

Adam Jiwa

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Communication Instruction in the Communicative Arts

Dr. Baum

Critical Review

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Intro

The purpose of the study “Mapping the Evaluation of Problem-Oriented Pedagogies in Higher Education: A Systematic Literature Review” (Acton, 2019) is a data review of the literature that pertains to the subject of problem-oriented pedagogies and how they have emerged to measure performance for instructors.

As I read the article, I was able to understand where the key points in the data gathering stages needed to be limited because of the number of results that were in the search. Along with that, I was able to see how Acton was able to sort the amount of data that was used. The unspoken theme that I absorbed was that staying organized and sticking to a timetable will make my process of writing easier. I believe the author did a remarkable job of putting together this study.

Article Summary

The article is titled “Mapping the Evaluation of Problem-Oriented Pedagogies in Higher Education: A Systematic Literature Review (Acton, 2019). The author examines how the evaluation of problem-oriented and inquiry-based pedagogies in international universities can influence student-centered learning. The review of literature reveals that current evaluation methods often prioritize qualification-related outcomes, are limited in scale and scope, and often function as demonstrations of performativity rather than as a part of an ongoing improvement cycle (Acton, 2019). The author continues to explain that evaluations of pedagogies that use a multi-method approach would be better to enhance the approaches to education.

In this article, Action uses a mapping review to gather the content needed. First, Acton had limited the number of databases that information would be used. Then the search terms had to be limited. Following that, only articles that were published in the five years prior to the study were

examined. From the 259 articles identified, only 48 were identified for inclusion within the review (Acton, 2019). After screening those 48, Acton divided the articles up from quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods of the studies.

Critical Analysis

Even though this study was more analyzing the data of the number of studies. I was able to read, and most importantly understand the amount of information there is about problem-orientated and inquiry-based pedagogies. The amount of research articles that have been published on the subject display a common need for analysis of pedagogy. Acton continued the study by going further into what was major themes of the studies.

The first point was the “Prioritization of Qualification Outcomes” (Acton, 2019). Acton explains that there is ‘...an emphasis on evidence, outputs, competencies, and impact and an instrumental understanding of teaching effectiveness” (Acton, 2019). This means that instructors are often rated and measured on their classroom impact more than they are in their personal lives outside of the classroom. From my own personal experiences, the most effective instructors that I have known have been able to show students how to balance their studies with their personal time outside of the classroom. Those instructors tend to show people, and students, what they do when they are not in educational environment. Whether they are volunteering, being active within their community, watching sports, or even something as simple as mowing the yard, it is those instructors that are subconsciously becoming role models for their students.

Another takeaway from this study is that problem-based pedagogies are put into place to make students use critical thinking skills. While inquiry-based pedagogies are for students to explore and ask questions. The idea that this journal article had me reflecting on was not necessarily the

research, but how to identify which technique would be used for different situations. Often at times, an instructor will not know what will work best for a student until they have them in class. Along with that idea, each individual student is different in their own learning style, so one might work for one student, another might work for seven other students in the same class. So being adaptable can be a major strength for an educator.

The study addresses a limitation, or weakness in the study, in a form that was surprising to me at first thought. A limitation of this article points out that there is a lack of multi-institution studies. This makes sense to me because of the time frame to conduct a study does not often allow for research to be performed outside of an instructor's university.

Another limitation is the idea that there is a delay between educational experiences, and the impact that can be felt by the student. Often in my life, I have not understood the impact that a teacher or instructor had on me until years later. Acton ends the study by writing, "...evaluation methods used to provide insight into the efficacy of the method and its effect have the potential to enhance and value the substantial possibilities for civic awareness...inherent in the pedagogy." This can be understood the methods can be used to assess the effectiveness of the teaching method but can also be used to improve the possible opportunities of civic awareness within the pedagogical approach.

Application to my Teaching Philosophy

Even though this article was more about the data gathering process, it did provide me with more insight on my own teaching philosophy. For instance, throughout this entire semester I have been focused on the classroom aspect of my future career, that I forget that students will also see me out of the classroom. At this point of my graduate studies, in my reflections, I am understanding

that a good teacher can communicate their goals, policies, how to measure student success, and even their beliefs about teaching. A great teacher will show a student how to be a better person outside of the classroom. I believe that this is another value I need to add to my own teaching philosophy.

References

- Acton. (2019). Mapping the Evaluation of Problem-Oriented Pedagogies in Higher Education: A Systematic Literature Review. *Education Sciences*, 9(4), 269.
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