

History of Homeschooling

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ABSTRACT: This article targets the issue of history of homeschooling. Recent data indicate that homeschooled students are generally more socially upright than those who participate in public school due to the absence of limiting factors such as peer pressure and discrimination (Guterman & Neuman, 2017). There is little research into the long-term effect of homeschooling on a student's as well as information on how it works, and therefore this poses a problem when making a choice. Despite its statistical advantage over public schooling, homeschooling impacts a child's both negatively and positively. Since education at home differs from everyday routines and rules, the impact of this situation is vital in understanding the culture shock when these students reenter the public system (Morton, 2017). More so, the difference in interaction with other students of the same age or lack thereof in a home setting limits exposure. These conditions are rarely evaluated, and parents that face the choice of a learning system for their children have limited information on the logistics of homeschooling. Additionally, restricting the disadvantages of homeschooling by suggesting workable solutions increases the efficiency of homeschooling in establishing desirable social skills in children. Subsequently, the positive impacts should be improved upon and guiding principles for home schools set to allow standardization of techniques across different learning locations.

Keywords: Homeschooling, Education, Curriculum, History

I. INTRODUCTION

In the US, the use of education has been evolving in accordance with the needs of society. The primary role of education in the 20th century ranged from instructing the youth in various religious doctrines as well as preparing them to live in a democracy. Schooling has also been critical in assimilating immigrants into the mainstream society as well as making the workers for industrialization in the 20th century. Education was also essential in the 20th century as it acted as a tool of shaping as well as preparing the young for their futures in a rapidly changing world. Education in this era also worked as a tool for creating adults who can compete in a global economy as well as emotionally healthy adults who can engage in meaningful relationships.

In the 1960s, a lot of schools in the northern districts of America dug their heels against the aspect of desegregation. However, there were some education officers in some of the rebellious communities that were advocating for desegregation. The local leaders too joined in the efforts of forwarding the ideas of desegregation. The leaders were supporting the approach to deepen the commitment of integration as well as raise the hope people have on the schooling system as well as the fate of the political and the economic status of the society. Desegregation focuses on advocating work within the education system. Such focuses shaped the education system in American society (Erickson, 2016)

For more than 176 years since its establishment, the US federal government hasn't been focusing on the K-12 education system. The government was deferring its role to the local leaders. However, in 1965, the arrangement was altered through the introduction of the ESEA (Elementary and Secondary Education Act). The act enhanced the establishment of a pattern of the federal government being involved in the continuity of the schooling system. The implementation of the ESEA was critical in shaping the education system into what it is today.

Homeschooling, also known as home education is the education of children at home or a variety of other places. Home education is usually conducted by a parent or tutor or online teacher. "Homeschooling" is the term commonly used in North America, whereas "home education" is commonly used in the United Kingdom, Europe, and in many Commonwealth countries. Homeschooling and curriculum used by parents wanting to homeschool their children. As I further investigated online curriculum for homeschooling, a wide array of curriculum, teaching methods, and educational information was presented. Going through my resources I found a lot of similarities between homeschooling curriculum and public school curriculum in general. While different choices in education, be it public, charter, private, or homeschool are common in some states, most

areas in the United States do not have many options for schooling other than public or private. Charter schools are not common, and homeschooling seems to be viewed as an odd choice and not widely accepted.

II. CONCEPTUAL HISTORY OF HOMESCHOOLING

Home schooling is considered as an alternative form of educating children. It is seen as a way of liberating learners to their own interest, acquiring varied learning experiences and engaging activities and quality time with their parents. According to Kunzman and Gaither (2013) the large-scale installation of public and private education system was felt in the 19th century in the United States. Most of the American children were sent to formal school. However at the beginning of 1970's home schooling started to emerge and became popular where most of the families in US resort to this alternative schooling method. With the massive increase of parents who opt to have home learning for their children, this action was dominated as "homeschooling movement." This is in connection with the assertive desire to institutionalize this system to make learning more accessible to the children. Kunzman and Gaither confer that around 1.5 million or 2.9% of school-age population of learners was homeschooling in 2007.

In addition, according to Kunzman (2012), children may obtain learning in different ways and settings. The learners could acquire knowledge through lectures, activities and experiments inside the classroom. In the same manner, students may attain it through learning experience with their parents, friends and other members of the community. Other acquisition of learning may take place in less formal settings, such as shopping with parents and dinner conversations with family and friends. Kunzman also added that the whole life experiences of an individual might be considered as of factors of education if only the person will be observant and keen to the lessons. Moreover, parents appreciate the quality time they spend with the children. The learning experiences at home are considered engaging and lively especially during the younger years of the children (Kunzman, 2012). These primary years contribute the important phase to the learner's life, where essential values must be inculcated, the parents must carefully observe the children's behavior, establish rules and engage learners to different educational materials. Learning at home may contribute to the stable foundation of the young learners. It will give the children the chance to discover their interest and skills in various settings and to have a strong bond with their parents. The promotion and rising preference of home schooling contribute to the progression of this liberty option in education. It may view that the relative interest of students are considered, the advancement of this program is structured and the influence and impact in the family is attributed.

Kunzman (2009) stated that more expansive homeschooling designed the regulations for protecting and assuring the rights and interest of the students. Parents are aware of the program that it was designed to protect the children and give emphasis to the education required to these young learners. In Kunzman proposal, the framework of the program is suggested to meet the equilibrium of principle and practicality. Incorporating the view and importance of education has to be acknowledged while considering the basic interest of the children.

Concerning the influence of technology in education, homeschooling has developed the hybrid of cyberschooling to the learners. This system is designed to give the poor children a chance for more attainable learning program (Kunzman, 2009). In a progressing society, the diversity on how children are attuned in technological advancement might contribute to the effective learning they may acquire and flourished in the future. Investing in the promotion of the education of the learners through technology may elevate the ability of the children to be more effective and functional in the process of achieving high academic performance.

Furthermore, the increasing demand for homeschooling will continue to challenge the notion of formal schooling, learning and family. Kunzman and Gaither (2013) postulated that the family has an important role in recognizing the need of homeschooling for the children who have special needs. It may also be the solution of the parents in protecting their children from bullying, and fears of racism. The guidance and assistance of the parents or guardian is maximized if the children are having homeschooling. In this process the learners are guided and attend their arising needs that require immediate attention. In the process of choosing safety and quality time to the children, the parents will definitely prefer the progressing stage of homeschooling. In this program the interest of the students are identified and also regulated.

III. DISCUSSION OF CONCEPTUAL SHIFTS

The concept of Homeschooling resurfaced in American education in the 1970's when educational reformist showed dissatisfaction with the industrialized education of the time. John Holt is the primary actor in the beginning and redevelopment of the concept of homeschooling in the 1970s. In his work, Holt believed that the formal types of schools only focused on rote learning which was oppressive preparing children for compliant employee jobs. His work directly contradicted the line of thought that brought about compulsory education attendance laws in the 19th and 20th century (Bauman, 2002). Since the 1970s to today, the most commonly cited motivations to homeschooling by parents include dissatisfaction with local schools and the need for increased involvement in their children's learning and development.

Early advocates of homeschooling aimed at liberating learners from the constraints of formal education

and making them free to follow their own interests. Holt advocated against all forms of formal schooling in the belief that the structured education curriculum did not recognize the differences in abilities of children and hence could not bring out their talents. The proponents of homeschooling view formal schooling as synonymous with suffering from children forced to do such activities as sitting down, shutting up and doing an assignment is an endless cycle of compulsion or forced learning (Bauman, 2002). Formal schooling does not allow children to enjoy what they loved but rather forced them to do what a few purported to be right.

The proponents of homeschooling also supported the idea that children needed to spend more time with parents. This idea was supported by the social movement of families especially in the west where there was the belief that education of children is the right of parents rather than the government (Kunzman, 2012). This was a movement against the curricula of public schools. Holt advocated for self-directed learning for children. According to Holt, parents should fit the curriculum to the interest of the child rather than fit the child into the curriculum. These ideas were also promoted by Raymond Moore who felt that education started too early for children especially boys who needed to wait for sometimes until they matured before joining school (Ray, 2015). Individual initiative and self-direction are the concepts promoted by proponents of homeschooling. The main opponents to homeschooling cite the lack of experience in the real world due to sheltering of children from society including its benefits and challenges. Homeschooled children have limited interaction with their peers, and society hence lacks essential skills for life (Kunzman, 2012). The tendency to live in insulated environments without exposure to ideas prevents personal growth and later life independence. The child is exposed to highly narrow viewpoints lack a broad range of experience that they would gain by interacting with others at schools. Bauman, (2002) also found out that homeschooling breeds separatism. The motive behind the early proponents of homeschooling has often been criticized for being religious. Moore is said to have been motivated by the necessity to instill religious values into children that were not promoted in public schools of the 1970s.

IV. CONTEMPORARY SHIFTS

While there are many opponents to homeschooling, the practice continues to increase in the US. Ray, (2015) estimates that there are at least two million children in the US under homeschooling with the rate increasing at between 15% and 20% annually. While the US Supreme Court held that parents reserve the right to direct their children's education, state regulations vary considerably. However, despite it having great potential impacts on education, very little attention is being given to home schooling as compared to other systems such as charter schools. The growth of these forms and systems of education such as charter schools and voucher programs has been impacted by homeschooling (Ray, 2015). Further, research fails to give useful information on homeschooling causing the importance of the topic in the United States to be ignored.

Available data show a consistency increase in the number of children under homeschooling since 1994 up to today. Reports of school non-enrollment show that most parents are opting to keep their children out of formal education. This forces us to try and understand what characterizes home-schooled children in the US. While there is not a big difference in age between home-schooled children and those undergoing formal education, there is a slight likelihood that homeschoolers are female (Ray, 2015). They are also more likely to be non-Hispanic and white and living with both father and mother. Such factors as household income, employment status, and magnitude of need also affect homeschooling decision. Having a non-working adult in a household highly influenced the decision to prefer homeschooling.

The issue of education quality is the most important factor in determining the decision for homeschooling. This is similar to the original motivation for schooling where parents who felt that public schools with low quality education motivated parents to practice homeschooling. Religious motivation also features as a factor for determining the decision for homeschooling. However, religious motivation to homeschooling has diminished since the introduction of the concept in the 1970s. The most important difference between homeschoolers and those following formal schooling is the extent of expressing negative attitudes towards schools. Why do people take or keep their children out of school? Mostly for three reasons: they think that raising their children is their business not the government's; they enjoy being with their children and watching and helping them learn, and don't want to give that up to others; they want to keep them from being hurt, mentally, physically, and spiritually. (Farenga & Holt, 2003, p. 1)

There are two main philosophies for homeschooling and they are school at home and unschooling. For the families who choose school at home, they are not usually concerned with why their children are learning certain things, but they are concerned with helping their children with what they have decided their children should learn. They typically choose from standardized textbooks and curricula. For those who are homeschooling in the unschooling approach, they are more concerned with interest-driven, child-led, natural, organic, or self-directed learning. The learning is not directed through textbooks, but by self-guided and an interest in learning (Farenga & Holt, pp. 238-239). "Kids, as any parent knows, are determinedly individual. Interests, learning styles, attention spans, growth rates, developmental progress, and food preferences vary wildly from child to child. There is no effective one-size-fits-all mode of education" (Rupp, 2000, p. 1). When it comes

to deciding what is the best way for children to be taught, or what is the best type of school for them to attend, a parent has a lot to consider. “When it comes to curricula, kids should always come first. It’s not what teachers teach that’s important; it’s what children learn” (Rupp, p. 2).

In the book *101 Top Picks for Homeschool Curriculum* (2012), Cathy Duffy has listed curriculum based by subject and content. Duffy breaks down the subjects by the style of content whether it is traditional, religious, or secular. They are categorized by grade level as well. As I looked over the curriculum with curiosity wondering what homeschoolers were taught, I realized a lot of the curriculum listed in Duffy’s book was what public, private, and charter schools use as well. Some of the curriculum listed, I have used as a teacher and a substitute teacher in both charter and public schools. I have taught Saxon math in both charter and private. Classical and Latin Roots is another program I have used while teaching at a charter school. Science and history books were also listed with information which would be helpful to those with a religious interest or if they were traditional or secular texts.

When choosing a curriculum for homeschooling, the focus should be on what knowledge, skills, and abilities you expect your child to achieve. Curriculum should be based upon your education philosophies, educational aims or ambitions for your child, and the learning goals or objectives necessary to achieve those aims.

Educational philosophies center on what you feel your children should learn in order to achieve happiness and success in their lives. Educational aims or ambitions for your children could include solid life skills and self-reliance, critical thinking and reasoning skills, creative thinking abilities, the ability to work well with others, to enjoy one’s work and career, to show love and respect for one’s family, to be a responsible and upstanding citizen, and/or contribute to the community. Learning goals and objectives should support your educational philosophies and aims for your child. (Linsenbach, 2015, p.126) Besides choosing what type of curriculum a parent would like for their homeschooled child, they also need to choose the format or method of learning. Homeschooling is broken down into three methods of learning. A child may learn using textbooks and curriculum which comes from a program. Another means to learn is through online programs. The third way of learning is through a hybrid program usually offered as part time school and part time homeschool. Many public and charter schools offer these types of hybrid programs. Private religious schools often partner with a homeschooling entity to offer a hybrid program for those who want a faith based education for their children.

While there is not a mandated time frame nationally for teaching your children at home, typically homeschooling follows state requirements and require around 180 day of schooling per year. Colorado law states “homeschool programs must have no less than 172 days of instruction, averaging 4 contact hours per day” (CDE, 2016, Attendance Requirements, para. 3). The time frame of teaching depends on the age of the child. Preschool through kindergarten require 30 to 60 minutes per day of instruction. Elementary children should be taught 60 to 90 minutes per day. Middle school children should receive 1.5 to 3 hours of instruction per day, and high school children should receive 2 to 4 hours per day (Linsenbach, p. 23).

Types of curriculum to consider for a school at home program are usually based on preferences. A homeschooler may be schooled with current public school curriculum, a traditional type curriculum, or a curriculum which supports religious beliefs. What is important to consider is which type of curriculum will support your child’s learning and help them to achieve their educational goals. Curriculum can be purchase through websites or you may borrow books to support your child’s learning through the library.

There are several types of online learning, and there are online schools which may or may not follow public schools curriculum. These programs usually have teachers and online support to help with curriculum questions and are usually responsible to help with student testing. There are also strictly private online schools which are a pay as you learn type program. You may choose which class and curriculum and receive support from their teachers. These are the most expensive programs and have a cost range on average from \$74 to \$399 per class. What has become more popular in the last decade is the hybrid version of homeschooling. Children do part of their homeschooling at home and part at school with homeschool learning collaboration and support. Students may do most of their schooling at home, but attend a regular school for math or electives as an example. Parents need to contact administration and work out a schedule for how the schooling will look, and schools which have this hybrid option to offer usually have an interest which makes it beneficial for both the school and the part time student.

In addition to school at home or online programs, there are online support programs for all types of homeschooled students. There are website entities which their purpose is to support homeschooled students. How this program works is you pay monthly fees for support with a certain class or topic or you may pay an annual fee for unlimited support in all areas of study.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The education system in United State has undergone through significant changes. The establishment of the idea of desegregation and the enactment of the ESEA has been critical in not only shaping the education

system in the nation but also they have been crucial in ensuring constancy in the schooling system. The government has been playing a vital role in shaping the education system as well. The education system has also been affected by the political as well as the economic state of the society. The schooling system has been improving on a daily basis courtesy of the commercial as well as the political influence on society. The education system in America stands as it is due to the enactment as well as the establishment of ideas that were critical in stabilizing it.

“A primary goal of homeschooling high school is to keep your student’s college and career options open” (Binz, 2013, p. 7). When considering which curriculum and how many years of each subject, it is important to consider the college your child plans on attending. While most freshman and sophomore years in high school are very similar in requirements, juniors and seniors have more options to their choice in electives or additional classes. It is very important to be aware of what your child will need to be qualified to application. ACT and/or SAT are required for homeschooled children just as they are required for public or private schooled children. In some states, “students that are participating in a homeschool program must have academic progress evaluated in grades 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11” (CDE, Assessment/Evaluation, para. 5).

Homeschooling has changed in the past few decades not only in methods of learning, but the perception of homeschooling is not the anomaly it once was. Many parents choose homeschooling for their children because they want to be in charge of their children’s education, for religious reasons, or for what they believe to be the best way to help their children achieve goals. As homeschooling has grown and become more accepted in society, there are more ways to help the student in their learning from support from public and private schools to online schooling and companies which support the child who is homeschooled.

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