berdyansk,

Golik Alexander, Ph.D.,
Associate Professor of Berdyansk State Pedagogical University, Ukraine, Berdyansk

General statement of the problem. Reform of secondary school depends on the level of pedagogical staff training, especially of school leaders. School management is the most popular one, it takes into account all the factors that affect the school and defines the direction of modern transformations in education. This raises the importance of professional training of educational institutions’ heads and, as a result, their willingness to implement managerial functions based on socio-pedagogical conditions of the school. The problems’ analysis of secondary schools heads’ training leads to the conclusion that this problem is still insufficiently developed in the pedagogical science. So the above mentioned issue is relevant for the study. The change of educational paradigm from the cognitive to the reflexive one requires from scientists the search of new methods for future school leaders’ training to meet modern needs.

Analysis of researches and publications. Theoretical and methodological aspects of modern professional training of educational institutions’ heads in Ukraine are highlighted in the works by the following researchers L. Vasylchenko, H. Elnikova, V. Pikel'na, E. Khrykova, V. Fedorova, etc.

The problems’ analysis of professional competence formation of school heads is important for our research, they are considered in the works by T. Volobueva (self-educational activity of the head), H. Elnikova, R. Vdovychenko (managerial competence of a school head), L. Danylenko (training of a secondary educational institution’s head), T. Sorochan (methodological recommendations for professionalism development of secondary schools’ heads management activity in the system of postgraduate pedagogical education of future managers in the training
process). N. Vasylenko (preparation of a secondary educational institution’s head to innovative activity), L. Voznyuk (development of the management culture of a secondary educational institution’s head), O. Kapitanets’ (development of professional and pedagogical creativity of future managers), V. Bereka (theoretical and methodical bases of managers training).

One of the modern means of future leaders training in undergraduate studies of a pedagogical university is a “scribing” method, which was invented by the British artist Andrew Park and was first applied in the educational process of the American teacher Paul Bogush.

**The aim of this article** is to determine the peculiarities of “Bricolage” method application in the process of reflexive management training of future managers of educational institutions.

**The main material:** the term “Bricolage” was first introduced in the scientific turnover by K. Levi-Strauss, a distinguished French ethnologist, sociologist, ethnographer, philosopher and cultural anthropologist. The term "Bricolage" is used in postmodern life in the narrow sense and means creating of the subject or object from scrap materials. K. Levi-Strauss, however, has expanded the concept of "Bricolage" to philosophical categories and included the characteristics of mythological thinking (pre-phylosophical reflection) into it. The concept of "Bricolage" is opposed in its essence to the concept of "deconstruction", since the first involves reconstruction of the mythological structure and the second means explosion inside the structure (an unexpected burst of creativity) [1; 2].

So, in the philosophical sense, “Bricolage” is a model of thinking or production of culture which are the characteristic features for traditional society with mythological type of consciousness. Both in the past and in the present traditional cultures widely use “Bricolage” as a method for material and intellectual production. The distinctive feature of bricolage is that “Bricolage” method of thinking makes the event a means of achieving the goals or an overall structure.

“Bricolage” is now used as an educational trend, innovation of which is in the fact that a teacher uses improvised tools and instruments, including those that were not originally designed for educational purposes, trying to give his students a new way of training, a change of routine educational process, in order not to be afraid of risks. The teacher creatively uses a new tool every time it is required.
The future leader needs to be creative. His creative activity has two main varieties. One type is associated with the replication of the original sample, another kind of creativity is associated with the creation of a fundamentally new model, that is, of such subject matter (ideas, theories, designs) that did not exist before. It is the kind of activity that can be classified as an innovative creativity. The activity of an individual is creative only when it is carried out not after a particular sample, is not a purely reproductive repetition of this pattern but is the result of reflection. The activities of the individual will not be creative, reproductive, if he uses in a certain situation the known means, rules, algorithms, activities, or copies the activities of others. Activities will be creative, if they are the result of reflection on the personal experience of fundamentally different types of activities’ implementation than on the activities that they carry out at present. At the same time the creative part will be even more significant when these activities become more incompatible. The reflexive method of future leaders of secondary schools training is “Bricolage”, a method that uses all available means, in addition to the items, specially created for this purpose. This approach helps to develop creativity, when one and the same object can be used to explain different purposes and concepts. For example, undergraduate students do not always understand the definition of "system". The system is a set of elements or relationships, naturally linked in a single entity that has certain properties that are absent in elements or relations that form it. In this case, you can use the simplest scenario, for example, cooking some dish, which consists of certain ingredients (vegetables, meat or fish, water, salt, spices), each of these products is part of the system that has certain qualities: color, taste, aggregate state. If all of these products are put on a plate, they still will not be a dish that we were going to cook. They need to be boiled, cut and so on, the cooking process is nothing than the entering of the elements into the relationship, and then a completely new product (our dish) will appear, which is not similar to its constituent elements, and it will have completely different qualities than the elements that have formed it. The method of “Bricolage” is a reflective method; there is the whole reflective process, namely, stop, fixation, removal, objectification, and self-reflexive rotation [3]. Consider how this process is taking place in the process of using this method.

If we turn to our example, it is possible to establish the fact that stopping of the teacher’s informative activity was done in connection with the further impossibility of its implementation because the undergraduate students could not understand the
definition of "system", all its attempts, and taking into account the previous experience, they did not contribute to solving the problems that arose. Attempts to solve the problem by means of the existing tools proved to be ineffective, so the further work was useless and it stopped. There is a problem that cannot be solved without a reflexive process. From the moment of the stop, the subject of activity begins to distinguish between himself and his activity, though the stop is not a reflection, but one of the reflection’s emergence conditions. The action which was stopped, must be somehow restricted in order to have a possibility to separate one action from another, so after the activity has been stopped, the process of fixing that performs the role of guidance is taking place, there’s an analysis of the previous activities and their results, without fixation the necessity in the knowledge and understanding of the processes the activities do not and cannot occur.

It realizes the attitude of the subject to the object of reflection, in our case, the definition of "system", the fixing creates the dichotomy, the polarization of the process and leads to a greater awareness of the problem. Stop and fixing are the basis of the objectification (awareness), this level of reflection stands usually in the form of own rules and regulations. Thereafter, the process of removal is taking place, if before it the statement was a direct participant of the process, then after that in relation to the previous activities it becomes an independent observer, as if opposing itself in the past with itself in the present.

Thus there is an exit into a reflective position, the purpose of which is to solve the problem and make the transition from the past to the future. The basis of exit into a reflective position is the need to go beyond normal activities, as it is no longer possible to do it and go beyond the borders and understanding of personal activity. This position is associated with the rejection of the usual, natural self-understanding and its activities – it’s impossible to execute and present a new situation in the activities, based on the outdated views about it.

Analysis of the personal actions in the system that exists, or in the future one, restoring the past of the image and designing of the personal future image, tracking the causes and possible consequences of the actions, reconstruction of the future vision start the next stage of the reflective process – the process of objectification. In this process, a centaur concept is created that allows to combine in a single concept a various class of processes and phenomena occurring both in cognitive and transformative activities of a person, a new explanation of the concept definition of a
person’s "system" appears, but through the means that do not have a direct relationship to the educational process. The objectified subject ceases to be the property of the person who created it, it is alienated, dehumanized, becomes an objective fact, and it can perform any operations not only by the teacher but be the students, as well. The characteristic feature for the objectivation is that the object always acts as a whole.

The next stage – the reflective rotational is the movement of a reflection subject back into practical action. The lecturer returns to the initial situation, but with a new outlook on the ways of performing the activities. The reflexive process as a complete act of consciousness can be fixed in any symbolic form because the sign refers to and replaces some already defined object of activity that exists independently of it.

At the same time, the undergraduate students who got such an unusual explanation of the definition, start to have an interest, which causes the need to carry out the actually reflective circle but in the opposite direction, they have already understood, after the new interpretation by the teacher of the concept of "system", but the very explanation has created a problem for them, therefore there is a need to stop and fix their mental activity, to analyze the previous activities, to withdraw from it and reconcile the past elements of explanation with new explanation elements, to agree on how they compare, to structure the comparisons, and to reach the traditional definition of the concept "system".

The method “Bricolage”, applicated by the lecturer, demonstrates the level of formation in it: reflexion – subject resource of conscious and purposeful activities to overcome the problematic situation in which he applies the methods, strategies, adequate to his resources and to the situation; reflexive readiness – state of the individual’s orientation to realization of his own activities and of himself as a subject that promotes the development of professionalism and is exhibited in the ability for continuous personal and professional improvement and growth based on the psychological mechanisms of self-awareness, self-regulation, self-control; reflexive competence – professional qualities of a person that enable him to carry out the reflexive processes most efficiently and adequately, the implementation of the reflective ability, which ensures the process of development and self-development, promotes the creative approach to professional activity, achieving its maximum efficiency and effectiveness; reflexive culture – the willingness and ability to rethink
and creatively transform the stereotypes of private and professional experience, to carry out plastic and constructive integration of innovations, that appeared as a result of it in the operation system, the system of business and interpersonal relations. At the same time, the undergraduate students have the opportunity to understand the relationship of reflection and creativity by themselves, to learn the mechanisms of the reflective process, develop the abilities to structure and analyse their own activities.

**Conclusions.** Thus, “Bricolage” can be defined as both science and art. It combines psychological, pedagogical and management aspects, it is a powerful reflective tool for the development of an undergraduate student’s personality, the method of reflexive control that initiates the directed self-development of subjects through reflection.

**References:**