

Perception of Independent Learning

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Abstract

The purpose of this project was to investigate the effectiveness of independent learning in making productive society and show the disadvantages of the Moroccan educational system. A review of the literature demonstrated that independent learning is a tool that enhances many qualities such as the habits of mind, which provides individuals with critical, analytical and reflective thinking skills. In order to gather data, surveys were distributed conveniently to undergraduate students, diplomatic students, and teachers. The sample size was 52 because the research consists of three different groups, and the survey questions were extracted from the literature review. The interviews were conducted to collect data from the teachers' experience in the dependent and the independent learning system. The main conclusion from this research project was that independent learning is beneficial for the students' academic, professional and personal lives. To sum up, independent learning is not only an educational system, but also a life style that prepares the learner to deal with the challenges of life.

Introduction

Independent Learning is a process in which the learner relies on him or herself to acquire knowledge. In other words, the learner is responsible of his or her own learning, which is very beneficial as he or she starts to improve and shape their personality by enhancing self-reliance, self-confidence, and critical thinking skills. In an independent learning system, teachers coordinate and guide their students throughout their academic life. However, in a dependent learning system, knowledge is fed to pupils to take exams and memorize many data that will be forgotten after passing the tests. In addition, dependent students rely heavily on their teachers and grades, which make them unable to make decisions on their learning and to connect what they have learned in classroom with the real world.

The Moroccan Ministry of Education adopts a dependent learning system, which faces many problems especially during the last three years when the new baccalaureate system was implemented in the curriculum. Therefore, the aim of this research project was to show that students at Al Akhawayn University, graduated from Moroccan public and private high schools, are not pleased with their educational system. In addition, it was important students are aware of the negative aspects of their educational system, which can distort and affect their future in the long term. It was also important to show that students are conscious about how independent learning can contribute in making them productive and creative members of the society. For this reason, teachers' and diplomatic students' contribution were important to foster the findings of the study. Therefore, the research answered the question how teachers, students and diplomatic students perceive independent learning.

Literature Review

As a definition to independent learning, Philip Candy at Oxford Brookes University in the United Kingdom (2002) claimed that independent learning is a philosophy of education

whereby learners acquire knowledge by their own efforts and develop the ability for critical evaluation. Therefore, this university takes its own experience as an example in which it presents the positive effects of independent learning on students.

In addition, according to Saskatchewan Learning (n, d), independent learning is “learning in which the learner, in conjunction with relevant others, can make the decisions necessary to meet the learner’s own learning needs”. As far as the article is concerned, the independent learning is a tool to achieve all the common essential learning. In addition, the author of this article had presented several concepts, which can help students and teachers to build a learning environment that is based on the independent learning theories.

Martin. et al (2000) from the Department of Education, University of Bath in England , presented a paper at the British Educational Research Association Conference in 2000. The paper discussed “The potential of GCSE coursework to develop skills associated with critical thinking, creativity, and independent learning.” In addition, it has shown the benefits of these skills and the way it improves the personality of the student in the long-term. Actually, a huge part of GCSE program is based on independent learning, which enhances the creativity and critical thinking skills. This point is highlighted by the benefits of this coursework summarized by providing students with a sense of responsibility toward taking decision, acquiring curiosity, and enhancing the way students analyze and evaluate evidence to make their research reliable.

In his article, Troyka (2004), a high school band director, discussed how it is important for music students to be independent and self-directed during their whole life. He also emphasized that the role of the teacher in independent learning is important; therefore, as a facilitator, he should always be there to guide students to be more independent and self-reliant. In addition, the teacher should create a good atmosphere in the class to enhance collaboration between students and their teachers. Once these things are realized, the student

adopts a sense of “ownership in their learning” in order to be more responsible, to learn how to take good decisions on their own and to deal with different challenges that encounter their musical career.

In a research that was conducted by Sivan (2000), course Leader of the Post-graduation Diplomat of Education(P.D.E), in Hong Kong Baptist University, she examined how active learning, which is another component of Independent Learning enhances students’ participation in activities that encompass the principles of Bloom’s Taxonomy. This paper showed “the relevance of active learning to students course work and learning process.” It improves students’ efficiency to develop a self-sense of evaluating, creates interests for problem solving, and prepares for future career (P: 381).

According to the English Language center in the polytechnic university in Hong Kong (2002), the goal of independent learning is to give students more control over what they learn. Furthermore, this style of learning helps pupils to decide, plan and assess how, when and what they will learn. In addition, it prepares them to learn after university and to improve their personal, academic, and professional lives.

In his research, Handal from the University of Technology in Sidney (n, d), has compared the uses of computer-based instruction in both dependent and independent learning. As a result, he discussed the effective role of hypermedia as an instructional environment for independent learners. In contrast, he talked about the perspective and linear style of instruction, which is preferred by the dependent learner. In fact, this article shows that independent learning is beneficial to keep track with technology.

According to Buchler (2003), educational consultant and director of New-Learning Educational Services, in the USA, teachers need to be independent learners in order to give students the motivation to engage in their self-learning by organizing team learning, evaluating learning outcome and criticizing the leaning issues. He explains how teachers

work to become independent learners and how they educate students to become independent learners. Actually, the need for independent teachers and students is crucial for the effectiveness of the independent learning system in making independent individuals.

According to a student's own experience in the University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada (n, d), "The independent learning is a completely different light of education in which students and teachers work in a collaborative way in order to enhance the student's educational outcomes." From this student's point of view, independent teachers have to take into consideration that students and their learning have to be the most important aspects in any teacher's class, for he thinks that in that way the goals of independent learning can be achieved.

Christie and Holford discuss in general the benefits of independent learning in higher education especially in the development of management skills. The most important points that the author discussed in the article is the positive impact of the independent learning on the individual learning and on the organization of the study.

As a conclusion, from all the diverse sites that were found, each one had discussed the benefits of the independent learning system and how it incites students to become independent individuals. In addition, different examples were examined, which illustrate the efficiency of this system and its outcome on both students and society. These results will be very helpful to answer and the assumptions made in the research proposal.

Methodology

The research is about independent learning and its effectiveness on the academic and professional lives of the learner. In order to answer the research question set, a survey and an interview were chosen as the instruments to answer some important questions about the benefits and the perception of independent learning among teachers and students at Al Akhawayn University.

Participants

Since students are concerned with independent learning, 30 questionnaires were distributed conveniently to sub-samples of participants from different backgrounds such as eight students from French schools, twelve Moroccan public high schools, four Moroccan private high schools, and six American schools. In addition, surveys were handed out randomly to ten Diplomatic Academy students. This is a group, who is at the moment studying at AUI, which adopts an independent learning system. They are assumed to be people, who experienced the dependent system in both their studies and their jobs. Faculty members are also involved in this issue, since some of them also experienced both independent learning and dependent learning, so they were given 12 copies of the survey to fill in. A total of 52 participants were asked to fill the surveys.

In Addition, two interviews were conducted with teachers in order to stress the difference between the independent and dependent system.

Procedure

The total summer population at AUI, which is 373 students, determined the size of the sample; therefore, 10% of the whole community is 37, 7. However, the Enrollment Department gave a wrong number the first time they were asked. The number they gave were 88 students, so it was agreed that 30 copies or more of the survey would be more reliable than the 10% of the 88 students. Students were given the surveys at the cafeteria and the restaurant because they are more available in these places; in addition, some students were asked politely to fill the surveys near their residency. The diplomacy students were asked to answer the questionnaire in laboratory 11 while they were working. Finally, surveys were given to teachers and interviews were processed with them during their office hours because it is the only time where they are free. However, some of them asked if they could return the survey the next day and only one teacher said that he couldn't fill it because he had

no time.

During the data gathering process, some questions were misunderstood, so the team members tried to clarify them either by translating them to Arabic or French or by giving more details. Diplomatic Academy students were the most interested by the reasons behind this survey as they were asking important questions about the topic. Concerning teachers, everything was understood, but some of them made comments about some statements that can be interpreted depending on the teacher's culture.

Materials

The questions focused on the effectiveness of independent learning in the Moroccan society. In other words, the questions stressed the benefits of independent learning on students' academic, personal, and professional life.

The survey included a short definition of independent learning to give the participants a clear idea of the topic. It also contained one open question that showed how the usage of independent learning is important in students' and teachers' lives. Six multiple-choice questions were included in the survey to collect precise and concise data, and the two Yes/No questions were given to avoid ambiguity. When writing the questions, a clear style was used in order to avoid confusion in participants' mind. In addition, the order of the questions was taken into consideration to make the survey coherent. The surveys were pre-tested before distributing them to participants in the class by classmates in order to improve and make them as reliable and credible as possible. Actually, this step was very helpful because it showed what was missing in the survey and what would be misinterpreted or misunderstood by participants.

Finally, the interviews were very important to this topic since they gave useful information about independent learning and the Moroccan society. The first interview was with, an accounting teacher, because he studied at l' Ecole Superieure de Commerce et

d'Administration des Entreprises (ESCAE) and took his Master's degree at Al Akhawayn University, which means that he experienced both independent and dependent systems. The second one was with a Center for Academic Development teacher, who also experienced both systems. The first interview asked if Moroccan students are dependent on their teachers, tests taking, and the grading process or not, which are some of the reasons why our society cannot create something or rely always on someone else to do our work. However, the second one asked whether there is any concrete difference between dependent and independent learning and which one is better than the other one. Both interviews were conducted in English by taking notes to collect useful information from teachers' experiences to avoid bias.

Results

The survey collected data from both teachers and students. The first part presents data collected from teachers' answers, the second presents both AUI students' answers and Diplomatic Academy students' answers, and finally the third part summarizes the two interviews conducted with teachers. The survey was composed of nine questions and was distributed randomly to teachers, diplomatic students, and students from different educational systems.

Teachers

The table below shows the results of how teachers define independent learning.

Table 1: Independent Learning Skills

Active Learning	Individual Learning	Collaborative Learning	Critical Thinking	Others
12	10	9	11	2

n=12

Twelve teachers agreed that independent learning requires active learning, ten agreed that it requires individual learning, nine assumed that it engages collaborative learning, eleven claimed that it involves critical thinking, and finally two teachers added that it necessitates analytical and reflective thinking, problem solving, and choosing the best method

for circumstances.

All teachers believe that independent learning does affect their productivity. In addition, in the sub-question about how does it affect the productivity, eleven teachers answered that independent learning helps the person to take decisions on their own, to set goals and achieve them, to manage time efficiently, and that it motivates good work.

Another question asked whether independent learning enhances some qualities in people's personality. Ten teachers out of twelve stated that it enhances creativity and curiosity, eleven agreed that it enhances self-reliance and responsibility, and nine answered that it enhances self-confidence.

Eleven teachers stated that they apply it in their academic life, twelve apply independent learning in their professional life, and nine apply it in their social life.

All teachers declared that they use independent learning skills to solve problems in their daily life. Their answers were summarized by the fact that they rely on themselves to work out, think, face, and make choices to find solutions for any novel situation in their life. In addition, some of them answered that they also use it in doing researches outside their major like being curious about what their children learn. Moreover, two teachers affirmed that they use independent learning skills everyday everyway.

Table 2: Differences between Independent Learning and Dependent Learning

Curriculum	Professor education and training	Pedagogy	Assignments	class interaction	other
3	8	10	11	9	1

n=12

Table 2 above shows that many differences exist between independent and the dependent learning; these differences are stressed in terms of the load curriculum, the lack of professors' training, teacher centered pedagogy, the quality and the goal of assignments, and also frequency and style of class interaction.

The answers to the last questions, which also concern the differences between

independent leaning and dependent learning system, show that there exist significant differences between the answers of Moroccan teachers, who have studied in a dependent system, and the answers of foreign teachers, who studied in either Canada, the United States, or the United Kingdom adopting an independent learning system.

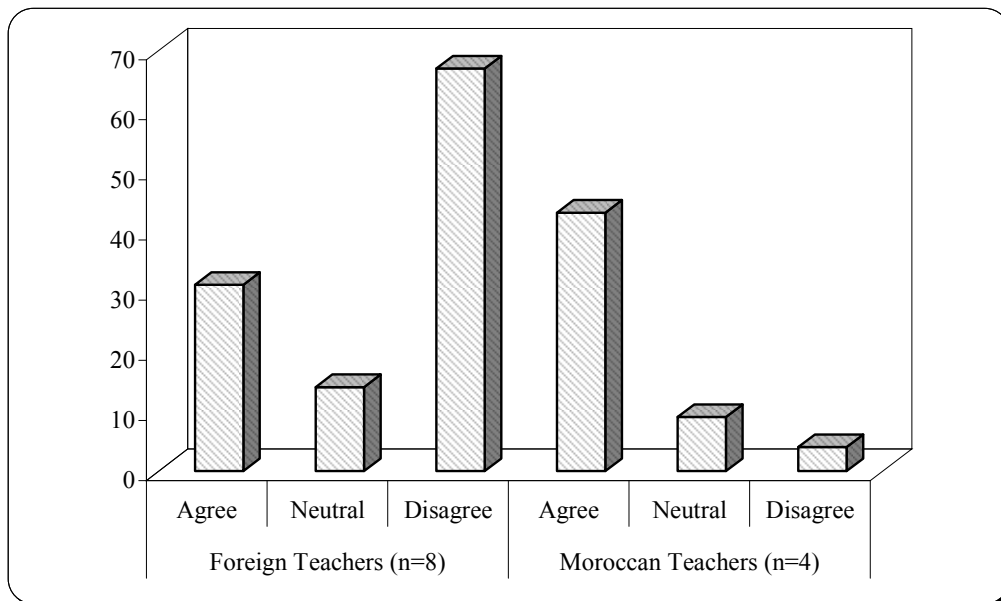
Table 3: Difference in Perception between Foreign Teachers and Moroccan Teachers

	Foreign Teachers (n=8)			Moroccan Teachers (n=4)		
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Curriculum Characteristics	20	6	38	27	3	2
Students Contribution	3	4	17	7	3	2
Teachers Contribution	8	4	12	9	3	0
Total	31	14	67	43	9	4

n=12

Actually, table three and figure one show that even if the number of Moroccan teachers is less (4) than the number of foreign teachers (8), the total of agreement about the negative sides of their educational system is much greater than the total of foreign teachers. For further information about the negative sides of the Moroccan educational system and how the data was conducted from these samples, see appendix 2 on page 28.

Figure 1: Difference in Perception between Foreign Teachers and Moroccan Teachers



n=12

AUI Students:

Concerning the question about the perception of the independent learning system, 26 students define the independent learning system as a system that involves critical thinking, 16 students see that it involves active learning, 14 claim that it also involves individual learning, and finally nine students claim that it requires collaborative learning.

Table 4: Independent Learning Qualities

High schools	Self-confidence	Self-reliance	Creativity	Responsibility	Curiosity
Moroccan (n=16)	11	9	6	13	8
French (n=8)	6	3	4	5	4
American (n=6)	3	5	5	5	3

n=30

The results of the question that concerns the independent learning qualities shows that 13 students from the Moroccan high schools consider the responsibility as the most important quality of the independent learning, 11 of them believe that self-confidence is also a basic quality, and nine declare that it improves self-reliance. Of the eight students from the French high school, six believe that self-confidence is a fundamental quality of independent learning. Students see responsibility (5), creativity (4), and curiosity (4) as the most important qualities enhanced by independent learning, but they think that this system does not develop self-reliance. The six American high school students seem to believe that the most important qualities enhanced by independent learning are responsibility (5), creativity (5), and self-reliance (5).

Table 6: Independent Learning Effects on Students' Productivity

Behaviors	Taking decisions	Time Management	Goals achievements	Responsibility motivates good work
High schools				
Moroccan (n=16)	10	5	10	7
French (n=8)	5	4	5	5
American (n=6)	1	2	3	5

n=30

About the question that discusses the effects of independent learning in students' academic life, the vast majority of students that studied in a Moroccan high school reports

that independent learning developed their own taking-decisions (10), and set goals and achievement (10). Nevertheless, they say that this system did not enhance their capacities of taking responsibilities or managing time efficiently. The French students' high school see that the independent system helped them to take decisions on one's own, manage time efficiently, and set goals and achievement (5). Finally, they think that independent learning motivates good work by taking responsibility of tasks (5). The table above resumes the answers of this question.

Table 7: Independent Learning Application

High schools	Academic life	Professional life	Social life	Do not apply them
Moroccan (n=16)	15	5	10	0
French (n=8)	5	7	3	2
American (n=6)	6	4	4	0

n=30

Concerning the application of independent learning in academic, professional and social life, 15 students that came from the Moroccan System said they use independent learning skills in their academic life, ten in their social life, and five plan to use them in their professional life. On the other hand, five French high school students stated that they apply these skills in their academic life, only three of them use them in their social life whereas seven students believe that they will use them latter in their professional life. However, two said that they do not apply them at all in their lives. The other students who belong to the American high schools affirm that they all use these skills in their academic life while only four of them report that they use or will use them in their social and professional life. The table above shows the results of this question.

Table 8: Independent Learning Use in Daily Life

	Yes	no
Moroccan High school (n=16)	11	5
French high school (n=8)	4	4
American high school (n=6)	3	3
Total	18	12

n=30

Concerning the use of independent learning in students' daily life, it seems that 11 students that studied in Moroccan high schools apply the independent system in their daily life. In fact, these students report that they use the independent learning system in problem solving, decision taking, time management, and self-reliance. About those who do not use it, they say to not be accustomed to use it. Concerning the French and American high school students, they are undecided about the use of this system in their daily life because half of them have reported to use it when the other half has denied its use. Actually, according to students that use it, they do in term of thinking about their problems and analyzing them. While the other students that do not apply it declare that it is not useful to solve daily life problems.

To summarize the answers that have been reported by students, 18 students states to use independent learning skills in their daily life while 12 students say that they do not use it. These results are shown in the table above.

Table 9: Difference in perception between foreign teachers and Moroccan

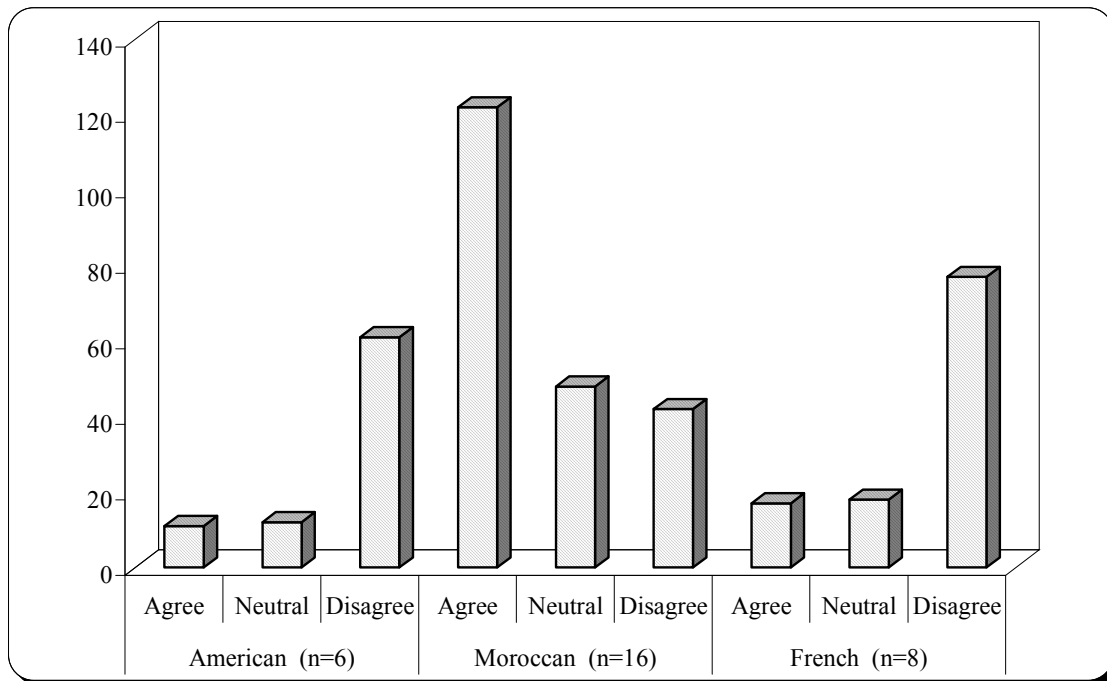
	American (n=6)			Moroccan (n=16)			French (n=8)		
	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D
Curriculum characteristics	3	9	38	68	24	29	11	11	42
Students Contribution	3	1	14	30	9	7	2	4	18
Teachers Contribution	5	2	9	24	15	6	4	3	17
Total	11	12	61	122	48	42	17	18	77

n=30 (A: Agree/ N: Neutral / D: Disagree)

In the answers to the question about the differences between the independent and the dependent learning, most students from Moroccan high schools find that the Moroccan system, which uses the dependent system, focuses more on making students absorbing information rather than educating them how to become independent learners or critical thinkers. However, students that came from a French high school believe that the French system encourages them to become independent individuals. Concerning the American high school students, they find that their system or the independent learning system incites them to

use critical thinking and enhances their sense of responsibility. The table 9 above and figure 2 below show the different perceptions among students toward their educational system. For more details, see appendix 2 page 29.

Figure 2: Difference in Perception between Students Coming from Different Educational System



n= 30

Diplomatic Academy Students:

Table 10: Independent Learning Skills

Active Learning	individual Learning	collaborative learning	Critical thinking	other
7	6	4	5	0

n=10

The table above shows the answers of the ten diplomatic students. Seven think that independent learning involves active learning, six agree that it enhances individual learning, five report that it improve critical thinking and four declare that it includes collaborative learning.

Table 11: Independent Learning and Productivity

Take decisions	Manage time	Set goals	Take responsibility
7	7	5	5

n=10

According to table 11, the diplomatic students strongly agreed that independent learning affects their productivity in the future.

Table 12: Independent Learning and Qualities

Self-confidence	Self-reliance	Creativity	Curiosity	Responsibility	nothing
6	5	8	7	6	0

n=10

After analyzing the table above, it was deduced that the qualities that independent learning enhances are classified, according to the diplomatic students, as follows: creativity, seven curiosity, six responsibility and self-confidence and five self-reliance.

Table 13: Influences of Independent Learning

Academic Life	Professional Life	Personal Life	None of the Above
9	10	6	0

n=10

All the ten diplomatic students confirmed that the professional life is the most influenced by independent learning then nine academic life and six personal life.

Table 14: Application of Independent Learning

Academic Life	Social Life	Personal Life	Don't Apply Them
9	4	10	0

n=10

According to the diplomatic students, the application of independent learning skills is clearly used in their lives. As a result, all of them affirm that they use it in their professional life, nine in their academic life and four in their social life.

Seven of the diplomatic students use the independent learning skills to solve their daily problems. It's clearly seen that the majority of those students use the independent learning skills to resolve their personal problems. They approve their choice by giving the following reasons:

1. Looking for more accurate information to take and improve the decision making process.
2. To see the problem from different sides.

3. Using critical thinking to take rational decisions.
4. To know why this problem has set up then to solve it.
5. To think carefully before acting.
6. To investigate about the problem in order to focus on the issue and make it easier to control. On the other hand, the other part of this category of students who say that they don't use the independent learning skills in their daily life argued that they don't know how to use the skills.

Table 15: Differences between the Two Systems

Curriculum	Pedagogy	Assignment	Professors education and training	Class interaction
7	9	3	6	4

n=10

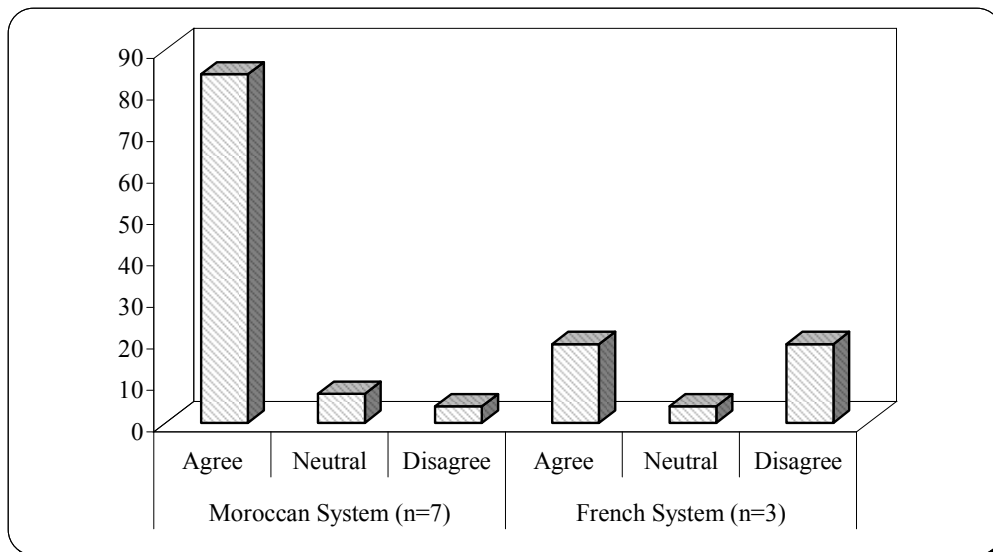
The table shows that nine of the ten diplomatic students think that pedagogy is the first deference between the two systems; however, seven of them think that curriculum is the deference between the latter. Six announce the professor's training and education, four classroom interaction and three assignments as other important dissimilarities between the two systems.

Table 16: Difference in Perception among Diplomatic Academy Students

	Moroccan System (n=7)			French System (n=3)		
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Curriculum characteristics	52	2	2	10	3	11
Students Contribution	16	3	1	3	0	6
Teachers Contribution	16	2	1	6	1	2
Total	84	7	4	19	4	19

n=10

According to the table above the diplomatic students who came from Moroccan system strongly agreed that the latter should be changed, for it does not present for them the conditions that will help them to be ready for their future academic and professional lives.

Figure 3: Difference in Perception among Diplomatic Academy Students

n=10

On the other hand the students who are from French system equally agreed and disagreed about the application of these statements in their educational system. (To have more information, see the appendix 2 page 30). In order to understand more the table 7, figure 3 above presents a clear idea about the diplomatic students' points view considering negative sides of the course and the teacher and students contribution.

Interview

As it was mentioned in the methodology section, two interviews were conducted with teachers. The first one was with an accounting teacher, who strongly stated that the Moroccan students in general even in l' Ecole Supérieure de Commerce et D'Administration Des Entreprises (ESCAE) are highly dependent on their teachers, tests taking, and the grading process, which mean that they don't start to study hard until the period of tests. In addition, he claimed that when these habits are accumulated day after day the students become unable to do things on their own, which are the reasons why Moroccan students are not creative and they always rely on someone else to do their work. Finally, he emphasized on his point of view by stating that the first question students ask before the test is "what we

should prepare for the test,” which mean that they will study and prepare things according to what will be in the test.

The second interview was with a Center for Academic Development (CAD) teacher, who articulated that one of the best features of independent learning is that it is learner-centered, which is completely different from the Moroccan system which is teacher-centered. While teacher-centered system give to the student a very good knowledge, the learner-centered system makes the student understand that he is the only person who will be responsible for acquiring the knowledge and therefore will remember it forever and do not memorize it. However, she also stated that if people were not motivated, they would find difficulties in an independent learning system, but the motivation makes the learning process enjoyable.

Discussion

The design and the survey of the project were done to answer some specific assumptions related to the use of independent learning in the life of students in general. Teachers, undergraduate students, and diplomatic students were chosen as samples to ensure that the results will fit with the assumptions set.

Teachers

All the data collected from teachers showed that independent learning is a beneficial tool, which helps the person to build up and improve his or her personality throughout his or her life. Teachers showed that independent learning is a process in which the person should adopt some learning styles such as being an active learner, which mean taking responsibility of his or her own learning, developing habits of mind, and making the first move to acquire, analyze, critique, and evaluate knowledge. In other words, this means being an individual learner to build knowledge instead of absorbing it from an instructor and forgetting it after taking tests. Teachers, however, argue that being an individual learner might not be

beneficial all the time as collaborative learning can be, especially, in some situation where the student is stumped in a math problem, for example. Collaborative learning is very crucial in the learner's life because it is a learning style in which students rely on them selves to help each others and to understand or to solve a problem rather than acquiring the answers of the problem from a teacher. Actually, when adopting these learning styles during lifetime, the learner starts to develop many qualities in his personality. Such qualities include self-reliance, self-confidence, creativity, curiosity, and responsibility. Developing these qualities is due to the fact the learner starts to interact with others and think critically and analytically about new ways to find solutions to any kind of novel situation in his or her academic, personal or social, and professional life. Finally, these habits will make the learner able to take decisions on his or her own as his or her self-confidence increase by setting goals and achieving them.

Students

In fact, since the project was intended to show that independent system is better than the dependent one, the students were divided according to their system in order to gather data about the effectiveness of each system. Indeed, the results show that students agree with the ideas that were set in the introduction. Yet, there were some disagreements toward some assumptions. Actually, students that came from a Moroccan high school agree that independent learning made them responsible. From these answers, it can be deduced that the independent learning leads students to acquire confidence and so be able to take responsibility. The fact that students report that independent learning improve their self-reliance show that this system is efficient on making future leaders that could be feasible and develop their capacities by themselves. From the French and American school results, it could be assumed that the independent learning enhances mostly self-confidence, responsibility, creativity and curiosity. Actually, it can be assumed from the difference

between Moroccan high school students', American and French school students answers concerning creativity and curiosity that their enhancements need some time. Since the Moroccan students high school are new applicants, they did not reach yet this level of creativity and curiosity as the French and American High schools students that have a long experience with the independent learning system. Thus, it could be said that independent learning system provides students with freedom and self-reliance that stimulates their curiosity and creativity.

From the results, it could be said that the independent learning effects on students' productivity, seem to agree that it has a positive impact in their productivity. Indeed, all students from the three different systems report that the fact that the independent system develop responsibility motivates their work and that it enhances their own-taking decisions. Thus, it leads them to be more open toward challenges and develop their motivation to achieve their goals. However, only American high school students seem to agree that the independent system enhances time management efficiently. Therefore, according to this data, it can be concluded that managing time illustrates one of the problems that students face when adopting the independent system; they admit being more responsible, but have trouble managing their time efficiently which would shape their aim of achieving their objectives.

Diplomacy student

From the diplomacy student results, it could be deduced that the dependent learning system has failed in forming efficient workers or productive members of the society. The fact that they are studying in an independent learning system to acquire critical thinking skills, shows that the independent system develops the country. It could also be said that the independent system is not only a tool to improve personal qualities such as being responsible, confident or a good time manager, but also an effective way to enhance individual intellectual capacities in order to develop the Moroccan society.

According to the project results, it can be deduced that the dependent system prevents students from using their intellectual capacities or to develop their own making-decision. In addition, independent learning provides individuals with self-confidence and self-reliance, which enables them to be critical thinkers and so responsible. This leads individuals to criticize, analyze, decide, create and produce new effective ideas. To stress on this, Moroccan teachers who experienced both systems illustrate the effectiveness of independent learning as they constantly transfer all critical thinking skills to work out, think, face, and make choices to find solutions for any novel situation in their life as it was stated in the result section.

Summary

From the results of the differences between the dependent and independent learning system, it can clearly be said that teachers, undergraduate students and diplomacy students find that independent learning is better than the dependent one. They all believe that independent learning makes them think critically rather than memorizing and absorbing information. In addition, it gives them more freedom to express themselves, so to be more creative and self-reliant. Indeed, it can be said that the fact that this system offers them the opportunity to criticize and take more responsibilities, leads individuals to become leaders and to take decisions on their own. In addition, the results showed that Moroccan teachers, students coming from the Moroccan educational system, and diplomatic students are not satisfied with their educational system, which is a dependent one. This shows that they are aware of the negative sides of the Moroccan educational system

Conclusion

The discussion section showed how much independent learning is important in the learner's life, and it also demonstrated that the Moroccan educational system needs to be changed because all of the three samples agreed about the ineffectiveness of the dependent

system. In order to apply these changes, the Moroccan society should find ways to teach new generations the independent learning skills by implementing independent learning styles in the Moroccan educational system or by changing the whole program into an independent one. For this to happen, the ministry should choose a study group to apply these changes during one to three years and see if the outcomes of the new curriculum or program are beneficial. In addition, parents should educate their children to be independent from an early age to start developing the habits of mind and make them have a sense of self-reliance, which will help them during the time to improve self-confidence especially when they start achieving their needs.

The results of this research project could be better if the size of the samples were equal; as a result, it is suggested to do this study again in order to make this research more reliable. Future researchers should look again for the negative aspects of the Moroccan educational system because it has showed its ineffectiveness during the last three years as it was reported that the rate of failure in Morocco is greater than the rate of success. Having equal sample size will make the comparison between the participants much easier. However, even if the samples were not equally divided, Moroccan teachers, students, and diplomatic students showed that they totally agree that the Moroccan educational system has significant disadvantages because each time the agreement about the disadvantages were greater than those who studied in another educational system even if their numbers were less in some cases.

To conclude, Arabs in general are consumers because they were not trained to think critically, analytically, and reflectively about what is around them. Knowledge is fed and not acquired through independent learning. Therefore, this latter should implemented and not acquired through independent learning. Therefore, this latter should be implemented in all Arabs educational systems in order to create creative and productive members of the society.

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Appendix 1: survey



SSK 1202 Survey: Effects of Independent Learning

Independent learning is a process in which a student takes the responsibility of his/her own learning. Given this short definition, please answer as honestly as you can the following questions. (You can tick more than one answer)

What is your status?

- Teacher Student

What kind of high school/ university did you attend?

- Moroccan Public High School French high school
 Moroccan Private High School American high School

Others: _____

1) Which of these skills does independent learning involve?

- Active learning individual learning collaborative learning
 using critical thinking
 others _____

2) Does independent learning affect your productivity in your (future) professional life?

- Yes No

If yes, how does it affect productivity?

- Take decisions on one's own Set goals and achievement
 Manage time efficiently taking responsibility of tasks motivates good work

3) What are the qualities that independent learning enhances?

- Self-confidence self-reliance
 Creativity curiosity
 Responsibility nothing

4) Independent learning influences:

- Academic life personal life
 Professional life none of the above

5) Where do you apply independent learning skills?

- in your Academic life in your professional life
 in your social life do not apply them

6) As faculty/student do you use independent learning skills to solve problems in your daily life?

- yes No

If yes, how do you use it? _____

If no, why don't you use it? _____

7) In what ways do Independent Learning and Dependent Learning differ?

- Curriculum Pedagogy Assignments
 Professor education & training Classroom interaction

Others: _____

Do you agree/disagree with the following statements about your previous educational system (high school or university)?

S.A: strongly agree/ A: agree/ N: neutral/ D: disagree/ S.D: strongly disagree

	S.A	A	N	D	S.D
Course materials are not well explained					
Learning is based on memorization					
Students are not allowed to criticize the course material					
The curriculum is overloaded					
Professors have an authority role in the classroom					
There is no time to prepare the lessons before coming to class					
Students study only for tests					
Courses do not focus on communication skills					
Courses do not improve the sense of creativity and critical thinking					
Courses do not compel the students to investigate their course material					
Courses do not encourage collaborative learning					
Lecture format predominate in the classroom.					
The courses are not learner centered					
Teacher's lack of communication skills.					

Thank you for your contribution and interest

Appendix 2

- 1: Course materials are not well presented.
 2: Learning is based on memorization.
 3: The curriculum is overloaded.
 4: Courses do not focus on communications skills
 5: Courses do not improve the sense of creativity and critical thinking.
 6: Courses do not compel students to investigate their course materials.
 7: Courses do not encourage collaborative learning.
- 8: The courses are not learner-centered.
 9: Students are not allowed to criticize the course material.
 10: There is no time to prepare lessons before coming to class.
 11: Students study for test only.
 12: Professors have an authority role in the classroom.
 13: Lecture format predominate in the classroom.
 14: Teachers lack of communication skills.

		Teachers									
		American/Canadian/British (n=8)					Moroccan (n=4)				
		Curriculum Characteristics									
		S.A	A	N	D	S.D	S.A	A	N	D	S.D
1		0	1	1	5	1	0	2	0	1	1
2		0	1	0	2	5	2	1	1	0	0
3		0	1	1	5	1	0	2	2	0	0
4		1	2	1	3	1	0	4	0	0	0
5		0	1	0	5	2	1	3	0	0	0
6		0	3	0	4	1	1	3	0	0	0
7		0	5	1	2	0	2	2	0	0	0
8		0	5	2	1	0	2	2	0	0	0
Total		1	19	6	27	11	8	19	3	1	1
		Students Contribution									
9		0	0	2	2	4	1	1	2	0	0
10		0	1	1	2	4	0	1	1	1	1
11		1	1	1	4	1	0	4	0	0	0
Total		1	2	4	8	9	1	6	3	1	1
		Teachers Contribution									
12		1	2	1	4	0	2	1	1	0	0
13		3	1	2	2	0	3	1	0	0	0
14		0	1	1	5	1	1	1	2	0	0
Total		4	4	4	11	1	6	3	3	0	0
		Total									
		6	25	14	46	21	15	28	9	2	2

S.A: Strongly Agree/ A: Agree/ N: Neutral/ D: Disagree/ S.D: Strongly Disagree

* S.A and A were grouped; S.D and D also.

Students															
American system (n=6)						Moroccan System (n=16)					French system (n=8)				
Curriculum Characteristics															
	S.A	A	N	D	S.D	S.A	A	N	D	S.D	S.A	A	N	D	S.D
1	0	0	0	4	2	3	3	4	4	2	1	0	2	4	1
2	0	0	0	3	3	7	2	3	3	1	0	1	2	3	2
3	0	1	1	2	3	3	7	3	2	1	0	1	1	3	3
4	0	0	2	3	1	5	4	2	5	0	0	2	1	3	2
5	0	0	1	2	3	3	6	1	4	2	0	2	2	1	3
6	0	1	1	3	1	4	4	5	3	0	0	2	0	3	3
7	0	1	1	3	1	2	5	4	4	1	0	1	2	3	2
8	0	0	3	4	0	3	7	2	4	0	0	1	1	3	3
Total	0	3	9	24	14	30	38	24	29	7	1	10	11	23	19
Students Contribution															
9	0	0	0	4	2	4	8	0	2	2	0	1	2	2	3
10	0	1	1	3	1	5	1	7	3	0	0	0	1	3	4
11	0	2	0	2	2	7	5	2	2	0	0	1	1	4	2
Total	0	3	1	9	5	16	14	9	7	2	0	2	4	9	9
Teachers Contribution															
12	0	2	1	2	1	4	6	4	2	0	0	1	1	3	3
13	0	2	1	2	1	2	5	6	2	1	0	2	0	2	4
14	0	1	0	2	1	3	4	5	2	2	0	1	2	3	2
Total	0	5	2	6	3	9	15	15	6	3	0	4	3	8	9
Total															
	0	11	12	39	22	55	67	48	42	12	1	16	18	40	37

S.A: Strongly Agree/ A: Agree/ N: Neutral/ D: Disagree/ S.D: Strongly Disagree

* S.A and A were grouped; S.D and D also.

Diplomatic Academy Students										
Moroccan System (n=7)						French system (n=3)				
Curriculum Characteristics										
	S.A	A	N	D	S.D	S.A	A	N	D	S.D
1	4	2	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	1
2	4	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
3	3	3	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
4	4	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
5	5	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
6	3	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
7	3	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
8	4	3	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0
Total	30	22	2	2	0	2	8	3	6	5
Students Contribution										
9	4	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
10	3	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	2	0
11	3	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	0
Total	10	6	3	1	0	2	1	0	5	1
Teachers Contribution										
12	3	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
13	2	4	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
14	2	3	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	0
Total	7	9	2	1	0	3	3	1	1	1
Total										
	47	37	7	4	0	7	12	4	12	7

S.A: Strongly Agree/ A: Agree/ N: Neutral/ D: Disagree/ S.D: Strongly Disagree

* S.A and A were grouped; S.D and D also.

Appendix 3: Interview

Interview 1: 07-06-2005

Interviewer: We are doing a study on independent learning and its effects on the Moroccan society, and we want to know if the Moroccan high school students are dependent or independent students. Can you talk about your experience?

Accounting teacher: First, you should know that we are highly dependent on our teacher. Even in L' ESCAE, students can't do anything without the supervision of the teacher. We are motivated by tests, grades, awards, and the placement in the class. I can give you an example. Today, a student asked what we should prepare for the test. I answered him that he is not preparing for the test but he is preparing himself, so everything is important.

Interviewer: Which mean that he will revise the parts related to the test only?

Teacher: Exactly. You know for me tests are not important. Tests do not measure students' capacity for me.

Interviewer: well, thank you very much.

Interview 2: 29-06-2005

Interviewer: We are doing a study on independent learning and its effects on the Moroccan society, and we want to know if there are any differences between independent and dependent learning. You studied in England and Morocco, so can you benefit us from your experience?

CAD teacher: Of course there are many differences between independent learning and dependent learning, but for me the most important difference is that independent learning is learner centered, which is completely different from the Moroccan system that is based on teacher-centered. It is true that the Moroccan system provides the students with good knowledge, but if we follow a learner-centered system knowledge will not be forgotten because it is acquired and not fed. I think that should also mention that if the student is not motivated to acquire knowledge he would fail in an independent learning system, but the motivation is what makes motivation makes the learning process enjoyable.

Interviewer: well, thank you very much.