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ED 556 Curriculum

Research Paper Proposal

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My research topic is going to focus on comparing education in the United States to the country of China. More specifically, I want to research educational influences in each country such as: gender bias, curriculum development, standardized testing, and family influence/involvement. After researching all of these I want to answer my main research question which is, why from the educational standpoint is the United States globally behind.

After reading Taubman he quotes numerous individuals who say, “Students are losing the academic race to their peers in other countries. They don’t work hard enough, and can’t compete with students form other countries whom he [Friedman] describes admiringly as feel[ing] no guilt about making money or spending it, and as destination driven…outward looking, not inward” (Taubman 101). Furthermore, Taubman quotes Linda Hammond who says, “International assessments reveal that America’s schools are among the most unequal in the industrialized world in terms of spending, curriculum offerings, teaching quality, and outcomes” (Taubman 143). I am curious why that is. Therefore, I am very interested to do some research to find out why and how the United States is not preparing students for global competition.

The United States not being prepared globally is a huge problem. If the United States is globally behind that directly affects me. If I am not as well educated as a teacher from another country my job opportunities are limited and this is not just in the field of teaching but in every field of study. If the people of the United States are not getting the proper education needed, jobs will be lost to citizens of other countries and our economy will continue to get worse. This is a problem that must be solved and in my opinion it is going to start with improving curriculum in education. Education is where it all starts and that needs to be our main focus. Educators shape the minds of students so they can become successful.

I have a need and interest to figure out why the United States is globally behind when dealing with the educational aspect of life. I being a teacher take offense to my students not being as prepared as they should be. I want my students to be able to find a job when the time comes. I want my students to be chosen for the job they want and not someone else’s student from a different country.

I also have prior knowledge that can help me with this research topic. Being a teacher and therefore directly in the educational field I get a firsthand look at what the curriculum is like. After hearing all this talk about the United States being behind globally I have taken a more serious interest in the curriculum at my school. I have noticed that it lacks problem solving and critical thinking skills, two very important traits that students will need in the work environment. This research project connects to my career indefinitely. As a teacher I was never too concerned with curriculum, I just knew that I had to follow it and now it is a whole new ballgame.

When thinking about the problem statement the main thing I want to know is why we are behind globally and how do we become more globally competitive? I know this starts with education, but I am curious how. What do we change in education? Who starts this change in curriculum? What are these other countries (more specifically China) doing that prepares their students more than ours? These are the major questions I have when dealing with my research topic and hopefully I can answer them through research.

The results of my research are going to be the reason(s) why the United States is globally behind other countries and how we as a country can improve our educational curriculum to meet and surpass the standards and education in other countries. Basically I want to know how the using and restructuring of curriculum can make the students of the United States number one.

 After researching information I have found there to be a significant amount of literature out there to help aid in my topic; why is the United States from an educational standpoint behind globally? I have articles written by Milton Friedman and Linda Darling-Hammond from Taubman’s book. Also, I have found numerous articles such as: *Lessons from China, Educational Opportunities Gift to Chinese Girls, The recession could push U.S. further behind in Global Education Race, U.S. Students’ Scores Fall further behind, New Skills Seen Essential for Global Competition* and many more.

 *The Recession Could Push U.S. Further behind in Global Education* was very interesting to me. It discussed the idea that the United States is behind globally due to our economy. It talks about not having the funds to provide resources for education. Furthermore, it states the current recession we are experiencing could lead to the United States falling even more behind because we have less money than before to spend on education. *Global Competition* by Kathleen Kennedy Manzo compares the level of technical skills of U.S. students with their international peers. According to experts, the attention and resources put by educators and policymakers in other countries to developing the technical skills of their students could put U.S. students behind the curve very soon. This article compares the United States to China and other countries.

 I am also looking to see if there are any gender biases that could affect why the United States is globally behind other countries. *Educational Opportunities Gift to Chinese Girls* by Roberta Chang discusses how to provide the Chinese girls with educationalopportunity that is similar tothe American education system. Chang stated that she would like to share the giftof education to her people, particularly to the women and girls as many from her country cannot read or write. This makes me think that maybe girls are not accounted for when discussing the educational success rate in China and possibly in other countries. This could be a reason why the United States is globally behind, because all Chinese students are not being counted for and not because our educational system has flaws.

 Finally, articles such as *Lessons from China* by Sean Cavanagh gives insight into why Chinese education is so prosperous and successful and to why the United States education seems to be slipping. Cavanagh suggests that American education has been changing to authoritarianism. This did not surprise me after reading Taubman’s book *Teaching By Numbers*. *U.S. Students’ scores fall further behind* by Arne Duncan discusses possible reasons why the United States is struggling globally. However, *New Skill Seen Essential for Global Competition* by Dakarai Aarons offers solutions for how the United States can become more successful in global competition by improving our education and curriculum.

 After reading many articles and becoming more knowledgeable on my topic, I now need to create a schedule in order to finish my research paper on time. I have already started to work on my research paper. I try to do a minimum of one page per day. I have found that I am making a lot of changes every time I write one page, therefore I will need a significant amount to complete my research project. If I stick to my plan I expect to be done well in advance to the research due date. This will allow me time to take my paper to the writing center and have other individuals proofread my paper.

 I am by no means an expert on the subject of curriculum let alone an expert on why the United States is globally behind from an educational standpoint. However, I do feel I possess qualities that can help me to complete my research paper. I have all of the resources needed at my disposal I just have to use them. I am a very thorough person; therefore I will read my research over and over and dissect it. This will help me reach a clear verdict to my research question. Also, I am a dedicated person and hard worker. I am not afraid to ask for help when I am stuck. My most important qualification for this project is my interest. This is a topic I am generally interested in and I enjoying finding information on my topic. People always seem to do a better job on papers when it is something that relates to them (which it does, me being a teacher) and when they take a genuine interest in it. I am looking forward to seeing the final result(s) of my research paper.