

Action Research Analysis

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The writers of this particular research article are Ruth Gannon Cook and Caroline Crawford from DePaul University and the University of Houston respectively. Their role in this action research setting is limited to desk research, more commonly referred to as secondary research. The individuals, groups, and organizations that were cited within this article consist of a mix of primary and secondary research. As secondary researchers, Cook and Crawford (2008) did not collect the study data themselves. Rather, they provided a detailed summary of previous studies that helped to validate their asserted hypothesis.

Within this study, Cook and Crawford seek to address the need for embedded action research in electronic instructional design. In accordance with previous studies, the researchers posit a relational existence between "*an organization's level of capability in electronic delivery of training and the barriers set up to detain it*" (Cook & Crawford, 2008). My interpretation of this premise focuses around an organization's commitment and ability to embrace this newfound form of technological change, and whether they can incorporate innovations such as electronic instruction into their existing organizational culture. The researchers of this article were very clear in stating the general objective of this study.

In this research article, Cook and Crawford provide an array of well-stated points that lend credence and sensibility to their posited assertion with regard to technology and the means by which it can influence team collaboration within both commercial and educational settings. The point that that I felt was right on target was the cruciality associated with developing an educational and training curriculum that addresses the need to deliver knowledge and expertise to other members within our global community. According to Cook and Crawford (2008), this would aid in breaking down cultural barriers that often lead to isolation and resistance.

In addition to providing a list of *Definition of Terms*, which provide a breakdown of key terminologies utilized within this article, Cook and Crawford also provide a literature review that covers *Instructional Design, Rapid Prototype Development, Management Theories, Development of Relevant Learning and Expertise, Organizational Adoption of Innovation*, and a register of other major topics that help to address the need for team collaboration and goal setting within an organizational setting. There was no mention of any permissions needed or ethical issues that stood in the way of the study.

Within this research article, there was no mention of any planning or intervention on the part of the primary researchers who conducted a team collaboration study that included four capstone project graduate students working on an *Instructional Design* plan. The information conveyed within the study consisted of only qualitative observations with a minimal degree of illustration and substance. While there was mention of *thick qualitative* data that was used to form an experiential narrative of the observed events, the study made no mention of any special materials that was created as a data collection tool. According to Cook and Crawford, there was only one method of data collection, which consisted of personal reflection and feedback by each capstone student. There was no mention on how the report was fashioned and submitted to the researchers in this particular study.

The method of data collection for this study is very similar to the qualitative methods used by many educators around the globe. Much of the assessment is based on observational analysis of the students. In this case, the participants provided written feedback that helped to create a baseline used to evaluate the student's emotional and social perspectives over the course of the study. There was not enough data to present a tables or graphs. The study's findings were presented in an illustrative textual format.

The results of the study's findings were explicit with regard to how the student's responded in their personal reports. While there is no way to gauge the responses of the participants due to the imprecise nature in the way the data is presented, the qualitative overview is enough to form an opinion, either for or against the researcher's position, with regard to the study's objective(s). According to Cook and Crawford (2008), the results from the study proved highly successful in demonstrating the importance of participation within *cross-functional* teams (p.21). This is best illustrated in the way the participant's communication and collaboration skills were positively altered over the duration of the study. The participants emerged from the research study with a more "global" perspective of the assigned project in lieu of a previous myopic viewpoint that was only based on personal experience and educational background.

The author's of this review were quick to point out the ineffective weakness of their study due to the limited number of participants involved. While their study lacked a substantial amount of statistical backing, which would have provided for a more in-depth generalization of the study objectives, the author's believe that their contribution to this area of research could be applied for broader use within other action research projects. Other than the minimal number of participants that were part of the study, there was no mention of any introspective insights that would alter the way they would conduct future studies.

Overall, I believe this literature review covered all aspects of the study's objectives. In terms of organization, I really appreciated the method in which Cook and Crawford presented the content assembled within this study. The formatting was well organized with subheadings that helped to maintain a consistent flow throughout the article. The introduction and summary was also well done. The same information was captured in both sections. There was no more or no less information in the beginning and end, which made the summary a perfect recap.

## References

Cook, R. G., & Crawford, C. (2008). Combining quality and expediency with action research in eLearning instructional design. *The Journal of Educators Online*, 5(2), Paper 3.

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