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Literature as an inspiration for scientific thinking: An Investigation

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Literature is defined as a body of written works. The name has traditionally been applied to those imaginative works of poetry and prose distinguished by the intentions of their authors and the perceived aesthetic excellence of their execution. On the other hand, Science is a creative study that originates in mind before moving forward to experimentation and verification. Thus, a possibility of a relationship can be seen between these two domains; Literature and Science. The main objective of this paper is therefore to identify the impact of literature towards scientific thinking as a source of inspiration to bridge the gap between imagination and reality. Thus, the research problem that is intended to investigate through this study is "How influential are the stories of science for youngsters to succeed themselves as scientists".

This study was mainly conducted in three stages. In the initial stage of data collecting, primary methodology in focus is to delve in to the lives of 15 highly successful scientists from a wide range of subject fields including physics, biology, mathematics, engineering, astronomy and etc. Data about inspirational literature were extracted considering their statements made during public lectures, interviews as well as concerning the experiences mentioned in their own publications. Secondly, an attempt was taken to analyze all these scenarios and they were classified in to three main categories depending on the reason of persuasion of these scientists to pursue a carrier in science. These three main reasons were revealed as extreme curiosity, desire to serve humanity and the passion of challenging established perspectives. Finally, in the concluding stage, several conclusions were made based on a qualitative analysis while seeing the stimulation of literature on scientific thinking.

Key words – Literature, scientific thinking, imagination, scientists, perspective

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