

The Effects of the Constructivist Approach in the Development of Historical Thought

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Abstract

This study assessed the effects of the constructivist approach on the development of historical thinking skill among Senior High School students and recommended a contextualized learning guide and rubric that targets historical thinking skill using a constructivist pedagogical approach. The study specifically determined the level of historical thinking skill among Grade 11 Social Science students of the Senior High School Department in a selected private university before and after the implementation of the constructivist approach in the teaching and learning process and if there is a significant difference between the level of historical thinking skills before and after the pedagogical intervention. This study also looked into the benefits and drawbacks of the constructivist approach as a teaching pedagogy towards the development of historical thinking. Constructivism has benefits and drawbacks at different stages of the learning process. As this is a different method than the more conventional pedagogical styles, consistent practice in the practical teaching strategies that encourage Constructivist learning is important in order to maximize its benefits and convert its constraints into potential. As an outcome of this study, the researcher created a Contextualized Learning Guide that took into account all of the findings from direct observations and focus group discussions.

Keywords: *Constructivism, Development of Historical Thought, Effects of Constructivist Approach, Historical Thinking Skills*

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Introduction

One often considers Social Science to be dull. And not only most students perceive the subject to be dull, but they also fail to see the relevance of Social Science to their everyday lives. Why is this so? Is it because the content is truly dull? Or is it because the instructional methods utilized by the teacher do not engage and inspire students to explore the subject? With the reality of how Social Science is taught in high school, and the model of thinking that our present learners have, the researcher considered it timely and important to address the development of historical thinking and to create a fresh way on how to drive this skill. The purpose of this study was to assess the effects of the Constructivist Approach on the development of historical thinking among Senior High School students at a selected private university. The study specifically addressed the following questions: a. What is the level of historical thinking skill among Grade 11 Social Science students before and after the implementation of the constructivist pedagogical approach? b. Is there a significant difference between the level of historical thinking skill before and after the implementation of the constructivist pedagogical approach? c. What are the benefits and drawbacks of constructivist teaching pedagogy towards the development of historical thinking? And d. What contextualized teaching-learning guide and rubrics may be proposed based from the findings of the study?

Methodology

This study used an explanatory sequential mixed approach with a quantitative and qualitative design to solve the research questions. The quantitative data was collected and analyzed using a standard historical thinking baseline and post assessment instrument and rubric. Following that, qualitative data was collected and analyzed through direct observation and focus group discussions. In addition, the data was analyzed using a quasi-experimental approach. The Explanatory Sequential Mixed Approach is a research approach that explores a research subject by combining qualitative and quantitative data analysis tools. This method is widely utilized in the social sciences, particularly history, to explore complicated phenomena and historical events.

Findings

Baseline Assessment results for 42 Grade 11 students who will take Disciplines and Ideas in Social Sciences. 14 (33.33%) received a Level 1 Beginning level, 18 (42.86%) received a Level 1 Approaching Developing level, 9 (21.42%) received a Level 2 Developing level, and 1 (2.38%)

received a Level 2 Approaching Intermediate level. According to the table above, no responder attained Levels 3 or 4. As it appears on the table, no respondent got a Level 1 Beginning or Level 1 Approaching Developing mark, while most of the respondents are at a Level 2 Approaching Intermediate level (42.86%). While all forty-two learners have moved increments higher than their individual baseline assessment level, it is important to notice that the group generally moved from mostly Level 1 to Level 2, which can be attributed to the pedagogical intervention, where the respondents exhibited collaborative effort, teamwork while manifesting meaningful interaction with historical sources. These data suggest that the constructivist educational intervention enhanced respondents' post-assessment performance. Because of their understanding of their baseline assessment level and the stepwise constructivist procedures utilized during the intervention, respondents were well aware of the tasks to be undertaken to raise their levels.

As a result of this research, a constructivist-based enhanced historical thinking skills learning guide and rubric was developed, as depicted in Figure 1 of the Conceptual Paradigm. All of the data from direct observations and focus group discussions were included into a Contextualized Learning Guide prepared by the researcher. The Enhanced Contextualized Teaching & Learning Guide and Rubric targeting Historical Thinking Skills utilizing a Constructivist Approach resulted from this research. This teaching-learning guide focuses on two main subjects from the subject Disciplines and Ideas in Social Sciences: Political Science (Discipline) and Marxism (Idea). This study guide splits historical thinking tactics into sessions that include constructivist concepts of critical thinking, teamwork, time management, data handling, and data presentation, as well as enhancing understanding and application of Political Science and Marxist principles.

Conclusion

According to the study's findings, the majority of respondents in the baseline assessment are at a Level 1 Beginning level and a Level 1 Approaching Developing level, and in the post-assessment, they are at a Level 2 Approaching Intermediate level. From their baseline to their post evaluation, all responders improved (8-16 points). The constructivist intervention was helpful in developing historical thinking skills since the post assessment was higher than the baseline evaluation.

There is a statistically significant change in historical thinking levels before and after the constructivist pedagogical intervention. Constructivism as a pedagogy for the development of historical thinking is advantageous for learners who have prior knowledge of historical content, who work well in groups and benefit from working and solving problems in groups, advantageous in the sense that the lessons on the skills of sourcing, critical reading, corroboration, and contextualization of sources are not condensed or congested, and advantageous in the sense that there is liberty in the manipulation of the learning experience on historical thinking.

Constructivism also has downsides that are chances for improvement: because information is held by the learner, past knowledge is inherently not leveled, necessitating a differentiated evaluation for each student. Furthermore, because learning is communal, there is a possibility of freeloading and incorrect learning outcomes.

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