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Strand of Work: Theoretical/Integrative

Abstract

This commentary examines the implications and possibilities of new insights into human learning and development from emerging work across the neurosciences, particularly in terms of cross disciplinary collaborations across fields that have traditionally focused on only one thread of development: cognition, motivation, health, life course development, social and emotional learning. The commentary argues that such cross disciplinary work involving collaborations with work in the various fields of the neurosciences (e.g. cognitive, social, cultural) offer opportunities to move beyond what have been persistent deficit orientations to understanding and explaining variation in patterns of activity in human communities. These dispositions, particularly in education related fields, to examine learning from deficit perspectives are particularly endemic today with attempts to extrapolate warrants from the neurosciences that are not justified by empirical data. The basic propositions put forward are illustrated in discussions of literacy learning.

The reasoning articulated in this commentary is consistent with the conceptual underpinnings of the longitudinal project in Project READI.

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