

# Free essay on educational philosophies

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In any educational institution, the main aspect to consider is teaching or knowledge delivery. This has led to several educational philosophies some of them being: progressivism, perennialism, essentialism and Reconstructionism. From personal experience in the field of education delivery, I can comfortably claim that my mode of delivery in class is reflective comparison, a universal philosophy that has roots in almost all the other philosophies.

After randomly determining four interviewees, I shared information with them regarding my philosophy and from the discussion; I was able to deduce some similarities and radical differences which explained the different impacts that our modes of teaching had on the learners.

In bench assessment philosophy, a teacher takes a lot of time in class explaining loads of educational stuff to the learners. The philosophy dictates that the learners are exposed to many problems regarding the topic under discussion but the knowledge they acquire is mostly problem solving oriented. This makes the whole syllabus and philosophy to be oriented towards passing the exam and gaining basic knowledge and facts. After certain duration, the learners are subjected to testing or assessment. This makes the learners reflect on what they acquire in class and stand a chance to explain the topics under discussion as explained during the class time. I find this as the best approach since it helps the learners keep in memory what is learnt in class and maintain revision throughout the whole period of learning. It also helps learners internalize some basic facts and elements in education and knowledge acquisition process.

The education foundation of this philosophy is mainly rooted in recall of the

learnt ideas and application of the acquired skills in solving personal problems. This makes this the framework of this philosophy to encompass mostly the learner and the teacher intensively while also drawing some contents from the other spheres of philosophy like sociology.

Turning to one of my interviewee's philosophy, perennialism, the interviewee has an experience of about ten years in the field of education. This interviewee has applied this philosophy all through the ten years of duty and has a lot to be happy about regarding this philosophy. To begin with, this philosophy seeks to help the learners acquire a wide scope of knowledge which is everlasting. The knowledge acquired is mostly on the ideas of western civilization and seeks to establish the best relationship for the west. The main framework aims at consolidating the educational background of the learners to acquire and all through have knowledge on the constants of this life like most of the human nature and principles of physics. After this acquisition, the learners are able to solve their own problems from any era and any discipline. The philosophy also seeks to develop the learners mostly based on academic disciplines which are not subject to change like science and philosophy but contains very little materials or impact of aspects like cultural studies which change with time.

Comparing this philosophy with my personal education philosophy, the main similarity is the mode of service delivery. It creates an everlasting strong basement for any further studies in the related field. The other similarity is the examination oriented nature of both approaches. This makes the two philosophies be regarded as philosophies of intensive reading to pass exams. However, from a personal perspective, these philosophies are only strict on

acquisition of vital skills and knowledge to the learner.

The main difference lies in the scope of the two philosophies. Though the two philosophies tend to advocate for the same thing, benchmark assessment does not discriminatively deal with any unchanging discipline like science as it is the case with the perennialism. The other difference is in the context of delivery. Perennialism mainly deals with acquisition of scientific and relatively constant disciplines while benchmark assessment deals with acquisition of all necessary skills to deal with a certain discipline regardless whether it is dynamic or constant.

Taking a look at my second interviewee's philosophy, essentialism, I discovered some radical similarities and differences as well. First, this philosophy has all the traits of perennialism except it allows dynamicity. This makes the philosophy to advocate for a disciplined and systematic way of knowledge acquisition and dispensation. It also claims that education must be delivered in basic facts which should be integrated into the learners' minds by use of periodic testing and examination and use of practical. All these traits allow this philosophy has a similarity to perennialism but since it is not reserved to any constant discipline, it is more benchmark assessment than perennialism.

Comparing essentialism and benchmark assessment, the two shares a number of similarities but the main similarities are briefly discussed. The scope of knowledge acquisition is the first similarity. Closely looking into the idea of essentialism and benchmarking assessment, the two have a similar approach to matters of knowledge and its meaning to the learners. They also advocate for the same principles and examination formats. The other

similarity is in the content of the two philosophies. Essentialism advocates for teaching the learners essentials in the particular discipline while leaving any advanced knowledge to the learners' personal research and interests.

This is the same case with benchmark assessment.

However, the main difference lies in importance of examining the progress.

In benchmark or reflective teaching, the teacher always tries to reflect on the acquired knowledge and cover it closely to ensure it is completely understood. This is not the case with essentialism which cares less with self interpretation of facts or basics as it is the case in reflective teaching.

Examining the third interviewee's approach and philosophy, progressivism, the teachers prepare the curriculum from personal interests and questions of the learners. This makes the education to all around the learner making the learner a problem solver and thinker instead of just an accumulator of knowledge which might not be of any practical use to the learner. This makes the philosophy be centered on learner interests and making the learner proactive in class instead of reactive. This is the core strength of this philosophy which if well implemented creates a self independent intelligent learner who can solve personal or communal problems with great ease.

Comparing this with the benchmark philosophy, the main similarity lies in content of the curriculum. The contents are similar though the assessment is not the same. This is because benchmark philosophy creates its areas of concern from observation and thus incorporates contemporary interests of the learners making them an important pillar in curriculum development.

Likewise, learners' interests are core in curriculum development in progressivism philosophy. The other similarity is the reflective assessment of

the two philosophies. Both are intensive on reflective assessment with benchmark being more vigorous in the facts and basics assessment while progressivism is more pronounced in contemporary (dynamic) aspects or disciplines of the learner.

The main difference lies in the scope of encompass. Benchmark draws a lot of content from the relatively constant disciplines like science and mathematics which require acquisition of basic facts and knowledge and then advancing from the simple known basics to the unknown. Progressivism is mainly based on the changing world and interests of the learners thus it is highly dynamic compared to benchmark assessment.

Onto my last interviewee's philosophy, Reconstructionism, the main argument in the philosophy is that the curriculum should be developed to create a better society and enhance democracy. This means that the curriculum is mainly involved with the contemporary dynamics unlike the perennialism and essentialism. This philosophy tends to cover the areas that appear ignored by perennialism and essentialism. The contents of the curriculum tend to emphasize more on need to change some trends and modes of lifestyles to improve on human conditions and reduce oppression. As the name suggests, the philosophy aims at reconstructing or correcting what is not appropriate in the contemporary society but was acceptable in the past. This is one of the latest educational philosophies that appear to be rooted in the multicultural education system and the contemporary multilingual societies.

Comparing reflective assessment and Reconstructionism, there are very few similarities but a bunch of differences. One of the few similarities is the

learner involvement. Both appear to have similar levels of learner involvement in the process of knowledge acquisition. The other similarity is the level of reflection on reading involved. Though benchmark is mainly concerned with excellence and relatively constant disciplines while Reconstructionism deals with dynamic disciplines, the two critically engage the learners in the process of knowledge acquisition making the learner to contribute actively in the process instead of reactively.

The main differences lie in context of application and disciplines dealt with. Reconstructionism deals with highly changing discipline mainly in sociology and humanities while benchmark deal with constant disciplines like science and mathematics. This results in a great difference between the two in content composition.

In conclusion, I can personally claim that there is no philosophy which can claim to be a standalone universal philosophy with all characteristics of a perfect education system or curriculum. Therefore, a teacher has to apply a philosophy which is best suited for the subjects taught and level of teaching. Elementary school teachers are most likely to use progressivism and essentialism while higher education teachers including high school teachers are likely to use benchmark to some levels, perennialism and Reconstructionism.