Effects of linking in Ugandan schools

How two secondary schools, a primary school and their local communities in Uganda are affected by their relationships with UK schools

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Outcomes of teacher collaboration; capacity building is evidenced and cost effectiveness of outcomes is considered.
Outline:

- Brief theoretical context - common historical context of former colonisation by British.
- School links often raise complex, tensional issues
Theoretical underpinning

4 strands:
To a casual observer not all four are immediately evident, yet it is the tensions between them that create this research's theoretical strength.
Leonard (2012) Adapted from: 4-strand braid (making) (Doit101.com)

1. Postcolonialism
2. Intercultural Education
3. Development Education
4. Critical pedagogical discourse

Research findings

Effects
1. Professional learning- pedagogy, display materials.
2. Students’ perceptions- from a focus group
   - Capacity building- progress towards MDGs

Finally
- Other effects- morale, inclusion, integrity and mutuality
- Summary conclusions- why complexity and controversy persist
- Recommendations- to avoid a dependency culture
1. Professional learning - Pedagogy: behaviour management

- Improved attainment in mathematics
- Sharing ideas and modelling them to fellow teachers
- Interaction in classrooms

Primary school

- “They have been teaching using their techniques, which we didn’t have at our school and as a result our teachers have also coped. For example, in Primary 5, there are some techniques which we didn’t know; but when the visitors came we have just come to learn them and it has helped our children to learn more knowledge about class work” (GN, 39-44)
1. Professional learning-

Display materials

- Permanent, affordable resources
- Celebrating success
1. Professional learning -

Sozo High School, 2012

NGO claim:

• “Before graduating to secondary school, the children must pass their primary leaving exams. The Stephen Jota children do extremely well and many gain grades 1-2, compared to the national average of grades 3-4”.


2. Students’ perceptions- from a focus group

Nakigo Secondary School, Iganga

““This link has helped us to provide fishing ponds, which acts as, which help us for running purpose. For example, like those Senior 4s, they have, they have used the fish which is there, for practicals and for food purpose”. (PFG, M, 49-52)”

“As they brought for us a fishpond it is, we will be learning from there. We were not supposed to, we will not be going for fieldwork outside, but we shall be having our studies at our school”. (PFG, B, 38-41)
3. Capacity building
“Sometimes there is an input of finances from the other side, usually when we have started especially, they do come with some finances. And that input is like something that helps, which actually catapults this other school in the South, to do something. So I feel that support from the Northern school goes a long way ... so the other school can initiate something” (DB, 143-147)

3. Capacity building

“The projects... come from us, but I am beginning to think that maybe we have, we have to sit down and now with this experience I think I can suggest something which would work better”. (JK, 146-148)

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3. Capacity building - progress towards MDGs

Students’ skills

MDG 1 and MDG 3

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Promote Gender Equality & Empower Women

3. Capacity building– progress towards MDGs

What is needed?

MDG 8: Global partnership for development

Other effects- morale, inclusion, integrity and mutuality

Morale

- Local recognition
- International collaboration

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Other effects - morale, inclusion, integrity and mutuality

Inclusion

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. From ‘object’ of study to collaborators
2. Students as equals
   • Teachers co-creating
   • Community engagement
   • Affordable e-learning

Other effects- morale, inclusion, integrity and mutuality

Towards Mutuality?

- “We are the ones to guide them, because they don’t know; they don’t have any new material or any new method, because they are not teachers, yeah? But for us, if I bring it out, and I guide, they can use it”. (SJCC,V,122-129)

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

- Common interests and curriculum creation
- Friendship

Risks of negative or complicated, complex effects?

- Misunderstanding, breakdown in communication
- Maintenance, repair, to support use of equipment. Electricity outages
- Cultural clashes – whose values?
- Outdated or outmoded technology transfers?
- Tensional challenge of Dependency
- Who takes part in Visits?
- Cost effectiveness of projects
- Is new expertise increasing local inequalities?

Towards ‘Reassessment justice’

Tensional challenge

1. Away from ahistoricism
2. Towards a conceptualization of knowledge as located in culture and social/historical contexts
   • To analyses of power relations
   • From paternalism to openness in ethical solidarity
   • From a deficit theorization of difference towards an ethical relationship towards the other

Reassessment or restorative justice?

“These children, they have learnt that since they write letters with them, they learn or they tell them their activities, they do, at their schools, And some of them they send some of the equipments of those activities they do in their schools. So, you find that they have developed new skills, either of games and those of learning, from those ones in the North. Like our children didn’t know how to play rugby, but they have sent them manuals which teaches them how to play rugby and they have sent them balls for rugby and other equipment”. (SJCC, JS, 35-41)
Summary conclusions - why complexity and controversy persist

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

- How are linking outcomes ‘cost-effective’?
- Accountability to others
- How is assistance or aid compatible with integrity?
- What and whose agenda drive initiatives?

“Education provided by the colonial government had a different purpose. It was not designed to prepare young people for service of their own country”

“We need an educational system that gives an opportunity for the learners to know more about what is happening, not only in their immediate surroundings, but also globally, in other parts of the world” (YN)

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Recommendations- to avoid a dependency culture

- Aspire to reassessment or ‘restorative justice’- to address inequalities
- Consider collaboration beyond schools- other partners in linking relationships
- Devise a Linking or Partnership agreement
- Ensure regular reporting- using affordable means of communication
- Seek advice from agencies, DEC network (Think Global) and experienced linkers, e.g. UKOWLA
- Seize curriculum opportunities

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- Kisiki College, Namatumba
- Nakigo Senior Secondary School, Iganga
- Stephen Jota Children’s Centre, Kampala
References


Websites:
- Link Community Development: http://lcdinternational.org Accessed 17 November 2012