

Peer tutoring as an intervention strategy in Economic and Management Sciences Education

The limited knowledge and understanding of accounting concepts by Grade 9 and 10 learners is well-known and widespread. This study aimed to shed light on this occurrence and subsequently identified suitable strategies that may overcome these challenges often associated with them.

This study investigated the intervention by peer-assisted learning (PAL) and the use of tutors in accounting. My supposition was that if PAL is facilitated, implemented and fostered in accounting, it might just benefit both teachers and learners in cultivating a better understanding of accounting concepts. This may improve their marks and make the subject more enjoyable, which can make Accounting an attractive option as a subject choice.

Many factors influence the accounting knowledge of Grade 9 learners and their attitudes towards the subject. These factors include time constraints, big classes and a lack of resources. The curriculum also only allows 40% of the allocated teaching time for the financial literacy part of the EMS subject. This restricts the quality of interaction and feedback between teachers and learners; instead, learners learn through collaboration and from each other.

Using a case study, I explored two Grade 8 and two Grade 9 groups of learners' experiences of taking part in a PAL programme and its effect on their examination scores.

Data was collected through individual interviews and a recording of the online lesson, providing descriptions of what the Grade 8 and 9 learners expected from the intended intervention and subsequently, what it meant to them. A questionnaire as well as tests before and after the intervention described these learners' understanding of accounting concepts and their ability to apply these concepts, by comparing data from before and after the PAL intervention.

The findings showed that PAL indeed enhances learners' understanding of accounting concepts. As their knowledge and understanding improved, their enjoyment of the subject increased and their attitude towards accounting changed from negative to positive. Furthermore, the use of a PAL programme improved these learners' academic performance and made them feel more confident.

The study concludes that PAL is indeed a valuable intervention strategy in accounting education, but that the effectiveness of PAL largely depends on the commitment of the tutor and their ability to share their knowledge with the learners.

Jinnie de Kock

Supervisor: Dr Carina America