Effects of an Instructor's Ideology on a Student's Perspective

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This study revealed the influence of an instructor on students' ideology and perception of valid information. It was hypothesized that if students were presented with an economic theory by an expert, they would assume the theory to be valid, despite the perspective they held before the presentation. To test the extent to which an instructor's particular ideology affects students' ideological perspective, an experiment was run in three treatment groups around a high school curriculum. Each treatment group was given a pre- and post-survey, regarding a group-specific lecture on the measures of an economy. Two of the lectures were based on dichotomous ideologies, while the third lecture provided an equal view of both ideologies. The results of the experiment support the hypothesis. Insignificant correlation coefficient values under .5 between pre- and post-survey scores across the treatment groups indicated that students' initial ideologies did not maintain after the lecture. The significant variance between each treatment group's post-survey scores ($p<.05$ level for the three conditions and Tukey HSD results) displayed a difference in response to the lecture between each treatment group. The scores reflecting the perspective of students after the lecture trended on average to lean towards the ideology delivered in the lecture. It was concluded that students who are presented with an ideologically biased perspective by an instructor will most likely assume that ideology to be valid, in turn changing their own previously held perspective. This further reveals the significance and power of education and the responsibility that a teacher holds.

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