



Paradigm Debates in Curriculum and Supervision: Modern and Postmodern Perspectives

Linda Behar-Horenstein, Jeffrey Glanz

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Paradigm debates in the educational research community are a frequent if not common occurrence. How do paradigm debates in other educational fields, such as curriculum and supervision, shape educators' understanding and practice? In this volume, it is suggested that educators' adherence to particular views of curriculum and supervision is influential in guiding their beliefs and subsequent actions. For example, a widely accepted belief is that if an individual adopts a mechanistic view of the curriculum, then s/he is likely to deliver a curriculum grounded in pre-established objectives and evaluate student achievement in relationship to formulated objectives. Postmodernists contend that such educators are bound by rigid bifurcation and a constrictive linear logic. In supervision, educational leaders who favor leadership styles comprised by autocratic behaviors, tend to create school climates that favor a top-down approach to human relationships. Autocratic leaders rely on hierarchical organizational structures and styles that seek to instill compliance and subordination. Yet prospective administrators who want concrete proposals put in practice find modern perspectives of supervision helpful. In contrast, postmodern supervisors allege that such leaders disallow the emergence of relevant and authentic relationships that might occur when conventional hierarchical structures are diminished and open lines of communication between teachers, students, administrators become normative.

The chapters in this book present an in-depth analysis of how an individual's predisposition towards modern and postmodern views of curriculum and supervision are likely to influence: (1) curriculum development, (2) teaching styles, (3) leadership styles, (4) teacher and student evaluation, and (5) the missions intrinsic to the creation of professional preparation programs that serve to promulgate existing practice or create a new order of teachers and administrator.

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