



Full Length Research Paper

The satisfaction of non-English communities with educational opportunities offered to their children who speak English as an additional language in state schools in Staffordshire

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The study aimed to identify the satisfaction of non-English communities with educational opportunities offered to their children who speak English as an additional language in state schools in Staffordshire in United Kingdom. This study is one of the quantitative studies, to answer the research questions, the researcher applied the study tool it was a (questionnaire) designed using three points scale (agree, I do not know, disagree) , It contains (15) of , (20) questionnaires were distributed, all of them retrieved and were valid to use for statistical analysis, percentage were used to answer the study questions. The study finding showed %100 agreed that teachers make new arrival students feel welcome, provide support, encourage friendships, and make sensitive assessments of their current levels of attainment and learning needs, On the second level the percentage of (95%) agree for regular meetings are held for parents to make clear to them the strengths and weaknesses points of their children's education that means there is a good relationship between parents and school and this relation will reflect on the students learning outcomes and performances. On the other hand (45%) agree that school developing specific resources which make the language of the curriculum accessible through. In general questionnaire analysis results found that there are conflict of views and results, this can be explained because most of parents have newly arrived in England, and the basic language barrier is one of the most important elements led to this conflict results. And on the other hand, the non-English speakers in the United Kingdom are dissatisfied with the education offered to their children. This is because the education leads to them losing their native identity, In view of the research results, recommendation given to make sure that teachers who are teaching non English speakers received training in EAL before service, and also make sure that schools supporting parents to understand how the education system works and how to support their child by giving them brochures and explanatory leaflets in the first day of school in different languages.

Keywords: non-English communities, educational opportunities, satisfaction, Staffordshire

INTRODUCTION

There has been an increase in the number of students in primary schools in the United Kingdom who are not non-native English speakers. This upsurge has been reported in the recent past to have grown by a third in one decade. This has translated to there be one student in every group of ten children that is not a native English

speaker. This upsurge has been attributed to the increase in the number of immigrants moving in to the United Kingdom from countries that are not native English speaking. Another factor that has informed this upsurge is the increase in the birth rate among the non-native English speaking communities in the United Kingdom. Though these students are afforded an education that caters for their special circumstances,

they are not satisfied with this educational opportunity for a number of reasons.

This paper will discuss the satisfaction of non-English communities with the educational opportunities offered to Children who speak English as a second language.

Negative Opinion

One of the reasons as to why the non-native English speaking communities are not satisfied with the educational opportunities that are offered to their children is because of the negative regard that these educational opportunities are given by the larger society. The education system that affords them an opportunity requires the adoption of a bilingualism system of education (Blatchford 2014). Such a system of education mandates that these children be allowed to receive the basic instructions and information on learning using their native language. This enables them to be at par with the rest of the students as they do not lag behind as they await to first comprehend the English language. This system requires that there be well trained teachers who understand both the languages. This system of education is viewed as expensive compared to the normal education systems. This being the case, the general population views the immigrants as receiving preferential treatment hence adopt a resisting stance to the education system. The dislike is reflected among the politicians and policy makers. This negative opinion has led to the education of the non-English speaking communities to be allocated lesser resources and little attention (Gearon, 2002).

Poor Infrastructure

The non-English speaking communities are required to attend schools that offer a bilingual system of education. This school will normally have students from immigrant communities. Even where such schools have native English speakers in their population, these native speakers are normally from the disadvantaged background (Staples and Cochran 2008). The government and the policy makers seem to have a low opinion of the mentioned groups. This being the case, these schools are normally granted little or no attention as far as the allocation of resources is concerned. They are normally with poor infrastructure and materials which does not enable proper education of these non-native English speakers (Machin and Vignoles 2005).

Loss of Identity

Another cause of dissatisfaction with the education opportunities offered to non-English speaking students in the United Kingdom results from the fact that the education offered erodes all their native identity. The education system in the United Kingdom is meant to replace their allegiance to their native language with allegiance to the English language. At the end, the

student loses his native identity and acquires the foreign English identity (Peal 2014).

LITERATURE REVIEW

There has been an increase in the number of students in primary schools in the United Kingdom who are not non-native English speakers. This upsurge has been reported in the recent past to have grown by a third in one decade. This has translated to there being one student in every group of ten children who is not a native English speaker. This upsurge has been attributed to the increase in the number of immigrants moving in to the United Kingdom from countries that are not native English speaking. Another factor that has informed this upsurge is the increase in the birth rate among the non-native English speaking communities in the United Kingdom. Though these students are afforded an education that caters for their special circumstances, they are not satisfied with this educational opportunity for a number of reasons.

One of the reasons as to why the non-native English speaking communities are not satisfied with the educational opportunities that are offered to their children is because of the negative regard that these educational opportunities are given by the larger society. The education system that affords them an opportunity requires the adoption of a bilingualism system of education (Blatchford 2014). Such a system of education mandates that these children be allowed to receive the basic instructions and information on learning using their native language. This enables them to be at par with the rest of the students as they do not lag behind as they wait to first comprehend the English language. This system requires that there be well trained teachers who understand both the languages. This system of education is viewed as expensive compared to the normal education systems. This being the case, the general population views the immigrants as receiving preferential treatment hence adopt a resisting stance to the education system. The dislike is reflected among the politicians and policy makers. This negative opinion has led to the education of the non-English speaking communities to be allocated lesser resources and little attention (Gearon, 2002).

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does not enable proper education of these non-native English speakers (Machin and Vignoles 2005).

Another cause of dissatisfaction with the education opportunities offered to non-English speaking students in the United Kingdom results from the fact that the education offered erodes all their native identity. The education system in the United Kingdom is meant to replace their allegiance to their native language with allegiance to the English language. At the end, the student loses his native identity and acquires the foreign English identity (Peal, 2014).

This paper discusses the satisfaction of non-English communities with the educational opportunities offered to Children who speak English as a second language.

Education is not a choice. It is a human right guaranteed legally for everyone to education, without any discrimination and every country have their responsibility to protect, respect and fulfil the right to education, otherwise these countries will be responsible for damages or deprivations of the right to education (vovob, 2017).

"The First Protocol (1952) to the European Convention on Human Rights includes the right to education (article 2): "No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions". (Equalities Act 2010)

"The first mention of 'equal opportunity' in international treaty dealing with education was in the Preamble of UNESCO's Constitution ('the States Parties to this Constitution, believing in full and equal opportunities for education for all ...'). On the other hand the Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960) was designed to promote equality of opportunity and treatment in the matter of education and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) refer to the general principle of 'equal opportunity'. (UNESCO, 2017).

The good education system is the one provides the same educational opportunity for all students taking into account the fairness, justice, quality and equity in education.

There are two concepts related to the fairness in education, quality and equity.

Quality in education

"A good quality education is one that provides all learners with capabilities they require to become economically productive, develop sustainable livelihoods, contribute to peaceful and democratic societies and enhance individual well-being". (vovob, 2017)

Equity in education

"Equity: Equity in education means that personal and social circumstances such as gender, ethnic origin or

family background are not obstacles to achieving educational potential and that all individuals reach at least a basic minimum level of skills." (vovob, 2017)

The word equity states to the principle of fairness. While it is frequently used interchangeably with the related principle of equality, equity includes a different range of educational models, programs, and strategies that may be considered fair, but not essentially equal. So "equity is the process; equality is the outcome. (Glossary of Education Reform, (2017)). The highest performing education systems are those that combine equity with quality. They give all children opportunities for a good quality education. (Oecd, (2017)).

Under the Equality Act 2010, there is a paragraph in the law known as "protected characteristics" this is mean it is illegal to discriminate between students on grounds of sex, gender, religion, believes, disability, pregnancy and maternity.

When the UK accepted the European Convention the first Protocol was reserve is the education article, declaring that it is accepted 'only in so far as it is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure'. The article, with its arrangement, has been incorporated into UK law in the Human Rights Act (1998). (Equalities Act, 2010).

(EAL) in Education

The abbreviation EAL means English as an additional language. In this study EAL refer to students who their first language is not English.

As stated by British council in UK above 15 per cent of the state schools population are learners who speak English as an additional language, this percentage in number is nearly more than one million, and these learners come from different backgrounds. Some arrive seeking asylum, working, or for other reasons. EAL learners speak their mother tongue language and some of them are even born and raised in the UK they are still speaking a language other than English. The most common first languages spoken by EAL learners include Polish, Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali, Gujarati, Arabic, French, Mandarin Chinese, Portuguese, Spanish and Tamil. (British council, 2017)

Every year the United Kingdom receives thousands of new arrival families, all of them from different backgrounds and Teachers should be dealing with this increasing numbers of students. "In 2014/5 87% of all local authorities chose to include an EAL factor in their local formula, for 2015/6 the government has identified a minimum funding level for this EAL factor within its calculations for identifying the sums which should be made available to local authorities. The minimum funding levels for English as an additional language 2015-16: Primary £466 Secondary £1,130 This minimum funding level will apply to pupils with EAL who entered the English state school system in the past three years, this

funding is supplied by the state for each EAL learner".(Naldic, 2017).

In 2013 a research partnership between Anglia Ruskin University, the University of Cambridge and The Bell Foundation has been set up to investigate and improve educational outcomes for children with English as an Additional Language (EAL). The project studied the impact of current provision on the language development, academic performance and social integration of students whose first language is not English. With the number of children learning English as an Additional Language in the UK almost doubling between 1997 and 2010 from 505,200 to 905,620 (Department for Education), it is important to understand fully the additional support necessary to ensure all students fulfil their potential (University of Cambridge,2014).

OFSTED (2005) published results of a research survey called "could they do even better" the research was about development of the writing skills of advanced bilingual learners at KS2. This survey was started to complement research which identified some of the key structures of language which students learning EAL seem to handle less confidently than their peers, the research identified were seen in the schools visited, exposure to good writing; explicit instruction; the development of specific strategies for EAL writers; and feedback based on assessment which took specific account of EAL.

On the other study for OFSTED (2003) about writing in EAL at key stage 4 and post 16, Common weaknesses identified included the quality of content, sentence structure, and word level grammar as well as difficulties in organising and writing extended texts and writing in a range of fields.

In 2007 there was a study in EAL conducted by the national foundation for educational research in England and Wales (NFER,2017), first study conducted by Benton and White entitled raising the achievement of bilingual learners in primary schools, of the attainment of bilingual pupils in participating primary schools involved in the EAL pilot program between 2004 and 2006. The main finding was that schools involved in the programme made more progress in their Key Stage 2 English results between 2004 and 2006 than similar schools not involved in the programme. The research also found there were also no significant differences between EAL and non-EAL learners in programme schools with regard to KS2 English results, nor any difference in KS2 mathematics and science.

In 2006, the second study conducted by White, Lewis and Fletch. They studied raising the achievement of bilingual learners in primary schools. The full research evaluation of the Primary National Strategy EAL programme by NFER emphasized a number of teaching methods these including: the use of curricular/layered targets to plan for language progress and curriculum access; planned chances for speaking and listening using 'talk partners', talk frames and role play; prioritising

of speaking and listening as a prelude to writing; and the use of first language by children to learn – rather than limiting use of first language by adults for explanations(NFER, 2017).

METHODOLOGY

Importance of the Study

The importance of the study stems from the following points:

- The primary education is essential since children are the hope of the future and the vital resource that a nation can have.
- To detect and evaluate the opportunities given to non-English students in state schools to make them integrate into the school community.

Research Problem and Questions

This study answered the main following question:

What is the satisfaction of non-English communities with educational opportunities offered to their children who speak English as an additional language in state schools in Staffordshire?

To answer the research question a three-point scale questionnaire was developed.

Definition of Terms

Satisfactions: Level of acceptance of services provided by educational authorities to students.

Non English Community: anyone who lives in England and whose origins are not English and whose mother tongue isn't English

Educational Opportunities: Every student has the same opportunity to have quality education.

Study Limitation

- This study is limited for non-English community for the purpose of the assignment.
- The study focused only on the primary stage of education.

Study Population

The study population were (20) parents (males and females) for students from year one to year six and their age between five and ten years old, they are from different back ground and community (Sudanese, Kurdish, Dutchmen, Syrian, Iraqi, Palestinian, French) in the schools targeted in the research. A total number of 20 questionnaires collected back, so 100% of the population answered the questionnaire.

Method of Data Collection

This study is one of the quantitative studies, to collect data a questionnaire was designed using three points

scale (agree, I do not know, disagree) to assess the population responses of the study about the questionnaire paragraphs.

The questionnaire consists of two parts as follow:

Part one: the covering letter that contained the aims of the study and its title, researcher name and address, place of the study, supervisor name and address and finally asked the study sample to answer the questionnaire.

Part two: it consisted of 15 paragraphs to estimate the population response.

The responders given enough time (ten days) to answer the questionnaire, the researcher asked them to put (x) beside the situation that apply to them.

- A review of educational theoretical literature on the subject of the study which facilitated to design the study tool process.
- Designed a study tool and presented to educators, academic staff in education and a module tutor for the purpose of development and to insure it is valid for the research.
- Distribution of the questionnaire to the parents and gave ten days to answer the questionnaire. The distribution process has been taken after obtaining the approval of the tutor module.
- Make the statistical analysis using the percentage to gain access to the findings and results.

Study Tool Validity

The validity of research's questionnaire was checked by presenting it to a group of university PhD students, educators, and module supervisor. All their notes have been considered.

Research Procedures

After identifying the problem of the study, questions and variable the following steps were taken:

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The study aimed to identify the satisfaction of non – English communities with educational opportunities offered to their children who speaks English as an additional language in state schools in Staffordshire .To answer the research questions, the researcher applied the study tool (questionnaire) that contains (15) of paragraphs on the study population, (20) questionnaires were distributed, all of them retrieved and were valid to use for statistical analysis, percentage were used to answer the study questions.

Table 1: Percentage for each items of the questionnaire

		Agree	%	I don't know	%	Disagree	%	Rank
1	The school offer intervention classes, where specially trained teachers focus on practical, everyday English	10	50%	0	0%	10	50%	12
2	School encourage parents to continue using the home language at home	9	45%	2	10%	9	45%	14
3	Teachers involving learners in activities where the language is challenging but appropriate to their abilities and interests	16	80%	2	10%	2	10%	4
4	Teachers received training in EAL before they start their job to create the best learning environment for EAL learners	6	30%	14	70%	0	0%	8
5	Schools supporting parents to understand how the education system works and how to support their child's education	8	40%	0	0%	12	60%	9
6	The school assess the learners' proficiency and literacy in their first language	3	15%	0	0%	17	85%	3
7	The school established what prior subject knowledge and experience they have in other subjects	12	60%	2	10%	6	30%	9
8	I am satisfied with the level of academic and non-academic support provided by the school to my r child	15	75%	2	10%	3	15%	5

Table 1 cont'd

9	The school provides courses for parents to familiarize them with school curricula and learning resources	8	40%	0	0%	12	60%	9
10	Regular meetings are held for parents to make clear to them the strengths and weaknesses points of their children's education	19	95%	0	0%	1	5%	2
11	School developing specific resources which make the language of the curriculum accessible through	9	45%	6	30%	5	25%	14
12	Teachers make new arrival students feel welcome, provide support, encourage friendships, and make sensitive assessments of their current levels of attainment and learning needs	20	100%	0	0%	0	0%	1
13	The educational policies provides adequate support for students and parents to overcome the problem of adapting to the language	10	50%	5	25%	5	25%	12
14	The local authority provide all requirements for integration into the school community for students as well as parents	15	75%	3	15%	2	10%	5
15	In general I am satisfied with the extent of services provided to learners by local educational authorities at all levels	15	75%	3	15%	2	10%	5

To answer the research question regarding the satisfaction of non –English communities with educational opportunities offered to their children who speaks English as an additional language in state schools in Staffordshire, descriptive statistics was applied percentage for questionnaire items.

Table (1) shows that on the first rank the percentage of (100%) agree that teachers make new arrival students feel welcome, provide support, encourage friendships, and make sensitive assessments of their current levels of attainment and learning needs, this result means that the British educational system has very high level of justice, fairness and equal educational opportunity, and this will reflect on the learner outcomes and will improve and increase their commitments and loyalty to their school and over all of the country.

On the second level the percentage of (95%) agree for regular meetings are held for parents to make clear to them the strengths and weaknesses points of their children's education that means there is a good relationship between parents and school and this relation will reflect on the students learning outcomes and performances. So "children of parents who are more involved in school activities do better in school than children with parents who are less involved". (Stevenson and Baker, 1987).

On the third rank percentage of (85%) disagree that the school assess the learners' proficiency and literacy in their first language, this result means that the school starts teaching learners regardless of their ability to learn

and ignored their previous knowledge in subjects in their mother tongue language, basically it will affect their achievement and the learning outcome.

On the fourth rank the percentage of (80%) agree for teachers involving learners in activities where the language is challenging but appropriate to their abilities and interests, this result shows that parents are very satisfied with involving their children in different kinds of challenges and activities, this result is consistent with the results of the study conducted by White, Lewis and Fletch in 2006, which has emphasized a number of teaching methods like the use of curricular/layered targets to plan for language progress and curriculum access; planned chances for speaking and listening using 'talk partners', talk frames and role play; prioritising of speaking and listening as a prelude to writing; and the use of first language by children to learn – rather than limiting use of first language by adults for explanations.

On the fifth rank the percentage of (75%) agreed and are satisfied with the level of academic and non-academic support provided by the school to children, on the other hand (15%) of parent disagree and (10%) they do not know, so three-quarters of the research sample satisfied with services and supports from school to their child this percentage considered high level for the parents which is composed of different backgrounds and cultures. In 2009 a study was conducted by Stephen Gibbons and Olmo Silvathe, the results showed that "Parents judgement of school quality is dominated by school average test scores, over and above other school

characteristics. This is true for parents from different backgrounds and with children of all abilities".(Gibbons and Silvathe,2009)

On the fifth rank as well the item that related to the local authority provide all requirements for integration into the school community for students as well as parents (75%), (15%) they don't know and (10%) disagree. This finding is generally satisfactory and acceptable because it represents three quarter of the study sample, especially since most of the sample are refugees and came to England recently.

On the other hand the item that the parents satisfied as well with the extent of services provided to learners by local educational authorities at all levels achieved the fifth level with percentage of (75%) agree, (15%) they don't know and (10%) disagree. This result very supportive that the local educational authorities are doing their best and followed the educational policies on how to make all the learners take their educational opportunity equally.

On the eight rank the percentage of (70%) parents they do not know if teachers received training in EAL before they start their job to create the best learning environment for EAL learners. And(30%) agreed that their children teachers already trained to deal with EAL learners, so depends on the percentage I can say that parents do not have any idea about the academic level of their kids' teachers and if they trained before they started to teach their kids and if they know how to deal with students who their mother tongue is not English.

On the ninth rank (60%) of parents disagree that schools supporting parents to understand how the education system works and how to support their child, also (60%) disagree that school provides courses for parents to familiarize them with school curricula and learning resources, on the other hand (40%) of parents agree for both items, this result is a bit complicated but when I did deep investigation regarding this point I found out that parents from different schools and different area confirmed that some of the school explained to them how the educational system work and how to support their child and some of the schools provide meeting not courses to make the parents familiar with the school curriculums.

In rank nine the item that school established what prior subject knowledge and experience the student have before the teacher starts a new subject a percentage of (60%) of parents agree,(30%) disagree and (10%) they don't know , this is a positive result for teachers because teachers take into account when they teach student a broad range of pre-existing knowledge, skills, beliefs, and attitudes, which influence how they attend, interpret and organize in-coming information and knowledge to build a new knowledge in subjects. In a study titled "The Relation between Assessment Practices and Outcomes of Studies: The Case of Research on Prior Knowledge" which conducted by Dochy and others in 1999 they found that "prior knowledge generally had positive effects on students' performance, the effects varied by

assessment method. More specifically, prior knowledge was more likely to have negative or no effects on performance when flawed assessment measures were used. However, in some studies, flawed methods yielded informative results. Thus, in educational research the implications of assessment measures must be considered when examining the effects of prior knowledge".

In rank twelfth (50%) of parents agree and (50%) disagree that school offer intervention classes, where specially trained teachers focus on practical, everyday English. The explanation that was found after investigation was that parents who disagree, they don't know what exactly happened inside the school and what kind of learning their child received and parents who agree they don't know what intervention classes are but they know that there are teachers who focus on a practical every day English.

And on rank twelfth as well (50%) of parents agree that the educational policies provides adequate support for students and parents to overcome the problem of adapting to the language but on the other hand (25%) they don't know and (25%) are disagree, this result was completely inconsistent with the previous result, this confirms that parents they do not have a sufficient information and knowledge regarding the educational policy and system and their responses were not compatible in general .

In rank fourteenth (45%) agree that school encourage parents to continue using the home language at home, (45%) disagree, and (10%) they don't know, after I analysed the questionnaire and found this result I asked again the study sample to give me more explanations about this point, their responses were different some of them assured that some schools don not care about it at all and another schools gave attention to this, and consider that mastering the first language could be a reason to master a second language.

In 1991 Fillmore conducted a study titled "When learning a second language means losing the first" the researcher studied the American society like the United States is one society with diverse populations, "children from linguistic minority families must learn the language of the society in order to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the society. The timing and the conditions under which they come into contact with English, however, can profoundly affect the retention and continued use of their primary languages as well as the development of their second language. This article discusses evidence and findings from a nationwide study of language shift among language-minority children in the U.S. The findings suggest that the loss of a primary language, particularly when it is the only language spoken by parents, can be very costly to the children, their families, and to society as a whole. Immigrant and American Indian families were surveyed to determine the extent to which family language patterns were affected by their children's early learning of English in preschool programs. Families whose

children had attended preschool programs conducted exclusively in Spanish served as a base of comparison for the families whose children attended English-only or bilingual preschools”.

In rank fourteenth (45%) agree that school developing specific resources which make the language of the curriculum accessible through, (30%) they do not know and (25%) disagree, this result refer to that some schools provided parents with supportive resources like online websites, educational games and YouTube programmes to make learning English language easier and more accessible, on the other hand some parents don not know or disagree completely about any learning supports courses except the formal school curriculum.

In general by looking to the questionnaire analysis results we found that there are conflict of views and results, this can be explained because most of parents are newly arrived to England, and basically language barrier is one of the most important elements led to this conflict results. And on the other hand the non-English speakers in the United Kingdom are dissatisfied with the education offered to their children. This is because the education leads to them losing their native identity. Further, the education is regarded negatively by the general population and awarded little resources by the government.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the research results, the researcher recommends the followings:

- Make sure that all teachers make new arrival students feel welcome all the time
- Regular meetings are held for parents to make clear to them their kids learning outcomes.
- Encourage learner to continue using their first language.
- Assess the learners' proficiency and literacy in their first language, to starts teaching them depends on their ability and previous knowledge.
- Make sure that schools supporting parents to understand how the education system works and how to support their child by give them brochures and explanatory leaflets in the first day of school in different languages
- Giving English language and Math classes at schools.
- Offer homework club and make sure that each child has the individual teaching. Opportunity.

-Schools should provide parents with resources which make the language of the curriculum more accessible.

-Make sure that teachers who are teaching non English speakers received training in EAL before service.

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