Curriculum perspectives

Constructivism Perspective

Gredler, M. E. (2009). Learning and instruction: Theory and practice. Merrill,

Pearson Education, Inc. Retrieved September 31, 2009, from University of

Phoenix EBook Collection.

Margaret E. Gredler Ph. D. is credited with a host of other material in the

area of education and constructivism. Her material is used by many colleges

and universities in providing instruction on theory and practice. Gredler

(2009) addresses and identifies the philosophy referred to as constructivism.

The author further defines radical social constructivism and also explains

educational constructivism and the factors that contributed to its

emergence. Gredler addresses Vygotsky and Piaget and the origination of

the constructivist belief along with the factors that contributed to the

emergence of constructivism. A significant discussion exists regarding

teachers constructed knowledge, attitudes, assumptions, beliefs, and values

about teaching and learning. The author identifies preexisting ideas and how

they frame teacher's beliefs about effective teaching with emphasis on how

these beliefs affect students and influence teaching styles. A primary

purpose of this text is to discuss the developments that are attracting the

attention of educators. The information posed by Gredler is widely accepted

in the field of education worldwide and encompasses citations and

supporting information from many other theorists and theories. The author's

targeted audience is educators and graduate students. Gredler provides

detailed information that will provide benefit to the field for years to come.

Harris, K. R., Alexander, P. A. (1998). Integrated constructivist education:

Challenge and reality.

University of Maryland, College Park Maryland. Educational Psychological Review. (10)2.

Retrieved January 31, 2010, Professional Development Collection Database .

Harris and Alexander, (1998), provide information in support of a complete reversal of the viewpoint of educators in regard to constructivism and the aims and methods presently used to teach children. The author suggest that reforms based on constructivist methods and principles, have failed in the delivery of services to children. The authors cited multiple definitions of constructivism, diversity in education population, and multiple on-going debates regarding operation of this construct as part of the reason for failure. Harris and Alexander base extensive research on perceived specific challenge faced in constructivist reform. Provide sources on perceived challenges faced in constructivist reform. Harris and Alexander's conclusions are significantly different from the views of Gredler and Skaailid. The case presented many challenges but only briefly addressed successes of constructivist reform which, can be construed as bias towards alternative theories. The targeted audience for this article is professional educators and graduate students. The authors address the educator in many areas of the article. The information provided in this article brings an alternative perspective on the value of constructivism.

O'Shaughnessy, J. P. (2001). A philosophical basis for constructivist education. Department of Social Foundations of Education, Eastern Michigan University. Retrieved January 28, 2010 from ProQuest Dissertation and Thesis Database.

O'Shaughnessy presents a philosophical analysis of the theoretical theory of constructivism and examined the present implementation in the classroom and obstacles to the implementation of the theory. The author acknowledges the growing trend in the constructivism movement and research on data compiled in the Michigan school system. O'Shaughnessy reveals that though the constructivist theory has become very popular and educational journals are publishing more articles in support of the theory and the lack of training provided to educators. Subsequently is limited to pedagogical theory in grades K-12. O'Shaughnessy cited numerous leading theorists in research and conclusions are shared by Gredler and other authorities in this field of discipline. O'Shaughnessy view is aligning with other noted theorist and research studies. The author addresses an audience of sociologist, and educators and provides information in support of constructivism that will benefit those in the field of education.

Skaailid, B. (2007) A developmental study concerning the designs and implementation of constructivist learning environments. Department of Educational Psychology Dissertation, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta Spring, Canada. Retrieved January 30, 2010, from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Database.

This developmental study provides information on what is constructivism and gives a definition of developmental research. The research study is the desire to improve education, a desire to create, and an interest in learning theory. The introduction also provides information on the significance of this study. The author quotes theorist, Guba and Lincoln, (1989) in an explanation of the elements of a constructivist research methodology.

Skaailild presents a developmental research framework based on Linjse's definition of a cyclical process of theoretical reflection, conceptual analysis, small-scale curriculum development, and classroom research on the interaction of teaching-learning process (Skaailid, 2007, p. 23).

The research study provided information on the antecedents for the design of constructivist learning environments. The information in this study is by other experts and studies in the field of constructivist education. The study provides supporting information from Piaget and Vygotsky, along with information from other noted constructivist theorist on the elements of constructivism. After a discussion of the elements of constructivism the study examines the management of constructivist classrooms and constructivist instructional design. The authors' case is by classroom experience and the support of leaders in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University Alberta in Edmonton Canada. Skaailid primarily addresses educators and provides an analysis of a constructivist classroom learning environment. This study provides detailed information that will benefit administrators and educators as they deliver educational services to children and families.

Constructivist Synthesis
A review of articles on constructivism provides information on the constructivist perspective as it relates to education. The articles revealed information on what is constructivism, provides a definition of developmental research, defines radical social constructivism, and also explains educational constructivism and the factors that contributed to its emergence. The information on constructivism presented helped to solidify an understanding

of the need for diversity in curriculum development. Research provides a comprehensive understanding of the constructivist perspective, and how it develops student skills in collaboration, team building, negotiation, problem solving and integration. Research also provides information that shows that traditional school settings that delivers a majority of teacher directed instruction, discourages the acquisition of deep understanding and higher level thinking skills in students (Skaailid, 2009). Educators should place an emphasis on ensuring developmentally appropriate classrooms and staff training in the constructivist methodology from grades pre-k through grade 12 (O'Shaughnessy, 2001).

In contrast, information is present that revels support of a complete reversal of the viewpoint of educators in regard to constructivism and the aims and methods presently used to teach children. Knowledge of opposition view to any theory is an important aspect of scholarly research. Constructivist educational practices face many challenges. Consistency in the provision of services is blame as the cause of the perceived failures of constructivism by opponents of the methodology (Harris & Alexander, 1998).

Behavioral Perspective
Harzem, P. (2004). Behaviorism for new psychology: What was wrong with behaviorism and what is wrong with it now. Behavior & Philosophy, 32(1). p. 5-12. Retrieved from Research Starters – Education database.

Peter Harzem, a professor of psychology, discusses the contributions of behaviorism scientific psychology. He critically assesses behaviorism past and present and concludes that the important aspects of behaviorism has

been absorbed into all scientific psychology. Unlike Standridge (2002) and Scott and McConnell (1992), Harzem only discusses behaviorism's beginnings and growth, recent behaviorism, and future behaviorism. This essay is also different then the latter two because he does not explore the concept of behaviorism within the educational setting. Harzem closely examines the intellectual conditions that created the need for its existences and its extinction. Like Standridge (2002) and Scott and McConnell (1992), Harzem gives recognition to Watson and Skinner and their contributions to the concept of behaviorism. Harzem believes that behaviorism is a concept embedded within all scientific-psychological thought. He suggests that all schools of psychology consider " isms" things of the past. Harzem's writing is for scholars and theorists in that he has formulated a new theory of embedded behaviorism.

Strain, P., & McConnell, S. (1992). Behaviorism in early intervention. Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 12(1), 121. Retrieved from Professional Development Collection database.

Strain and McConnell, professors of Education Psychology, explore common criticisms of Behaviorism. They also present reactions to the criticisms. Strain and McConnell's focus on the behavioral approach and how it applies to early childhood special education. They also describe and identify serious features of the behavioral approach and how it is similar to early childhood special education. The article goes on to give examples of how the application of the behavioral perspective has influenced this field of education. Strain and McConnell believe that the perspective of behavioral curriculum has made substantive contributions in improving the lives of

families with children with special needs. The support the idea that the concept of Behaviorism is used in the development of early childhood special education services. Strain and McConnell publications are for the scholar. Like Standridge (2002), Strain and McConnell are advocates for Behaviorism, but clearly state that they believe that the integration of many theoretical perspectives offer the most support for practice and research in early childhood special education.

Standridge, M. (2002). Behaviorism. In M. Orey (Ed.), Emerging perspectives on learning, teaching, and technology. Retrieved February 3, 2010, from http://projects. coe. uga. edu/epltt/

Melissa Standridge, of the Department of Education Psychology and Instructional Technology at the University of Georgia, based this article on the concepts related to behaviorism. Standridge covered concepts includes; cueing, modeling, shaping, contracts, consequences, reinforcement, and extinction. The concepts of classical and operant conditioning are also discussed. Standridge also includes a section that discusses some of the most influential names associated with Behaviorism. Standridge discusses how the works of Watson, Skinner, and Pavlov clearly indicates that they are advocates for Behaviorism. The sections within the chapter are associated with student and teacher relationships. Standridge eventually integrates all concepts back to how Behaviorism can be used in the classroom. Standridge's defines Behaviorism as what is observable. However, this viewpoint is altered when she starts to explore Bandura's Radical Behaviorism that is based on emotions and thoughts. Unlike Strain and McConnell (1992), who focus on early educational design, Standridge keeps

the focus on education and classroom teaching. The level of reading is simple and to the point. The article lacks organization but the concept is presented in a clear manner. This research would be beneficial to casual readers for the purpose of literature reviews.

Behavioral Synthesis

The review of articles on behaviorism gives insight to the perspective and how it affects the classroom and research. The research provides information on the behaviorism perspective as it relates to education and scientific-psychology. The articles discussed how Behaviorism is being used in education, the classroom during the design phase of education, and within scientific thought. This information on behaviorism supports the idea that creating lessons and basing it on scientific research involves understanding what students can do. In contrast, the articles discuss how behaviorism is embedded in the classroom, life, and research. Standridge (2002) along with Scott and McConnell (1992) are proponents of behaviorism. On the other hand, Harzem (2004) is not for or against behaviorism. He just believes that the concept of behaviorism works with all processes of thought and research.

Traditional Perspective

Bleicher, R. E., & Kirkwood-Tucker, T. F. (2004). Integrating science and social studies teaching methods with a global perspective for elementary preservice teachers. Curriculum and Teaching Dialogue, 6(2), 115-124. Retrieved February 1, 2010, from the EBSCO database.

This qualitative interpretive ethnography research study was conducted by Robert E. Bleicher a professor of Education at California State University Channel Islands focusing his attention on interdisciplinary curriculum and

science teaching self-efficacy. Toni Fuss Kirkwood-Tucker is a professor of Education at Florida Atlantic University and her attention is focused on global pedagogy and curriculum. The researcher chose to be a participant in the study, in the capacity of team teaching, the other participants were undergraduate students in an elementary instruction program. The urban university is in southeast Florida. Bleicher and Kirkwood-Tucker evaluated the method of new teachers formulating skills related to incorporated science and social studies curriculum from an international viewpoint versus traditional methods of teaching these courses. Feedback from the researcher came from several resources related to student assignments. The students elaborated on revising traditional methods of teaching that included technology, as seen from the perspective of the new teachers (Bleicher & Kirkwood-Tucker, 2004).

Bleicher and Kirkwood-Tucker used the design of Berlin and White Integrated Science and Mathematics Model (1994), which support curriculum integration of the subject matter and the Hanvey Model. The researchers also supported their study with individual research related to curriculum and instruction. The article was strengthened by historic research, begun in the 1960s, of developing a worldview into learning models (Bleicher & Kirkwood-Tucker, 2004). The topic of interest is appropriate for educational professionals and students in the field of studies related to education for all levels of learners including undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral learners.

Synthesis

Traditional education has been viewed as a form of preparation training of one's citizens. The classroom environment was one of, do it as the teacher

says and do not question the methods. The constructivist perspective, on the other hand, encourages students to apply what they know while being guided by a teacher. Constructivism is meant to cause the student to develop decision-making skills. The traditional and constructivist perspectives come together is in developing productive citizens (Posner, 2004).

Conclusion

This article was thought provoking in that it explored the advantage of preparing new educators, specifically in the area of elementary education, and of incorporating global ideas into their classroom design and instruction through the use of technology as part of his or her teaching tools. The article used established models to build the foundation of the research. The concept of causing a young learner, in science and social studies coursework, to begin to think on a global level related to the cause and effect of life, is the theme of the research.

Field, S. L., Bauml, M., Lecompte, K., & Alleman, J. (2009). Mexico, our closest neighbor: Three elementary teachers' perspectives. Social Studies, 100(6), 251-259. Retrieved February 1, 2010, from the EBSCO database.

This qualitative research report examined the teaching methods of teacher in different areas of the country teaching a social studies lesson about Mexico. The data collected is from the teacher's perspective. Each of the researchers works in education at the university level. Sherry L. Field is a faculty member at the University of Texas at Austin in the college of education department and Michelle Bauml is also a faculty member at the

University of Texas at Austin in the curriculum of instruction department. Karon LeCompte is with Vanderbilt University in the department of teaching and learning; and Janet Alleman is at Michigan State University with the department of teacher education. The three elementary school teachers in the study were from Michigan, Tennessee, and Texas. Each used different approaches in teaching a traditional social studies lesson about Mexico. This article identified the cultural aspects of why teachers in different parts of the country cover certain topics in their lesson. Global awareness was also a part of the classroom objective (Field, Bauml, Lecompte, & Alleman, 2009).

Different strategies were used and included valued children's literature. The study incorporated the multiple intelligences theory (MI) and guidelines listed from the Council for the Social Studies National Standards (Field et al., 2009). The majority of the researcher's information relates to teacher input and respective state documentation. The topic of interest is appropriate for the educational professional and students in the field of studies related to education. Educators involved in curriculum design and teachers looking to enhance the classroom environment would find the research informative.

Synthesis

The initial reason behind the behavioral perspective was to expand learning in the math and sciences disciplines. The traditional perspective's focus was more about teaching citizenship. Behavioral perspective advocates mastery, where traditional advocates basic understanding (Posner, 2004). The researcher supports understanding, but on a global level (Field et al., 2009).

Conclusion

This article is worthy of note in that it reveals how hidden curriculum in the classroom influences a lesson with regard to a schools location, the demographic of a student population, and a teacher's experiences (Posner, 2004). The research illustrates how a variety of learning strategies can be used to advance a traditional lesson plan. The research further recognizes the significance of developing a lesson that teaches more than one lesson; such as, a lesson that would include differences and self-awareness that focus on a local and on an international perspective, and would also realize the importance of beginning that learning in the elementary school grades (Field et al., 2009).

Gentry, M., Peters, S. J., & Mann, R. L. (2007). Differences between general and talented students' perceptions of their career and technical education experiences compared to their traditional high school experiences. Journal of Advanced Academics 91(4), 372-401. Retrieved February 1, 2010, from the EBSCO database.

This qualitative research study examines full time career and technical education (CTE) as opposed to a traditional high school environment, with students attending the CTE program part-time. Data was collected from interviewing and observing the students. All the researchers are associated with Purdue University. Marcia Gentry is an associate professor in the department of educational studies, director, Gifted Education Resources Institute, and a part of the Educational Psychology and Research Methodology at Purdue; Scott J. Peters received his doctorate from Purdue and is an Assistant Professor of Educational Foundations at the University of

Wisconsin; Rebecca L. Mann is a member of the Purdue University faculty in the Educational Psychology and Research Methodology Program, and Department of Educational Studies. This article examined the student experience attending both a CTE program and traditional high school program. The article focus is on students identified as gifted and other students in the program. The aim of the article was to develop strategies from the student's experience. Increasing the positive experience for high school students was also an aim of the study (Gentry, Peters, & Mann, 2007).

The study is supported by increased test scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) for students who attended a CTE program. Statistics from National Assessment of Vocational Education (2005), the United States Department of Education Office of Vocational and Adult Education (2005), and dropout related information (Gentry, Peters, & Mann, 2007). Much of the researcher's information relates to the student experience and teacher relationship; however, the positive results are lessened by the lack of corroborating evidence. The topic of interest is appropriate for the educational professional and prospective teachers in the field of studies related to

education. Educators involved in curriculum design, alternative education, guidance counselors, and educators looking to enhance the classroom environment.

Synthesis
The article relates to aspects found in the traditional and constructivist perspective. The traditional perspective seeks to address familiar ideals

(Posner, 2004). According to Gentry, Peters, and Mann (2007) students are looking for commonality with their teachers. The constructivist perspective promotes student contribution (Posner, 2004). The CTE educational option supports the constructivist definition, although still allowing for some traditional elements in the learning process (Gentry, Peters, & Mann, 2007).

Conclusion

The article reminds readers of the importance of student input. It explores the themes that are developed for the student feedback. The concepts related to alternative education and gifted students pursuing other avenues toward college are also discussed. The vital role of teachers is highlighted.

Reference

Berlin, D. F., & White, A. L. (1994). The Belin-White integration science and mathematics model. School Science and Mathematics, 94, 2-4.

Bleicher, R. E., & Kirkwood-Tucker, T. F. (2004). Integrating science and social studies teaching methods with a global perspective for elementary preservice teachers. Curriculum and Teaching Dialogue, 6(2), 115-124. Retrieved February 1, 2010, from the EBSCO database.

Field, S. L., Bauml, M., Lecompte, K., & Alleman, J. (2009). Mexico, our closest neighbor: Three elementary teachers' perspectives. Social Studies, 100(6), 251-259. Retrieved February 1, 2010, from the EBSCO database.

Gentry, M., Peters, S. J., & Mann, R. L. (2007). Differences between general and talented students' perceptions of their career and technical education experiences compared to their traditional high school experiences. Journal of

Advanced Academics 91(4), 372-401. Retrieved February 1, 2010, from the EBSCO database.

Gredler, M. E. (2009). Learning and instruction: Theory and practice. Merrill, Pearson

Education, Inc. Retrieved September 31, 2009, from University of Phoenix EBook Collection.

Harris, K. R., Alexander, P. A. (1998). Integrated constructivist education: Challenge and reality.

University of Maryland, College Park Maryland. Educational Psychological Review:

10 (2). Retrieved January 31, 2010, Professional Development Collection Database.

Harzem, P. (2004). Behaviorism for new psychology: What was wrong with behaviorism and what is wrong with it now. Behavior & Philosophy, 32(1). p., 5-12. Retrieved from Research Starters – Education database.

O'Shaughnessy, J. P. (2001). A philosophical basis for constructivist education. Department of Social Foundations of Education, Eastern Michigan University. Retrieved January 28, 2010 From ProQuest Dissertation and Thesis Database.

Posner, G. J. (2004). Analyzing the curriculum (3rd ed.) New York: McGraw Hill. Available from University of Phoenix, University of Phoenix Ebook

Collection, Web site: https://ecampus. phoenix.

edu/content/eBookLibrary2/content/home. aspx

Skaailid, B. 1 (2007) A developmental study concerning the designs and

implementation of constructivist learning environments. Department of

Educational Psychology dissertation, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta

Spring, Canada. Retrieved January 30, 2010, from ProQuest Dissertations

and Theses Database.

Strain, P., & McConnell, S. (1992). Behaviorism in early intervention. Topics

in Early Childhood Special Education, 12(1), 121. Retrieved from Professional

Development Collection database.

Standridge, M. (2002). Behaviorism. In M. Orey (Ed.), Emerging perspectives

on learning, teaching, and technology. Retrieved February 3, 2010, from

http://projects. coe. uga. edu/epltt/