



A Prospective Primary School Teachers Confidence in Teaching Disciplinary History: A Case of Finland

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Abstract

The main objective of this article review is to evaluate the existing literature on disciplinary history teaching. The evaluators choose one reputable article written by well-known Professor Rantala and PhD student Khawaja, entitled "Prospective Primary School Teachers' Confidence in Teaching Disciplinary History." The reviewers of this article chose this article because both authors raised a very influential and needed curriculum issue. I have been devoted to going through all the points in constrictive forms, starting with introducing the article, surveying previous research, summarizing results, and discussion. Finally, the evaluator provides his personal view on how it applies and provides questions to the article writers.

Key words: Disciplinary history, Student-teachers, Finland.

1. Introduction

As per the instruction given, I have been dedicated to going through all the points. After critically understanding the issue in the article, I was able to point out the constructive efforts of both authors in the article and their limitations in doing research. The title of the article is "Prospective Primary School Teachers' Confidence in Teaching Disciplinary History." This article was written in Finland in 2021 by Rantala, J and

Khawaja, A. Professor Rantala has published articles on history education, and history curriculum. Khawaja is currently a PhD student and has published some articles.

In the main body of research, the authors described since the 1990s across Europe, a new discipline called disciplinary history teaching (whose focal point is historical knowledge and the way it has been constructed) emerged. This resulted in most European countries putting emphasis on adopting disciplinary history teaching in their national curriculum. Also, Finland's National Core Curriculum calls attention to the new emerging science of historical thinking, which is disciplinary history teaching adopted in the same period. On defining the research problem authors stated, due to a shortage of time in teaching and learning, most teachers failed to make good use of disciplinary history teaching in the classroom, in similar way in-service history teacher education in Finland is challenged by inconsistency and a non-organized way of training disciplinary history teaching. In order to fill this gap, both authors require practical implementation of disciplinary history teaching. They totally decided to use 121 trainers of primary history teachers, particularly first and second years, who took the history didactics course at Helsinki University. Researchers choose 20 student-teachers for in-depth interviews and 8 students for post-interviews from a total of 121 student-teachers. The primary objective of article is to assess new trainers of primary school history teachers "confidence in teaching disciplinary history".

Previous research was done by Fordham (2012) on the new emerging disciplinary history in England. The main participants in the research are history teachers who are subject specialists, typically those who have first and post-graduate degrees. Fordham in the review literature shows that most history teachers had problems with knowledge of disciplinary history teaching. The leading question of study is "what understandings are required of how history teachers operate in order for the implementation of such a change to be possible." This research finding differed from Rantala and Khawaja's study by arguing that in accepting disciplinary history teaching, teachers should have

knowledge in a temporal issue (teachers engage with what has previously been written) and social relation (teachers relate to the disciplinary community). Such an idea has important implications for teachers of history who must engage with that academic discipline when designing lessons for their pupils. Fordham also emphasized the importance of experience in disciplinary history training for subject specialists.

In a similar study conducted by Tambyah (2017) in Australia, researcher via case study assessed five Queensland teachers in single secondary school through interviews, observations, and FGD. The research objective is to investigate the problem of understanding and changing disciplinary knowledge. Research finds middle school classrooms where teachers are not necessarily qualified or experienced in history, most of the time, they teach factual content and lack the awareness skills to teach subjects. Tambyah argues that in order to teach skill-based history at school, all primary teachers, including beginning teachers, should have a good understanding of the use of varieties of teaching strategies and when preparing the objective of disciplinary history, it should be equally with the scope of all pupils' ability. A side, Tambyah recommended that teacher education at colleges and university governments should provide disciplinary history teaching knowledge during pre-service teacher training programs.

Another good justification of research made into disciplinary teaching history has been offered by Rautiainen et al., (2019) study conducted in Finland examining the objectives and practices of disciplinary history, the research question is how, in more than twenty years (mid 1990s) since the changes in curriculum objectives were made, general upper secondary school teachers have come to value the curriculum objectives of history teaching and how these have impacted their teaching. The data collection instrument was collected through a semi-structured survey from total of 151 teachers who taught for ten years at upper secondary schools. Findings of the study reveals new move of Finland's national history curriculum particularly emphasize that objectives of teaching historical skills are still challenged by old views most teachers relying on

content based and traditional methods of teaching. The authors argue that skill-based history teaching to be effective at classroom government of Finland should focusing matriculation tests. Writers as well advocated for long-term in-service training as well as mutual friend and age-mate support among senior secondary school teachers. In addition to these, researchers also underlined the call for an in-depth study of history teaching in senior secondary schools.

2. Summarize Research questions, Methods, Results and Discussions

The writers of the article explore the following general research question on their word put as "How confidence do prospective teachers feel themselves to teach disciplinary history after a course which focused particularly on teaching historical thinking." In the Methodology part employed even so, the writers didn't state the method used apparently on the article they may use survey design and qualitative approach. The literature section is supported by excerpts from books, reputable papers, articles, and journals written by academics.

The writers of the article collect data through in-depth interviews related to pre-course and essay writing for the purpose of gaining answers from student-teachers' views on varieties of teaching strategies. Interims of the population of the study, researchers choose a total of 121 student-teachers for the pre-examination, finally make a decision to selecting 20 students-teachers via evaluating background data with current achievement. The authors again did not put a sampling technique in vividly manner, but it seems they used a purposive sampling method. Data gathering tools were in-depth interviews and written questionnaires with a brief discussion on how to use research methods and data gathering tools. The data analysis technique is an inductive coding strategy related to grounded theory and analysis stage supported by tables, percentage with sequential manners of qualitative approach.

When proceed to the results, the authors conducted a pre-course survey by categorizing students into eleven groups and proposing an interview question about

the purpose of primary school history teaching and the result showed most student-teachers had an orientation to teaching content knowledge in history education. In the time of course, writers orders students to write essays about the history teaching they have received from primary to senior schools, as well as the knowledge and skills that middle school teachers should have in order to instruct history subject, and most students' answers history education is one of the least preferred subject. After essay writing, researchers conducted post-course in-depth interviews and the result showed a lot of students -teachers prioritized content knowledge of history rather than combining it with skills based.

In the discussion part, researchers build up their research with several studies and make an analysis of the national frame work of the Finnish history curriculum. Lastly, the article writers point out the following major findings that are used for teaching disciplinary history teaching. First, they introduced a "discipline-heavy approach". The main aim of instructing history subjects at primary schools is to build up vital information processing skills. Second, researchers introduced the "discipline-lite approach" to support the idea of accepting skill-based history teaching and improving through training or work experience. Third, the implementation of disciplinary history teaching at schools might face some constraints, such as some teachers' worries about the availability of suitable reference materials and other instructors' neglect of skill-based history teaching. Over all, the completion of historical thinking teaching depends on the determination of each school teacher. Equally important, researchers emphasized on the need of implementation skill base history teaching to in-service teacher program and professional development.

3. Personal response to, how it applies, why you choose and limitations or Questions to the article

The writers of the article's primary goals for the reader or audience are to provide tangibles new knowledge to the well-understanding of disciplinary history, particularly

to history teachers at colleges and universities, history curriculum designers, implementers, and practitioners, as well as undergraduate and graduate history teachers, they also advised using skill-based teaching in middle school to broaden student attitudes and increase problem-solving skills. Since I am a college history teacher, I can apply disciplinary historical teaching methods to the college level.

I chose this article because both authors raised a very influential and needed curriculum issue. In addition to this major emphasis, the Ethiopian national curriculum promotes constructivist assumptions and student-centered teaching methods, which means that using disciplinary history teaching in school can help students or teachers to alleviate existing problems in the history subject.

In my understanding, under the limitation part, I have tried to extract major criticisms. Let me start with the appropriateness and clarity of the title. The title stated on the cover and the first pages lacks appropriateness and clarity because it is better to say that it is *perspectives of history student-teachers' appraisal on curriculum implementation and the practices of new disciplinary history teaching in Finland*. Instead of saying, "Prospective Primary School Teachers' Confidence in Teaching Disciplinary History." Using two examples from higher education, instructors can conduct an evaluative study on the implementation of disciplinary history assessment practices and an appraisal study on how historical didactics course module organization can be improved. (Green, 2016:93-109).

The methodology, as I mentioned above, the writers of the article may have used survey design, and qualitative research approach, or sampling technique is purposive sampling method, and they used several pieces of literature and demonstrated examples of the existing issues that they analyzed by themselves. In fact, they used the best way of analysis to present research results.

In terms of population, the researchers focused on first- and second-year student-teachers and did not show how many first- and second-year student-teachers were

selected out of the total number of 121 students. Because freshmen and senior students differ in their academic achievements, in addition, they do not give a reason why the middle and lower classes were not included in the study, but the main purpose of the researchers is to explore the trainers of primary school teachers' confidence in teaching disciplinary history. In qualitative research approach sampling frame law, orders, one-third of the respondents should be between 40 and 50, and the authors select 28 student-teachers out of 121 candidates depending on their highest academic qualifications. This might be hinders the researchers' ability to obtain reliable and in-depth information about their study topic. Scholars who have published research say that, for example, professor Mertens (2010:331-332), in her book described qualitative research sample size for each sub categories' of qualitative approach. Furthermore, Counsel (2014, 205–206), in her best study on disciplinary history teaching, discusses ways of knowing how to help weaker pupils, which is very essential, and mentions that approach teaching is made by teachers to help fewer students on the concern of student engagement in learning.

In the result interpretation, both researchers show that to some extent data triangulation cross-checks information interviews with documents and with other scholars' research papers. Yet, in this, I argue that the data collected from student teachers must include different data gathering instruments, such as observation and focus group discussion. Furthermore, Interview questions I argue that the interview questions prepared by researchers really measure the desired result. To ensure the validity of the interview questions, it is necessary to show the interview questions to history teachers and researchers to determine whether the interview questions in the questionnaire are written precisely and clearly or not. Researchers can adopt an internationally recognized metric for interview questions that can measure skills, confidence, and knowledge.

To sum up, in line with previous researches discussed and the article I evaluated, it is important to conclude that suggestions given from scholars, subject matter and researchers are used as sources of knowledge to reconstruct one country's curriculum development and that it also helps to formulate appropriate and suitable educational objectives that meet the needs of respective subject teachers and improve learners' and contemporary life of nations. Another advantage of reading this trendy research article, particularly for history teachers in any area, is that they gain new knowledge on how to develop content and historical skills for students.

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