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Psychology of Education: Theory, research and evidence-based practice.

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Reviewed by Rachel Maunder

I was delighted to hear about the publication of this text and wanted the opportunity to review it. There has been, in my view, a gap in the market for a text like this that provides a rounded resource on the psychology of education that will cater for the growing number of programmes (and specialist modules) at undergraduate and postgraduate level covering this topic.

The professional affiliations of the authors means that the terminology, applied cases and examples are predominantly UK-based, which makes this well suited for a UK market because it is directly relevant to the educational system and career paths of the likely readership. This is an important selling point as many of the established texts in the field are rooted in the US – which sometimes limits their applicability.

As an edited book, the chapters cover a range of topics written by different authors based on their area of expertise. The authors are multidisciplinary, including psychologists, teachers, sociologists and specialists in early years, childhood, and youth, which really demonstrates how psychology interacts with other subject areas and the value that can be gained from cross-disciplinary approaches. I was impressed by the breadth of coverage of topics, meaning that there would be 'something for everyone' who has an interest in the psychology of education.

The book is organised into 3 parts. Part 1 is about the background and basics of educational psychology, including the history of the subject, educational policy, psychological approaches, and research methods. The section provides a useful introduction to the broad field and helps to put the subject 'in context'. Part 2 covers psychological theories and approaches in education. Here we see chapters drawing on key aspects of developmental psychology (such as language development, social and emotional development, and cognition) and issues of individual differences, diversity, and collaboration. The content included in Part 1 and 2 means that core areas of psychology are covered (as is expected for programmes that cover the BPS core curriculum) but with an applied emphasis in education. Both sections form a nice foundation for Part 3, which focuses on applying psychology to education settings. Chapters cover a range of areas where psychological knowledge and approaches can be used in education. Examples include teacher education, special educational needs and inclusion, mental health and wellbeing, and second language learning. It was great to see a chapter on adult and lifelong learning as sometimes this is a neglected area in texts on the psychology of education.

The chapters adopt a similar structure, and are very learner-friendly, including learning objectives, chapter map, key words, critical questions, assignment help and highlighted key readings. I particularly liked the integration of case examples through the book, which really help to bring the topics to life. These cases could work well in classroom settings if the book was being used as part of a taught course, but also gives useful opportunities for applied learning for the independent reader. My only criticism is that I would have liked to see case examples used in all the chapters.

A notable strength of the book is the way that it covers contemporary topics (such as digital learning, social media, educational neuroscience) and approaches that reflect current practice in the field (such as an emphasis on evidence-based practice; interdisciplinarity,

person-environment interaction). It is therefore up to date, and a great showcase for the growing advancement of psychology in education.

Overall, this is an excellent book, and I will certainly be using it with my educational psychology students.

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