

Abstract

The turn of the 19th Century in the United States was a period of immense economic, social and political growth. The Progressive Era was born out of this rapid change and led to a shift in educational theory creating a debate over curriculum. Curriculum has been a fervent point of discussion among educational theorists and practitioners with politicians and businessmen having all had something to add to the fray. The current movement in curriculum content has been at the forefront since 2010 where education has been besieged by a strong impetus toward standardization. This has taken the form of the Common Core State Standards (Common Core or CCSS). Until the advent of the Common Core the individual States in the United States each had their own curriculum standards that were meant to be guidelines for local curriculum writers. John Dewey, the philosopher and educational theorist wrote that curriculum should be local. In the United States, the movement toward a national curriculum and with this movement is the need for an assessment test(s). A scripted curriculum, however, does not lead to conceptual change nor does it foster intellectual curiosity. This study focused on whether or not teachers rigidly follow the adopted curriculum and if the teachers had the power to customize that curriculum in their daily classroom practice. Finally, if the teachers engaged in active curriculum making, what if any, were the measurable or perceived effects in terms of teacher efficacy and in terms empowerment?