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Epistemological and Pedagogical Concerns of Constructionism: Relating to the Educational Practices

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ABSTRACT

Today's world may be defined as the world of constructs and all constructs can be categorised into either Mental or Social. Social constructs are creative urge and constructs of Constructionists. Constructionists, focus on knowledge as power, believing that "cultural specifications" exert a real influence on people's lives and takes a stand on the subjugating effect of discourses. In the case of education, perhaps the pivotal concept is that of knowledge itself. Constructionists assert that knowledge is not only constructed by an individual's interaction with his/her own world (or experiences) but also co-created by his/her interaction with other individuals within a specific social community. This implies that both cognitive and social processes are involved in knowledge construction and expansion through the process of reflecting on and sharing their own experiences and others' experiences or ideas as well. Constructionism is also a theory about the pedagogical value of active learning, in a practice that includes a teaching model of mediation as opposed to instruction. Given the socio-historical nature of knowledge, social constructionist curricular practices therefore centre on the collective construction and transmission of meaning, learning and knowledge in recognition that they are shaped by the historic conventions of culture and language. The primary educational challenge of the present century is to replace the traditional focus on the individual student with concerted investments in relational process. It emphasizes on from isolated to relational rationality and from dead curricula to cultural curricula where there is no walls of the classroom as an artificial barrier between educational and cultural processes. This paper studied the Constructionism theory and attempted to interrogate and develop the theoretical and practical propositions of how the epistemological and pedagogical concerns of Constructionism relate to the concepts and practices of education in contemporary world and more specifically how the implementation of Constructionist perspective will bring about desirable changes.

KEYWORDS

Constructionism; Constructionist Epistemology; Constructionist Pedagogy; Relational Curriculum

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