

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

M A N K A T O



CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING OF PHILOSOPHIES OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

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Presentation to the 2009 Undergraduate Research Conference

Research Question

- ◆ **What types of educational theories and philosophies are dominant among university students and teachers in early childhood education programs in Russia and early childhood education programs in USA?**

(an adaptation from a study by
Madoc-Jones & Gajdamaschko, 2006)

Philosophical Groups

Theorist	Themes (Examples)
Dewey	Education is to equip students for success as citizens and productive work.
Plato	“Excellence” in education should be the most desired aim of the schools.
Rousseau	Education should take into account the individual student’s differences and learning styles.
Vygotsky	Education should encourage the development of logical operations, imagination, self-reflection, emotions, and awareness of one’s own thinking.

36 Philosophical Statements

Theorist	Teacher Role	Ideal Education	Curriculum Choices	Incompatibilities
John Dewey	1, 2	3, 4	5, 6	7, 8, 33
Plato	9, 10	11, 12	13, 14	15, 16, 34
Jean Rousseau	17, 18	19, 20	21, 22	23, 24, 35
Lev Vygotsky	25, 26	27, 28	29, 30	31, 32, 36

Sort Cards Into Categories

Definitely Disagree	Disagree	Some Disagree	Neither	Some Agree	Agree	Definitely Agree
2 cards						2 cards
	4 cards				4 cards	
		7 cards		7 cards		
			10 cards			

Research Sample Characteristics

Regions (n=2), Subjects (n=63)

Characteristics	RU NESU	US MNSU	Total
Male	1	3	4
Female	25	34	59
BA/BS degree	15	10	25
Graduate degree	3	3	6
Total	26	37	63

Research Sample Characteristics

Regions (n=2); Subjects (n=63)

Characteristics	RU NESU	US MNSU	Total
18 – 21 years	1	13	14
22 – 25 years	5	18	23
26 – 30 years	9	1	10
31 – 40 years	8	1	9
41 – 50 years	2	2	4
51 – 60 years	1	2	3
Total	26	37	63

Value of Q-methodology

- ◆ **Studies the meaning behind an individual's behavior**
- ◆ **Correlates persons into clusters instead of scores on tests**
- ◆ **Provides self-understanding by subjects**
- ◆ **Leads to new insights about thought and beliefs**

Process of Q-methodology

- ◆ Create instructions, statement recording form, 36 statements, and a response form
- ◆ Sort statements into rating levels
- ◆ Assign value to each category (1-7)
- ◆ Use SPSS 12.0 for k
- ◆ Examine clusters of subjects for similarities
- ◆ Compare clusters of subjects for similarities and differences
- ◆ Discuss and assign meaning to clusters

Some Examples - Magadan

Cluster	N	Agree	Disagree
Group 1	10	#2: Teacher should be role model of values, beliefs, & norms. (Dewey)	# 9:Teacher should be an authority & an expert in the relevant subject. (Plato)
Group 2	12	Elements of Dewey, Rousseau, & Vygotsky.	# 34: A priority of education should be excellence among those most able to attain it. (Plato)
Group 3	1	#3: Education should equip students with skills for success by sharing norms and values of peers. (Dewey)	#16: A higher proportion of education should be provided for academically advanced students. (Plato)
Group 4	3	1 each for Dewey, Plato, Rousseau, & Vygotsky.	2 each for Dewey, Plato, Rousseau, & Vygotsky.

Some Examples - Mankato

Cluster	N	Agree	Disagree
Group 1	5	#17: Teachers must make teaching methods conform to the nature of student's learning. (Rousseau)	#14: Literature, history, sciences, mathematics, Latin, Greek, & art history should receive most curriculum time. (Plato)
Group 2	18	#22: Schools should differentiate the curriculum –one education plan cannot fit everyone. (Rousseau)	#9: Teacher should be an authority & an expert in the relevant subject. (Plato)
Group 3	8	#18: Teachers should merely facilitate the child's own active discovery. (Rousseau)	# 34: A priority of education should be excellence among those most able to attain it. (Plato)
Group 4	9	#24: Each child's individual potential should guide the teacher's activities. (Rousseau)	#13: "Excellence" by teaching academic programs should be the desired aim of schools. (Plato)

Initial Data Analysis

- ◆ Overall, Russia subjects seemed to prefer philosophies of Dewey and Vygotsky.
- ◆ Overall, American subjects seemed to prefer Rousseau.
- ◆ Subjects in both countries did not agree with statements based on Plato.

Conclusion

- ◆ **There are differences in educational philosophies among and between teachers in early childhood education programs in Russia and early childhood education programs in USA.**

Lessons learned

- ◆ The word “college” means something different in Russia than it means in the U.S.
- ◆ The different styles of teaching at the college level here in the U.S. verse in Russia

Recommendations

- ◆ **Continue and expand the cross-cultural university partnerships that involve pre-service teachers so they can expand their understanding of the teaching philosophies in other cultures – which may appear among immigrant families.**
- ◆ **Encourage discussion among pre-service and in-service teachers about theoretical differences and decision-making about instruction and policies.**

Acknowledgements

- ◆ Dr. Elizabeth Sandell, Dr. Olga Klypa and Professor Elena Shkatova
- ◆ International Studies Committee in the College of Education, MSU, Mankato
- ◆ Students, teachers and administrators in schools and universities in Mankato and in Magadan
- ◆ MSU, Mankato Undergraduate Research Conference sponsors and planners
- ◆ North-Eastern State University administrators
- ◆ Senator Amy Klobuchar
- ◆ Our friends and families

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Thank you!!

Questions?