

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED IN THE LEARNING PROCESS OF TEACHERS HANDLING SOCIAL STUDIES SUBJECT

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The starting point of meaningful learning is through active learning which is often contrasted in rote learning. In the case of social studies, meaningful learning responds on relevant acquisitions for the student, for their further study and for professional activity, acquisitions that allow lifelong learning and active citizenship.

One of the challenges that the teachers encounter when they are trying to make meaningful learning is that they relate it with the old practices such as: a.) ignore to the large extent the student's real needs' their specific/individual features; b.) design teaching from the perspective of information, which involves primary focus on teaching and narrow perspective on learning that merely targets the learning about...; c.) there is an abstract learning without contextualization; d.) teachers were still into passive learning (Tesileanu, 2014).

The curriculum of social studies is described as problematic in many ways. There is a distinction between the curriculum and the teaching strategies implemented by the teachers. There are some studies shows that the role of the teacher is a instructional decision makers and not as a curriculum creators. Social studies is not all about implementing activities set by the policy makers but rather teachers should be actively engaged in the process. Social studies is not a passively learning that simply absorbs someone else's conception about the world but rather an active learning where the students personally create their own learning and understanding about what is being presented to them (Ross, 2018) Another factor that can be entailed with the curriculum is the limited amount of time it has to cover numerous topics or lesson included in the

curriculum. Time and physical conditions should be allocated well to have an effective education (Kece, 2014).

The ideology of neutrality is widely present and visible in teaching practices in schools is sustained by theories of knowledge and conceptions of democracy that constrain rather than widen civic participation in society and functions to eliminate the ideological consequences of so-called neutral schooling, teaching and curriculum. Neutrality, objectivity and unbiasedness is also a good thing when it comes to schools and teaching. On the contrary, holding a neutral stance in a conflict can be considered as a sign of ignorance in an issue. People often misled to think that anyone with a strong view about an issue cannot be unprejudiced. The key to it is on how views are justified. Wherein, it will be a response on what does social studies trying to imply which is to prepare young people with the knowledge, values and skills to actively participate in the society.

In terms of coursebooks, according to some studies, most of the reference books focused on the exam questions rather than its functions. It is also lacking in terms of valuing which is also same in the teaching process. Concepts, values and skills are the headstones of social studies program but it seems like it is missing. Teaching skills are problematic for the teachers. Their focused where diverted into covering all the topics in the curriculum since it is its function. The result is that, there is also lack of interdisciplinary approach (Kece, 2014).

References:

Tesileanu, A. (2014) Challenges to Meaningful learning in Social Studies- the key competences as an opportunity to student's active participation.

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