Metacognitive Problem-Solving Inequalities in Education

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Abstract

Educational reform movements face systemic inequalities globally. This failure to nurture the neurodiversity of all learners is directly related to egocentric tendencies towards superiority and a deep, and often hidden, history of eugenic educational practices. Cross-disciplinary scientific research reveals that learning can be clearly defined as a universal process of problem-solving, which can form a cyclical, culture free pedagogy/curriculum that can be widely disseminated and retrofitted into educational institutions. By consciously and directly teaching Metacognitive Problem-Solving (MPS), students can develop their ability to reflect on their own learning and situations, making finding the solution to these problems part of the curriculum. Systems to support students can be developed utilizing MPS to address impediments to learning caused by individual traits, environmental disparities, or cultural inequalities. MPS changes how both the student and the teacher approach the learning relationship, supporting their ability to address learning problems, inequalities, and implicit biases, while building the self-regulatory skills needed to face the challenges that impede development. MPS can be used to address the special needs of all learners, supporting the work of educators and educational institutions themselves using a universal problem–solving principle. This paper reviews the research and presents both pilot and existing programs that utilize the ideas of MPS to support students actively problem-solving their own learning impediments demonstrating how systems of support using this model can enhance the learning potential of all learners while addressing the inequalities that have historically impeded the development of educational reform.

Keywords: Educational reform, metacognition, self-regulation, problem-solving, student empowerment, adaptive learning