

Teaching History: Bridging the Gap between Theory and Practical Teaching

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Abstract:

Introduction: The purpose of the study was to identify effective teaching strategies to bridge the gap between theory-based and practical-based approaches to teaching a history curriculum.

Methods: A qualitative exploratory case study was used. Twenty educators who taught history in K-12 classrooms participated in the study. Semi-structured interviews and document analysis served as data sources.

Results: The findings indicated that History is better taught by actively engaging students. Innovative activities integrated with traditional methods to activate engagement and promote historical skills.

Discussion: The key to making history come alive is using multiple teaching strategies. The strategies to bridge theory to practical application include engagement, innovative teaching, and authentic teaching.

Limitations: It was difficult for some participants to commit to the scheduled interview.

Conclusions: The content of the study may be used as a reference for practitioners to reflect on current teaching practices and developed strategies to implement in a history lesson or other content areas.

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Introduction

History is traditionally conveyed through theory-based approaches where educators disseminate historical facts from textbooks or lectures (Walker & Carrera, 2017). Such pedagogical approaches fail to ignite and strengthen students' communication skills, critical thinking, capacity to apply concepts to real-world scenarios, and democratic empathy (Bills, 2021). Identifying and applying effective teaching strategies in a history curriculum is necessary for learners to gain knowledge and skills to make connections to significant events in history. History is taught with little to no connection between the historical event and its meaning, causing students to discount the importance of history courses and the value of the historical event (Harris & Reynolds, 2014). When learners do not value content presented in a history class, the historical event is minimized without appropriate societal and cultural integration. Experiential, practical-based learning empowers students to forge relationships with the subject matter and create knowledge (Halvorsen et al., 2019; Marouli, 2021). The shift in teaching encourages students to do history rather than simply learn it (Buxton et al., 2021; Carter & Korostyshevsky, 2021; Sarica & Çetin, 2020; Walker & Carrera, 2017).

1 Literature and theoretical framework

Educators and learners are faced with varied challenges in a history curriculum. A historical narrative can be taught as a story to define the events in history and connect individuals and groups involved. Educators are challenged with building continuity between past and current events. Teaching history provides opportunities for educators to activate reflections of self-identify, ethical orientation to the past, present, the future, and develop a renewed historical consciousness (Miles, 2018). Social learning theory purports learning occurs through observation and interaction, not when students sit idly in the classroom (Omrond, 2016). Constructivism is a learner-centered model which suggests individuals learn when they can actively construct their meaning of new concepts (Clark, 2018). Learners' process or construct new information by relating their beliefs with their experiences and attitudes (Clark, 2018).

The theory-based approach continues to be the primary strategy for teaching a lesson in a history curriculum. Practical-based instructional tools for teaching historical content are rare and this affects students' ability to comprehend and connect historical context (Huijgen et al., 2018). Educators continue to struggle with bridging the gap between theory-based and practical-based approaches to

catalyze connections in students' knowledge and thinking. The educational system and diversity of student populations are continually changing. Changes in education also bring changes in students and the teaching strategies for diverse learners (Anderson & Hamilton, 2016). Research indicates educators feel they are not adequately prepared to teach history beyond the standards defined for their specified grade level (Waters & Magliocca, 2018). Script writing scenarios were seen as effective pedagogical elements in training teachers to apply real-life to the teaching of Mathematics (Aytekin, 2021). Čerešník (2015) asserted that scenarios “come under the cognitive structure which reflects our experience” (p. 44). The use of scenarios activates the dispersal of attention since students can be more creative and use different situations to explain the topic of discussion.

History education has primarily been taught using textbooks and lectures as the main sources of learning transfer. Walker and Carrera (2017) recognized the need for history to be taught beyond the traditional lectures and chapter readings. Learners are expected to internalize lectures and readings and utilize historical thinking skills to synthesize information on past events with knowledge of and application to current events. As education evolves, expectations for learners' transition from passive recipient to active participant as engaged citizens of their community and the world. Learners need to do history rather than learn it.

Previous studies indicated a lack of effective teaching strategies to bridge theory-based and practical-based approaches to teaching history curriculum. Educators need leadership to innovate effective teaching strategies for history education. Reliance on textbooks and curriculum standards inhibits educators' capacity to create meaningful learning for their students (Waters & Magliocca, 2018). Willis (2017) validated a need for studies on models for practical-based classroom teaching strategies to complement theory-based approaches. As Denial (2021, p. 29) rightly said “[a]s historians, we need to do better by one another, and commit to the principle of transforming new instructors into well trained, supported, and appreciated professionals. To do any less is to abdicate responsibility for the lifeblood of history education”. This study contributes actionable strategies to make history real.

2 Methodology

The purpose of this case study is to explore how Hawaii educators bridge the gap between theory-based and practical-based approaches of history lessons. Archival history lessons documents were also reviewed. The theory to practice may activate critical thinking and personal and academic connections for diverse learners (Bickford, 2017; Bills, 2021). Content taught in the classroom can be better understood and valued when the student's culture, capabilities, and knowledge are considered during lesson development. History education can cultivate the minds of learners, develop good citizens, and promote moral

Acta Educationis Generalis
Volume 14, 2024, Issue 3

character (Levy, 2016). It is incumbent upon teachers to prepare students for the challenges of college, career, and civic life (Gupta, 2021; Phi Beta Kappa, 2021). Learners can connect prior knowledge to new content, place, identity, and culture, thereby connecting the historical event with the value associated with it.

Research Question: The following research question was addressed: What teaching strategies do educators use to bridge from theory to practical application to instill the value of a history curriculum among diverse learners?

This qualitative case study explores teaching strategies to bridge the gap between theory-based and practical-based approaches to teaching history to diverse learners. A qualitative method provides information to answer questions about a topic of interest that is derived from the participants' experiences, personal meaning, and perspective (Hammarberg et al., 2016). An exploratory case study investigates a specific situation being evaluated for a possible outcome, such as the development of educator and student interaction in a classroom setting. An exploratory case study was chosen for this study to address the lack of effective teaching strategies for a history curriculum. Exploratory case study occurs when there is limited research about a phenomenon (Ellinger & McWhorter, 2016).

The population is comprised of 60 educators in Hawaii. The sample participants consisted of educators who were at least 18 years of age, who have taught history in a classroom, education department, or education program; and developed and implemented a history lesson or curriculum. The exclusion criteria were educators who did not have experience in a classroom setting, education department, or education program. Educators who have taught content other than history and educators who have not developed a lesson from a history curriculum were also excluded. The sample consisted of 20 educators in Hawaii who taught history in the classroom or developed a history curriculum.

Approval from the University Institutional Research Board was obtained before data collection. Data were collected from two sources, face-to-face semi-structured interviews, and archival data. The archival data were lesson plans designed by educators from three identified educational sites that held a collection of research-based history lesson plans on an educational site in a pacific island in Hawaii. The interviews were guided by a series of open-ended questions that focused on the teaching strategies to make history real for the students. All interviews were conducted through Zoom® conferencing and were audio recorded, no video recording was used in this study. The audio recording was transcribed. The transcriptions were sent to the participants to review for accuracy. Corrections made to the transcriptions by the participants included information that was not audible due to connectivity problems. Once both data

Acta Educationis Generalis
Volume 14, 2024, Issue 3

sets were complete and verified with the participants and the research team, data analysis began.

An analysis system was developed to code the transcripts and the archival data that were retrieved. The codes were then grouped into categories, and then themes. The coding system was conducted through a process that ensured rigor and consistency. Braun and Clarke's (2013) six steps framework were used. Steps include: 1) Familiarity with the data, 2) Generating codes and categorizing them, 3) Identification of themes, 4) Reviewing the themes that were identified, 5) Defining the themes, and 6) Synthesis of data. Coding, categorizing, and developing themes were the processes to recognize relationships within the data. In data organization, categorization, and theory development led to the construction of meaning and the ability to advance effectively in the research process (Williams & Moser, 2019). Each data source was analyzed alone and then together to extract thematic data that were relevant to each but resonated in both data sources.

Analysis of Interview: The familiarity of data was obtained by repeated reading and review of transcripts from each interview. During the interview analysis, notes were written in the margins to support the codes identified in the data. Once the codes were generated, the organization of data in a systematic and meaningful approach began. The organization of the codes allowed the data to be organized into chunks which provided further meaning that then lead to categories followed by specific themes. The identification of themes was characterized by the significance of the data in each cluster. Once the themes were identified, they were further analyzed to determine if themes could be combined. Once the themes were determined, words from the participants were identified to support each theme. When a theme is identified, the data within the clusters were reviewed for accuracy and to determine whether the contents align with the theme. The themes were analyzed for meaning, and alignment to the purpose and research question.

Analysis of Archival Data: Lesson plans designed by educators were reviewed based on specific content criteria which included:

1. Goals and historical components for the lesson.
2. Identification of teaching strategies used for the lesson.
3. Identification of resources used for the lesson.
4. Expected student outcomes.
5. Suggestions made by educators to improve and expand on the lesson.

The contents of the lesson were analyzed. The specific content reviewed were the lesson's goals, procedures, activities, assessments, and education reviews. Notes taken during data analysis were repeatedly reviewed. Codes were

generated through the organization of the data. The organization of data used codes to refine the data into chunks and provided meaning that identified specific categories and then themes. The archival data were analyzed separately, before its integration with the interview data.

Integration of Data Analysis: After the interview and the archival data were analyzed independently, the commonality and differences between them were studied and resultant themes discussed.

3 Results

Theme 1: History is the foundation to understand the present through active engagement.

A history curriculum is comprised of various topics. The content within these topics was presented through facts and interpretation as depicted in the lesson plans reviewed. P15 stated, “historical events recognize the past and how our country was formulated through global and humanitarian challenges. Global challenges included the division between countries stemmed from tragic events and the changes in law and politics.” Based on the archival history curriculum materials, learners value history when they understand its importance and the evolution of historical events. P10 stated that, “emerging themes that consistently surface throughout history can be used as a learning point to understand how life was in the past and how they continue to impact the life we live today.” A valuable component for humanities identified by the participants was the understanding and appreciation of culture. Learning about the various cultures in the world provides an opportunity to understand how the past has defined and established beliefs and practices over time. P3 stated, “Humanity is the fidelity towards culture and ethnicity. Culture is an important part of self-identity. The awareness of cultural beliefs and practices can be the foundation leading towards acceptance of cultural differences.” There were lesson plans that highlighted specific events such as the history of the Pacific and the experiences of humanity. P20 stated, “Educators can be highly influential on student thinking. Students tend to rely heavily on personal opinions of their educators which in turn does not give them the ability to develop their own opinions and interpretation.” The diverse level of students’ academic skills for a history curriculum was addressed through a variety of teaching strategies. P5 stated, “Differentiation accepts and accommodates for various academic levels and capabilities of every learner.”

Document reviewed showed that active engagement through student-centered activities and conversations was prominent within the History curriculum. The content for the lessons were designed for the learner’s personal experiences and academic ability. Engagement strategies allow the learners to connect their

Acta Educationis Generalis
Volume 14, 2024, Issue 3

experiences and current knowledge to understand the content presented in the lesson. Participants shared about engagement. P6 indicated: “When learners are engaged in a lesson, learners develop an interest towards the contents for a history curriculum. When learners are engaged, it gives them a reason for the content they are learning.” The lessons of the past were connected to significant current events, for example, P18 referenced that “The 9-11 attack and World War II were historical events that pose as similar tragic events that affected citizens and society and continue to affect society today”. P18 continued that “today, the pandemic has affected our world. These occurrences will give learners the understanding that they too are living history.” Based on these events, activities were designed to activate engagement and promote historical skills.

Theme 2: Integrating Traditional and Innovative Activities

Participants identified innovative activities that could be integrated with traditional methods to activate engagement and promote historical skills. Activities were designed to activate critical thinking, enhance communication skills, and encourage connections. Traditionally, worksheets and books have been the primary source of activity for a history lesson. Worksheets were identified by educators as a form of resource that contains supporting content for the lesson. These resources included vocabulary, timelines, narratives, or educational activities aligned to the objective of the lesson. Participants shared that worksheets are easily accessible for educators to incorporate into a lesson and designed to support the focus of the lesson. Although there are benefits of having worksheets for a history lesson, participants shared that worksheets should not be the primary source of a history lesson. A participant shared that an innovative way of using worksheets is making learners develop their own worksheet. P19 had learners design worksheets to exhibit their understanding of a lesson as a form of assessment. Books are used as tools to support the contents of a history lesson and not as the primary source. Participants emphasized that learner-centered activities should accompany books to activate social engagement, promote interpretation, and discussion. As a supporting activity, P20 developed the criteria for learners to design their own books aligned with the objective of the lesson. Criteria for an exemplary book designed by learners were illustrations or graphics to support facts and interpretations of historical content. Students’ designed books became a collection in a classroom library. Learners were featured as historical authors and allowed to share their books with the whole class, small groups, or with a peer. Featuring learners sharing their worksheets and books is another method of developing and presenting perspectives about the topic of the lesson in an innovative way.

Acta Educationis Generalis
Volume 14, 2024, Issue 3

Participants shared that technology and other visuals were commonly used to support the content of a history lesson. P1 affirmed: “Educators now rely heavily on technology with all the resources that are readily available through the web.” Replicas of historical icons, such as monuments, flags, symbols, articles of clothing, and historical documents, are examples of visuals used for lessons. Other visuals identified in curriculum documents included artifacts, graphic organizers, multilingual resources, and photographs of historical figures and occurrences. Replicas provide opportunities for learners to utilize their five senses to explore and gain a better understanding of the focus of the lesson. P14 indicated: “When the five senses are activated in a single lesson, the students have multiple opportunities to make connections and to retain the information from the lesson.” Some of these visuals cannot be presented in a tangible form, visuals within books were sometimes used to present information to students. Books were used to present an interpretive story, evaluate facts, and analyze visuals, such as photographs, geographical locations, and influential historical figures.

Theme 3: Develop Relevant and Authentic Experiences

The archival data source mentioned place-based learning; and was defined as providing an opportunity for immersive learning experiences at historical, cultural, and community sites. Participant P4 shared: “The place-based learning opportunity provided learners a reminder of walking in the footsteps of historical figures, who are now found in history books.” Participants shared that inquiry-based learning is a new shift in thinking and teaching. P4 states “I tend to incorporate opportunities for my students to engage in inquiry with the topics I present, specifically controversial topics and situations that can potentially activate critical thinking and develop multiple interpretations.” From the curriculum documents, practical-based teaching strategies are a way of incorporating theories into practice. P1 and P2 provided discussions through investigations, comprehension, and projects that go beyond the classroom in their teaching. P3 shared about integrating the contents between history and science provides a deeper academic understanding and helps learners develop connections to sustain the content of a lesson.

Project-based learning was recognized by P4 as a culminating activity designed to evaluate learner's understanding. Curriculum documents revealed that topics for project-based learning were real-life situations addressing issues like racism and inequality. Participants shared that they incorporated project-based learning as a culminating activity at the end of a unit to provide learners the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills taught within the series of lessons in the unit. Through projects, P6 stated, “Integration of history across content areas can develop scientific thinking and sustainability of a history curriculum.” There

Acta Educationis Generalis
Volume 14, 2024, Issue 3

were multiple applications of values in the history curriculum projects. Participants defined the application of values as lessons learned from the past to make the decisions and interpretations of current practices and preparatory outlook for the future. P14 indicated, "Application of values develops an appreciation for the life we live. When learners apply their values, they can develop empathy and compassion for the occurrences of the past, humanity, and society." The application of values was seen as allowing learners to reflect on the past and make decisions. P14 also stated: "Historical lesson serves as a reminder for citizens to be aware of past events in our country, our world, and our humanity. The lessons can provide opportunities to prevent or overcome the challenges of the past."

Some participants shared that historical scholars/survivors were invited to share historical respective on various topics. P11 stated: "listening to history scholars and survivors, learners come to the realization that anyone can become someone influential and in turn promote positive initiative in the community." Participants shared that presentations led by citizens in the community were incorporated into history lessons to connect learners to historical knowledge and personal experiences of those sharing. Those invited included veterans and historical scholars with extensive knowledge and expertise in history, who connected the contents of a history curriculum and provided the learners with a perspective beyond the lessons taught in the classroom. Citizens who shared their firsthand experiences were survivors, eyewitnesses, or individuals related to survivors. These individuals shared their personal experiences and engaged students in conversation about the historical situation they were involved in.

Some participants shared they also use reenactment as a culminating activity. A culminating activity for a history lesson identified by educators was reenactment, defined as role-playing, narratives, or speeches. Educators set up a lesson by inviting historical experts to reenact the role of a historical figure or an event in history to demonstrate the contents of the lesson. Some participants described using song and dance as a reenactment; for example, the Thanksgiving experience was reenacted through songs and dances demonstrating the Pilgrims' gratitude for the friendships and food that helped them survive. As another example, P1 described reenacting a historical event that was focused on a lesson on Greece. The P1 and their learners created a Toga day, where learners went to school dressed in a toga. A learner was chosen to be Cleopatra while the rest of the class was asked to interview Cleopatra. The participant designed this lesson to evaluate learners' understanding.

Reflections assesses the learners' level of comprehension and application. Reflections connect the past with current events. Participants shared that learners are given the opportunity to reflect on how society has overcome the challenges of the past. P10 stated: "The lessons of the past present a problem to engage

students to evaluate the scenario, interpret their understanding, and develop a reasonable resolution to resolve the situation.” P11 shared: “Reflections evaluates the contents of the lesson and provides the ability to overcome adversity and become something greater despite the backgrounds the learners. Learners are given the realization of how tragic occurrences in the past serve as a lesson that helps others to overcome situations and build a life for themselves.” P16 indicated: “When learners develop a realization for the relevancy of history, they can connect to the past and find things that interest them.” Reflections of a lesson is an opportunity for educators to determine student's understanding and the effectiveness of a lesson.

4 Discussion and implication

The key to making history come alive is using multiple teaching strategies. From the results of the study, teaching strategies to bridge theory to practical application includes engagement, innovative teaching, and authentic teaching. Participants shared classroom activities they use within these strategies.

Engagement Strategies: Engagement in history develops a range of perspectives and historical empathy which are skills needed to be inclusive in a diverse society (Vogel, 2020). Some of the engagement strategies include differentiating instruction. Differentiation provided multiple strategies of delivery lessons to address the diverse learners in the classroom. Differentiation involves planning that involves differentiating content, process, product, and learning environment (Pedler, 2019). Differentiation in instruction includes variation in content development and implementation, and the flexibility in the structure of the learning environment. The development of lessons considers how the content relates to learners' academic capabilities and experiences. Instruction centered on experiences and knowledge promotes meaningful learning, engagement, and motivation (Portes et al., 2018). Opportunities for social active engagement promote learners to learn easily and effectively (TeKippe et al., 2020). Traditionally lessons are taught to a whole group for the duration of the lesson. Differentiated lessons consider the content of a lesson and the implementation of the lesson in the learning environment. The contents of a lesson were differentiated through consideration of learning styles and academic capabilities. Participants shared that their implementation of the lesson included a combination of whole group instruction, small groups, one on one instruction with the teacher, and peer support. Whole group instruction provides the ability for educators to present the focus and goals of a history lesson and sets the lesson for exploration, interpretation, and reflection. Providing time for small group instruction is an opportunity for learners to engage at an intimate level and sets up the learners to engage in discussion for the activities designed for the lesson.

Acta Educationis Generalis
Volume 14, 2024, Issue 3

One-on-one instruction provided participants with the ability to address challenges and continue to nurture academic strengths.

Innovative Teaching Strategies: The integration of traditional and innovative strategies incorporated into history lessons was the foundation to promote active engagement and the development of historical skills. Traditional strategies were referred to as theory-based strategies that focused on the facts and theories of historical content. Innovative strategies were practical-based strategies applying the integration of the facts and theories with content knowledge and skills. Integration of both strategies holds value for the development of effective teaching strategies. Lessons progressed from traditional classroom resources to innovative technological resources. Even when books and worksheets are used, teachers engage students, so that students are not merely learning about history but doing history. Various forms of visuals from the past were readily accessible. Technology and other visuals enrich the lessons. Incorporating technology in a lesson shifts the power to the students and increases student participation (Woodley & Parra, 2019). The use of technology has the capacity for learners to actively participate and engage in virtual place-based learning. Learners were also actively engaged in online conversations with learners outside of the classroom and the local community. Woodley and Parra (2019) stated online forums and live online courses support and engage learners. Digitalization enhances pedagogy and “offers diverse methodological learning and joyful ways of acquiring knowledge.” (Fazekas, 2023). A combination of visuals activates the five senses and learning styles, which promotes multiple opportunities to develop a connection for a lesson; and keep the students' interested and engaged. Using the combination of teaching strategies encourages higher academic achievement (Ferrell, 2018). Engagement activities increase students' attention span (TeKippe et al., 2020).

Authentic Teaching Strategies: Theory-based is a traditional approach to teaching. Theory-based focuses on the facts and theories of historical content. Applying historical practices such as examining artifacts and conducting interviews with the community provides for a meaningful lesson for students (Halvorsen et al., 2019). The study of testimonies of survivors is an opportunity to examine human narratives rather than primarily focusing on a setlist of facts (Miles, 2018). The individual's recollection of their experience provided a perspective of the past that may not necessarily be taught within the confines of the classroom. This is in support of Ahasu's et al. (2024) study that recommended that encouraging community members as guest lecturers helps to establish partnership with schools. Additionally, learners may develop a sense of empathy towards others because of what they have experienced. The stories of

people and how they impact the community can be a motivator and connection to experiences and daily living (Halvorsen et al., 2019). Place-based learning, defined as providing immersive learning experiences at historical, cultural, and local community sites, promotes active learner engagement and personal reflection (Herczeg et al., 2021; Tarbutton, 2018). According to the participants and information from archival curriculum data, learners develop as model citizens when history is the foundation of being. When learners apply historical content to their current lives, historical events come alive, and history is real to them. Rather than words in a book, or artifacts depicted in a lecture, the purpose and intention of the historical event have greater importance. As these historical parts come together, participants shared that students see the inter-relationships and how they have shaped their current reality. The study participants shared that integration of historical occurrences and stories of humanities sets the foundation to apply the knowledge learned through the continued journey towards reconciliation, forgiveness, and peace. But like Zulfadhli Khairuddin et al. (2023, p. 192) indicated, “peace should not be rigidly stated in lessons, it requires practices and experience from the learners and the school’s community.”

The components of a history lesson set the foundation to instill the values and importance of a history curriculum. The development of a history curriculum considers content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge or teaching strategies (Halvorsen et al., 2019). Reflections provide an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of a lesson and learners’ understanding. The reflection point of a lesson determines the ability or inability of learners to apply their knowledge with the contents presented in the lesson. Reflections develop and evaluate the potential societal impact the historical content has in society and as a learner. Providing opportunities for open discussion and reflections promotes conversation about multiple interpretations and perspectives (Fordham, 2017).

Learners can view historical figures and connect them to human experiences when developing connections to the past (Vogel, 2020). The values of understanding humanity provide learners with multiple perspectives. Individuals impacted by historical occurrences provide interpretation and perspectives through first-hand account and experience. Participants shared that historical skills and understanding are developed when learners are exposed to multiple perspectives. The exploration of perspectives engages students in critical historical thinking and develops the awareness of different versions of history (Vogel, 2020). Actively engaging learners in a lesson builds personal and academic success (TeKippe et al., 2020). Engagement strategies allow the learners to connect their experiences and knowledge to understand the content presented in the lesson.

Study results show that students develop the ability to explore historical perspectives when allowed to construct and reconstruct ideas from the past

Acta Educationis Generalis
Volume 14, 2024, Issue 3

(Vogel, 2020). The historical occurrences and experiences of humanity are the foundation for learners to understand current events. History provides the study of human interpretation of the past and controversies that require the study of present politics (Martell, 2020). Historical content could provide background knowledge, clarification, and understanding of how events and experiences have played a role in the various changes of a country and the world. The most tragic and victorious events hold valuable lessons that can be used to overcome current challenges experienced and witnessed globally. When learners understand the series of events that contributed to change over time, the importance of history becomes evident (Halvorsen et al., 2019).

Student outcomes are the historical skills and knowledge learners acquired from a history lesson. The shift in teaching encourages students to do history rather than simply learn history (Walker & Carrera, 2017). Some skills are expected to develop through a history curriculum to promote and maintain active involvement in learning. The history lessons develop fundamental academic skills into complex academic skills through engagement in various activities. Examples of fundamental skills are grammar and vocabulary. Complex skills are critical thinking skills. As with any content, learners need to be given opportunities to develop and apply these skills within a history lesson and when integrated across content areas. The level of skills participants identified as an expected student outcome ranged from comprehension to application. By comprehending the basic understanding of facts, historical thinking can be embedded in historical literacy and writing, leading to the interpretation of the past (Monte-Sano et al., 2017). The connection of the past is compared to current events or personal experiences the learners had. Finally, the application is the ability to critically think about the historical facts as learners compare perspectives and ultimately applies their knowledge and skills in various situations and as citizens in society. Incorporating inquiry in a history lesson allows students to cite evidence to support factual claims, develop historical thinking, and ultimately make sense of conflicting views of history (Martell, 2020). With the complexity of a history lesson and the values each lesson holds, learners can develop a better understanding and realization of the importance of history.

The most important student outcome is to instill interest and relevancy for the past and how it connects to the present, and ultimately self-identity. History creates a sense of identity as a citizen in society. The lessons of history are an opportunity for learners to discover their family heritage and lineage and develop an awareness and appreciation for cultural differences (Amalia & Wuryandani, 2020). Exposing students to diversity provides a context for promoting respect for the value of individual differences, commitment to cultural humility (Alvarez-Hernandez & Choi, 2017), and creative exploration of alternatives to

the status quo (Malik, 2023). Awareness of differences leads to the development of a sense of duty towards perpetuating their culture and values. The main goals of teaching are to take part in the formation of student moral values and emotions (Xiu-mei, 2020). The strategies discussed may therefore help history educators bring history lessons alive.

5 Limitations and recommendations for future studies

Data were collected in 2021 when educators were still unsure of the unforeseen circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic thus making it difficult for some participants to commit to the scheduled interview. Many of the interviews were scheduled in the evenings. During that time of the day, participants shared their status of exhaustion and the challenges of the day. As a result, a few of the participants were brief in their responses.

A recommendation for future study is to include an observational data component. The study data were from participants' responses to their teaching practices in the educational setting and from archival lesson plans. Observations in the educational setting can enhance pedagogy. Monitoring learners' responses and engagement with the educator and peers during the lesson enables instructors to adjust teaching strategies to align with desired outcomes. It is also recommended for future research to focus on grade level strategies. The study could have benefited from analyzing strategies for a specific grade level. Elementary, middle, and high school history is taught using various teaching methods. The level of understanding and knowledge of learners may contribute to the development of the lesson and the teaching strategies designed to implement the lesson.

Conclusions

The purpose of the study was to identify effective teaching strategies for teaching a history lesson. The contents of the study can be used as a reference for practitioners to reflect on current teaching practices. Although the study focused on effective teaching strategies for a history curriculum, the findings of the study can be applied in other content areas. The results of the study uncovered various forms of teaching practices and learning activities. Effective teaching strategies that instill the values of a history curriculum begin with the educators' knowledge of the contents in history and the ability to address diverse learners. Educators need to continually engage in professional development courses to increase their knowledge and skills to keep up with the ever-changing dynamics in education. The integration of theory-based and practical-based approaches connects and applies foundational components with multiple academic experiences. History comes alive when the learner can connect a historical occurrence to current world experiences. Therefore, by making history real,

Acta Educationis Generalis
Volume 14, 2024, Issue 3

educators impart the importance of historical events to the next generation so that the stories can live on.

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