Social constructivism is a theory of knowledge in sociology and communication theory that examines the knowledge and understandings of the world that are developed jointly by individuals. This theory assumes that understanding, significance, and meaning are developed in coordination with other human beings. The most important elements in this theory are (a) the assumption that human beings rationalize their experience by creating a model of the social world and the way that it functions and, (b) the belief in language as the most essential system through which humans construct reality (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2009).

Vygotsky (1978) states that cognitive growth occurs first on a social level, and then it can occur within the individual. To make sense of others and construct knowledge on such a social level allows learners to relate themselves to circumstances. (Roth, 2000). Roth also states that the roots of individuals' knowledge are found in their interactions with their surroundings and other people before their knowledge is internalized. According to Derry (1999) and McMahon (1997), culture and context in understanding what occurs in society and knowledge construction based on this understanding are emphasized in social constructivism.

Social construction is the process in which people and groups interacting in a social system create, over time, concepts or mental representations of each other's actions, and that these concepts eventually become habituated into reciprocal roles played by the actors in relation to each other. When these roles are made available to other members of society to enter into and play out, the reciprocal interactions are said to be institutionalized. In the process, meaning is embedded in society. Knowledge and people's conceptions (and beliefs) of what reality is become embedded in the institutional fabric of society. Reality is therefore said to be socially constructed (Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman 1966).

Social constructivism is a learning theory that highlights the significance of social interactions and the role of culture in creating knowledge. Social constructivism considers learning as an active process (Lev Vygotsky 1978).

Social constructivism emphasizes the importance of culture and context in understanding what occurs in society and constructing knowledge based on this understanding (Derry, 1999; McMahon, 1997).

Social constructivism is a sociological theory of knowledge according to which human development is socially situated and knowledge is constructed through interaction with others (McKinley, J. 2015).

According to Social constructivist approach, learning occurs ideally not to solve certain and open with a complex when students encounter with real world problems. When students encounter with a common aim, they study concerted for conclusion and they take common responsibility on key decision. Teacher's role orientates learners to solve these problems for exploring more than one direction. Such a role is contrast with instruction situation directly from true solution by students (Gruba and Snedergaard, 2001).

The implementation of social constructivist approach (applications): 1) Peer communication with more skilled students, 2) Encouragement of students into the community of the particular academic discipline or profession, 3) Usage of suitable and authentic tasks, 4) Multiple point of views are seen valuable, 5) Solution of problems related with real world, 6) Cooperative during learning process and 7) Opportunity for students to publicly share their work, revise their work based in social critiques, and reflect on what they have learned with others.

In social constructivist approach, solving problem of learners, analysis, syntheses, critical thinking are important to have high level knowledge and skills (Murphy, 1997). Many educators are more efficient when teaching learning situation occurs in social constructivist approach.

PERSPECTIVES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

The following are the characteristics of social constructivist teaching and learning:

i. Goals and objectives are derived by the student or in negotiation with the teacher or system.

ii. Teachers serve in the role of guides, monitors, coaches, tutors and facilitators.

iii. Activities, opportunities, tools and environments are provided to encourage metacognition, self-analysis - regulation, - reflection & awareness.

iv. The student plays a central role in mediating and controlling learning.

v. Learning situations, environments, skills, content and tasks are relevant, realistic, authentic, and represent the natural complexities of the ‘real world’.

vi. Primary sources of data are used in order to ensure authenticity and real-world complexity.

vii. Knowledge construction and not reproduction is emphasized.

viii. This construction takes place in individual contexts and through social negotiation, collaboration and experience.

ix. The learner’s previous knowledge constructions, beliefs and attitudes are considered in the knowledge construction process.

x. Problem-solving, higher-order thinking skills and deep understanding are emphasized.

xi. Errors provide the opportunity for insight into students’ previous knowledge constructions.

xii. Exploration is a favored approach in order to encourage students to seek knowledge independently and to manage the pursuit of their goals.

xiii. Learners are provided with the opportunity for apprenticeship learning in which there is an increasing complexity of tasks, skills and knowledge acquisition.

xiv. Knowledge complexity is reflected in an emphasis on conceptual relatedness and interdisciplinary learning.

xv. Collaborative and cooperative learning are favored in order to expose the learner to alternative viewpoints.

xvi. Scaffolding is facilitated to help students perform just beyond the limits of their ability.

xvii. Assessment is authentic and interwoven with teaching.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS BASED ON SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM APPROACH

Instructional models based on the social constructivist perspective stress the need for collaboration among learners and with practitioners in the society (Lave & Wenger, 1991; McMahon, 1997). Lave and Wenger (1991) assert that a society’s practical knowledge is situated in relations among practitioners, their practice, and the social organization and political economy of communities of practice. For this reason, learning should involve such knowledge and practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Gredler, 1997).

Social constructivist approaches can include reciprocal teaching, peer collaboration, cognitive apprenticeships, problem-based instruction, web quests, anchored instruction and other methods that involve learning with others (Shunk, 2000).

a) Reciprocal Teaching

Where a teacher and 2 to 4 students form a collaborative group and take turns leading dialogues on a topic. Within the dialogues, group members apply four cognitive strategies:

- Questioning
- Summarizing
- Clarifying
- Predicting

This creates a ZPD in which students gradually assume more responsibility for the material and through collaboration, forge group expectations for high-level thinking, and acquire skills vital for learning and success in everyday life.

b) Cooperative Learning

More expert peers can also encourage children’s development along as long as they adjust the help they provide to fit the less mature child’s ZPD.

c) Situated Learning

Situated learning proponents argue that knowledge cannot be taught in an abstract manner, and that to be useful, it must be situated in a relevant or “authentic” context.

d) Anchored Instruction

The anchored instruction approach is an attempt to help students become more actively engaged in learning by situating or anchoring instruction around an interesting topic. The learning environments are designed to provoke the kinds of thoughtful engagement that helps students develop effective thinking skills and attitudes that contribute to effective problem solving and critical thinking. Anchored instruction emphasizes the need to provide students with opportunities to think about and work on problems and emphasizes group or collaborative problem solving.

e) Other instructional methods

- Encourage team working and collaboration
- Promote discussion or debates
- Set up study groups for peer learning
- Allocate a small proportion of grades for peer assessment and train students in the process and criteria
- Show students models of good practice in essay writing and project work
- Be aware of our own role as a model of ‘the way things are done...’ be explicit about our professional values and the ethical dimensions of our subject

CONCLUSION

Social constructivism encourages the learner’s own version of the truth that is influenced by his or her background, culture or knowledge of world. Social constructivism which assumes that cognitive growth first occurs on a social level and later individual level, emphasizes the role of ZPD (Zone of proximal development). The learner’s background also helps to shape the knowledge and truth that the learner creates, discovers and attains in the learning process. Social constructivist teaching approaches emphasize reciprocal teaching, peer collaboration, cognitive apprenticeships, problem-based instruction, web quests, anchored instruction, and other methods that involve learning with others. Instructional models based on the social constructivist perspectives highlight the need for collaboration among learners and with practitioners in the society.

REFERENCES