

Students' Ability to Solve Complex Accounting Problems Using a Framework-Based Approach

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Abstract : Accounting transactions are becoming more complex, and more extensive accounting guidance is provided on a continuous basis. It is widely perceived that conceptual teaching of accounting contributes to lifelong learning. Such a conceptual teaching approach also contributes to effective accounting problem-solving. This framework-based approach is rooted in educational psychologies such as constructivism and Ausubel's subsumption theory. This study aimed at investigating the ability of students to solve complex accounting problems by using only concepts underlying the Conceptual Framework. An assignment was administered to pre-graduate students at a South African university and this study made use of an interpretative research design which implemented multiple research instruments to investigate the ability of students to solve complex accounting problems using only concepts underlying the Conceptual Framework. Student perceptions were analysed and were aided by a related reflective questionnaire. The importance of the study indicates the necessity of Accounting educators to enhance a conceptual understanding among students as a mechanism for problem-solving of accounting issues. The results indicate that the ability of students to solve accounting problems effectively using only the Conceptual Framework depends on the complexity of the scenario and the students' familiarity with the problem. The study promotes a balanced and more conceptual (rather than only technical) preference to the problem-solving of complex accounting problems. The study indubitably promotes considerable emphasis on the importance of the Conceptual Framework in accounting education and the promotion of life-long learning in the subject field.

Keywords : accounting education, conceptual teaching, constructivism, framework-based, problem-solving

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