
The Role of Social Constructivism in Shaping Educational Practices in the Philippines

Fely V. Alajar*, Dianara Lyka D. Aranas, Jurich M. Faunillan***,
Iris April L. Ramirez**** & Gladys S. Escarlos*******

, **, *, & ***** Graduate Student, Central Mindanao University
***** Faculty, Central Mindanao University*

ABSTRACT

This study reviews the role of social constructivism on the Philippine educational practices focusing in the K to 12 curriculum. This study examines how social interaction and cultural contexts shape the students' learning experiences. By reviewing recent studies, the researchers identified the key constructivist practices being employed in the classroom such as cooperative learning and the integration of locally employed practices in planning the lesson. Findings of the study indicates that these approaches can significantly enhance the student's engagement, comprehension and performance academically. Also, the study highlights Magatayo's Instructional Framework as an effective model in facilitating the knowledge co-construction of students. Recommendations for educators includes an ongoing professional development focusing in teachers culturally responsive teaching approaches, curriculum adaptation reflecting on local contexts, and increased community involvement in the teaching and learning process. The research also highlights the potential of Social Constructivism in creating a well inclusive and effective learning environments that resonates with the diverse backgrounds of Filipino learners.

KEYWORDS: *Educational practices, K to 12 curriculum, Magatayo's instructional framework Social constructivism,*

INTRODUCTION

Socio-psychological theories play a crucial role in shaping educational practices by highlighting the interplay between social factors and psychological processes in learning. In the Philippines, where diverse cultural backgrounds and social dynamics significantly impact education, these theories impart important insights for educators seeking to enhance learning outcomes. The application of socio-psychological theories in Philippine classrooms has gained attention, particularly with the implementation of the K to 12 curriculum. This curriculum fosters active learning and collaboration among learners, aligning with constructivist principles that view learners as active participants in their education.

For instance, Social Constructivism is an important idea in education that focuses on how people learn through social interactions and cultural experiences. Instead of just receiving information from teachers, learners actively build their own understanding by working with others. This approach is especially relevant in the Philippines, where diverse cultures and social backgrounds shape how learners learn. As the education system evolves, especially

with the new K to 12 curriculum, it is crucial for teachers to use Social Constructivism to make learning more effective.

Several studies illustrate how Social Constructivism can be applied effectively in Philippine classrooms. For example, a study by Pimentel and Abenes (2024) revealed that teachers who used collaborative projects in Junior High School Social Studies classes helped learners feel empowered to share their ideas and learn from each other. In health sciences education, another study found that using social constructivist strategies led to better learner engagement and understanding compared to traditional teaching methods. Learners enjoyed classes where they could converse concepts together rather than just memorize facts (Abiasen & Reyes, 2021). Additionally, a program focused on environmental science used hands-on activities to teach complex topics, resulting in better understanding and enthusiasm among elementary school students (Arioder, Quintana & Dagamac, 2020).

Using Social Constructivism in Philippine education has many advantages for improving learning outcomes. First, encouraging cooperation among learners helps them develop social skills while deepening their understanding of subjects. Second, engaging learners in discussions about real-life issues encourages critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Third, culturally responsive teaching methods make all learners feel valued and included, which boosts motivation and participation. Finally, providing training for teachers on constructivist strategies equips them with the tools needed to implement these approaches successfully.

It offers valuable insights into how social interactions and cultural contexts shape learning processes. In the Philippines, where education is increasingly focusing on student-centered approaches, this theory can help in enhancing teaching effectiveness and learner engagement. By promoting collaboration, encouraging critical thinking, and supporting diverse learners through culturally relevant practices, educators can create dynamic learning environments that prepare students for success in a connected world.

However, despite its advantages, the application of social constructivism in the Philippines faces challenges. There remains a gap in research regarding its practical implementation and the specific strategies employed by teachers (Dela Cruz & Reyes, 2021). Many educators may inadvertently use constructivist techniques without fully understanding their theoretical underpinnings or effectiveness. Addressing these gaps through targeted professional development and research may further strengthen the role of social constructivism in Philippine education.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Social constructivism is rooted from the works of theorists such as Lev Vygotsky (1978), emphasizes the importance of social interactions and cultural contexts in the learning process. This theoretical framework posits that knowledge is not merely transmitted from teacher to student but is actively constructed by learners through their experiences and interactions with others. In the context of Philippine education, social constructivism has been increasingly recognized as a vital approach, particularly within the K to 12 curriculum, which aims to foster more engaging and meaningful learning experiences. In the Philippine educational context, social constructivism aligns with the K to 12 curriculum, which encourages student-centered learning approaches that foster critical thinking and collaboration (Magtayo, 2024).

In social constructivism, language plays a crucial role in shaping thought processes and understanding. Vygotsky believed that language is not just a tool for communication but also a fundamental part of how we think and make sense of the world. Through conversation and dialogue, individuals are able to articulate their thoughts, negotiate meanings, and construct knowledge together. This perspective underscores the idea that learning is a social activity, where discussions and interactions are essential for cognitive growth.

The implications of social constructivism extend into educational practices. Educators who adopt this framework focus on creating learning environments that encourage collaboration among learners. Techniques such as group discussions, peer teaching, and cooperative learning are commonly used to facilitate interactions that enhance understanding. By promoting dialogue and teamwork, teachers may help learners develop critical thinking skills and a deeper comprehension of the subject matter.

Finally, social constructivism recognizes that cultural contexts significantly influence learning. The values, beliefs, and practices within a culture shape how individuals interpret experiences and acquire knowledge. This means that education should be responsive to the diverse backgrounds of learners, allowing for multiple perspectives to be shared and understood. By acknowledging these cultural influences, educators can create more inclusive and effective learning environments that reflect the realities of their learners' lives.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of the study is to review the relevant philosophical literature on social constructivism, with an emphasis on how it shape educational practices in the Philippines. Specifically, this discussion seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How has social constructivism influenced the K to 12 curriculum in the Philippines?
2. What are the common social constructivist teaching practices employed by educators in Philippine classrooms?
3. What evidence exists regarding the effectiveness of social constructivism in improving student performance in Philippine education?
4. In what ways can social constructivist teaching strategies be adapted to fit the cultural context of Filipino students?

SCOPE AND LIMITATION

This literature review focused on the influence of social constructivism on educational practices in the Philippines, particularly within Philippine education system. The review will examine the perspectives and experiences of educators, learners, and educational policymakers involved in the Philippine education system. The research encompassed various regions across the Philippines, including both urban and rural contexts, to provide a comprehensive understanding of how social constructivist principles are applied in different educational environments.

The literature reviewed will primarily include studies published between 2019 and 2024 This time frame is selected to ensure that the findings reflect current trends and practices in education, as well as recent developments in social constructivist theory. Key themes

explored will include collaborative learning strategies, the role of teacher-student interactions, and the integration of cultural contexts in educational practices influenced by social constructivism.

Definition of Terms

Social Constructivism is the study of how social relationships and cultural environment shape learning and the process of constructing knowledge. That is, the theory implies that learning is not merely something assumed but is also dependent upon relationships and environments in which learning occurs.

The Influence Of Social Constructivism In The K To 12 Curriculum In The Philippines

The influence of social constructivism on pedagogical approaches and teaching strategies has been immense since its integration into the K to 12 curriculum in the Philippines. Social constructivism states that learners construct their own understanding through interaction with others and their environment. Learner-centered pedagogies, such as constructivist, inquiry-based, and collaborative methods, are the emphasis of the K to 12 curriculum as defined in Republic Act 10533. This transition encourages children to be critical thinkers as well as problem solvers rather than being mere memory retainers; hence the shift from old ways brings them to an interactive relevance in the learning experience (Magtayo, 2024; DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2016).

In practice, social constructivist principles have led to redefining the roles played by both teachers and students in the classroom. Teaching is no longer seen only as a source of information but as a facilitation process that guides students' exploration and understanding of given concepts (Abiasen & Reyes, 2021). This way encourages active participation and collaboration among learners, where they share ideas and learn from each other. For instance, Filipino teachers have managed to integrate discussion and project-based learning activities that suit the constructivist approach (Magtayo, 2024). There has not, however, been a fundamental shift since there are inequities in the readiness of the teachers and institutional support.

Additionally, research indicates that even though the K to 12 curriculum offers a footing for the integration of social constructivism, teachers also require professional development to bring it into practice (Henrikus et al., 2020). Teachers need both theoretical as well as practical knowledge about the constructivist approach to implement them correctly. As pointed out by many theorists, promoting an enabling climate towards teacher autonomy and ongoing reflection for teaching practice is vital toward the development of this agenda to promote student motivation as well as learning (Kapur, 2019; Presto, 2023). Therefore, even as the K to 12 curriculum is a significant accomplishment toward embracing social constructivism, it will depend, in fact, on such extensive training for teachers plus institutional support.

Common Social Constructivist Teaching Practices Employed By Educators in Philippine Classrooms

Teachers in the Philippine classroom have embraced various social constructivist teaching methods that connote collaboration and interaction. The most important one is cooperative learning, whereby opportunities are created to increase learning by students working collaboratively. For example, the Magtayo Instructional Framework clarifies how Junior

High School Social Studies teachers use group activities, which include group dynamics and brainstorming, to build knowledge construction among the students. This is similar to Vygotsky, who stresses social engagement as a means for cognitive development (Magtayo, 2024). There is also think-pair-share technique whereby the technique allows students to voice their thoughts to help them understand better through their encounter with colleagues (Magtayo, 2024).

There is another common practice of incorporating feedback mechanisms into the teaching process. Effective feedback helps the learner to overcome error and develop better understanding and appreciation of the content learned. Two-way feedback adds more value to a learning environment for both student and teacher. Students are likely to accept self-assessment and peer review with it, which enables them to strive for excellence in performance- that is, improvement rather than mere maintenance (Magtayo, 2024). This kind of feedback not only enhances performance but further contributes to forming a favorable classroom environment where students feel valued and motivated to actively participate (Bognot, 2020).

Lastly, is group dynamics in the context of social constructivist practices. Teachers are concerned with ensuring that their tasks allow children to assume greater ownership in their learning in an essential way of becoming more competent in the required social skills. For instance, doing group projects, on several occasions, causes increased participation because of collaborating students working through tasks that often demand much critical thinking and problem-solving (Arioder et al., 2020). Evidence that the methods work can be found in the improvement in outcomes for students in nearly every subject area, a development that implies that where these social constructivist methods are used well by the instructor, they have been very effective in improving the student experience through interaction and learning.

Effectiveness of Social Constructivism In Improving Student Performance in Philippine Education

A study conducted by Dominado (2020) has used quasi-experimental designs that determine the effect of the constructivist approach on the eleventh-grade students' study of Philippine Politics and Governance. The results show the experimental group's improvement after using constructivist strategies. It is observed that the mean scores grew from 10.78 to 27.22 points, hence showing that constructs are powerful strategies for creating engagement and academic outcomes for students. This is further supported by previous studies by Khurshid and Ansari (2012), who stated that present teaching methods are better as compared to the old because they yield better performance from students. The study concluded that constructivism not only improved scores academically but also affected the attitude of the student positively toward learning.

Further support for the approach of social constructivism could be found in research done on social studies education. In the recent research brought forth in the Magtayo Instructional Framework in 2024, it was explained that when using a social constructivist method of cooperative learning and group dynamics, students were noted to be more involved with mastering the material being learned in social studies. The strategies created an environment wherein students could actively co-construct knowledge, leading to improved academic performance and civic competencies. This becomes relevant in the context of the K to 12

reforms in the Philippines, wherein the curriculum promotes more interactive and student-centered learning environments (DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2016).

Bognot (2023) also examined the employability of constructivist learning approaches in special education where it was found that a cohort of students who learned by using collaborative and interactive modes of learning had a dramatically higher score than those who were being taught through traditional methods of instruction. Generally, these findings indicated class participation to be better, comprehension in class to be enhanced and examination results also enhanced where students were taught by using this constructivist approach. This body of literature collectively underscores the potential of social constructivism in enhancing educational outcomes in the Philippines and calls for wider application in other subjects in promoting deeper learning experiences.

The Adaption of Social Constructivist Teaching Strategies to Fit The Cultural Context of Filipino Students

Adapting the social constructivist teaching strategies to the culture of Filipino students would mean recognizing and including local values, experiences, and dynamics in the process of learning. Research also underlines how a collaborative learning environment encourages students to work in a group with the aim of reflecting on their cultural aspects. For instance, through the Magtayo Instructional Framework, there is scope for expression, collaborative work, and correction of misconceptions, thus giving students a chance to co-construct knowledge in ways that resonate with their lived experiences. This framework has been shown to enhance engagement and understanding among students because it makes instructional practices more consonant with the cultural context of the Filipino learner.

Such cultural relevance adaptations entail incorporating the use of stories or illustrations in lesson planning in ways that make knowledge accessible to the students while enabling the application of common or personal experiences. In addition, a cooperative learning method will foster an interactive atmosphere, using techniques such as think-pair-share and group presentations, which enhances learning in a peer-to-peer process that is reflected through the communal values exhibited within the Filipino culture. Studies indicate that if students can see themselves in the curriculum, through their cultural references, then they will participate more and take more ownership of the learning process. Furthermore, comprehension is enhanced, and social skills are built because students interact and learn from one another (Bognot, 2020).

Finally, teachers will play a key role in facilitating this culturally responsive constructivist approach. They need to be equipped to craft inclusive contexts that appreciate and celebrate diversity and encourage student dialogue. Ongoing professional training in culturally responsive teaching can support these practitioners in the development and application of these strategies appropriately. The social constructivist practice becomes more pertinent and impactful in a classroom context where teachers create an environment marked by respect and inclusion for Filipino culture.

Summary

As presented from the discussions, Social Constructivism plays a vital role in shaping the education practices in the Philippines. It emphasizes on how these theories work between social factors and psychological processes in learning in which it is crucial in a diverse

educational landscape. Accordingly, the implementation of the K to 12 curriculum provides a further picture of the importance of active learning and collaboration among students. The research findings indicated that constructivist approach is relevant in collaborative projects and culturally relevant teaching strategies leading to an improved student engagements, comprehension, and overall academic performance. To clearly synthesize the context of the studied theory, the Magtayo Instructional Framework is used to be presented as a model that facilitated the co-construction of knowledge through group activities and peer interactions aligning it with the communal values of Filipino culture.

CONCLUSION

The application of Social Constructivism theories in the Educational System Philippines has shown positive results in enhancing the outcomes of the institution. By this, educators will have more engagements in creating a more inclusive and effective environment for learning. Based on the evidences, it is suggested that students can better view their cultural references in the curriculum through actively engaging themselves in social interactions and collaborations. Also, by applying such approach in teaching, students can take ownership of their learning. This approach not only improves students' academic success but also builds essential social skills among the learners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Professional Development:** Educators should maintain or join developmental training that would enhance their culturally responsive teaching techniques and strategies to effectively implement the social constructivism approach in the classrooms. Trainings attended should focus on incorporating inclusive contexts that celebrates diversity of student's dialogue.
2. **Curriculum Development:** School administrators should incorporate local cultural references and collaboration for further learning opportunities. This can be done achieved by integrating activities that will allow the learners to share stories, illustrate their cultural context and share real-life experience reflected into their daily lesson plans.
3. **Research and Evaluation:** Further studies should be conducted to examine the impact of constructivist teaching strategies of teachers in a long-term application of the theory on student outcomes across various subjects. This will help in refining teaching practices that will ensure that the diverse needs of Filipino learners.
4. **Community Involvement:** Schools should collaborate and engage with local communities to gather insights and resources that will help enrich the learning experience of the learners. This involves the parents and community members in the educational process helping them enhance the relevance and applicability of the curriculum.

By implementing these recommendations, the Philippine educational system can develop a positive change in their educational landscape highlighting the potential of socio-

psychological theories in improving the learning outcomes and exercising a more engaging and culturally aware student body.

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