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Use of Constructivist Approach in Higher Education: An Instructors' Observation

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed at exploring the significance of constructivist approach at higher education level. It also examined its effects on social learning of students. The researcher adopted observational method of descriptive research. The participants of the study consisted of students of Master of Arts in Education (M. A. Education) of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur. The researcher taught a course titled, " Qualitative research methods" for three years to three (different M. A. Education) classes. The researcher used constructivist approach and designed activities to involve students in the process of learning. The activities were offered to homogeneous (male-male and female-female) as well as heterogeneous (male-female) groups of students. On the basis of observation, the researcher concluded that students enjoyed working on collaborative and cooperative projects and tasks. They were keen on constructing knowledge by involving themselves in activities and showing their readiness to embrace constructivist approach. Constructivist approach played a significant role in the process of learning to constructing knowledge. Similarly, collaborative and cooperative work developed contribution spirit among students overcoming their shyness and introversion. They became independent and capable of taking initiatives in conducting research projects. They also learnt ethics, social skills and etiquettes in groups. However, some culture related problems like working of female students with their counterparts and shyness of rural students were noted.

KEYWORDS

Constructivism; Knowledge Construction; Higher Education; Social Constructivism; Learning Activities; Productive Knowledge; Social Interactions

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