

A philosophy for Transnational Chiropractic education

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Context: This paper follows an earlier exploration of the philosophy of chiropractic education in which a history was given along with predictions for future directions.

Argument: My prelude paper situates this current paper in which I draw on a review of the known basic approaches to the philosophy of education and extract and apply those elements I contend best represent the optimal philosophical framework for a program of chiropractic education. This synthesis is new as while the literature presents a number of reports about enhancing the elements of a chiropractic program there seems to be no overarching philosophy for chiropractic education argued at this time.

Conclusion: This paper reports a philosophy for a program of chiropractic education and argues in its favour. The program of reference is the Transnational Curriculum developed for Nations without a current program of chiropractic education.

Indexing terms: Chiropractic; education; philosophy; philosophy of education.

Introduction

The prelude to this paper (1) provided a context for chiropractic education which included a brief history of its development from 1897 (2, 3) and a series of predictions for developments which will impact on the future provision of chiropractic education globally. I did not at that time provide a philosophy for chiropractic education; this is the purpose of this paper and as such I shall focus on the philosophy of education in general and extract elements relevant to chiropractic education in particular. I will not repeat beyond passing comment the history of the profession's education nor my predictions.

My prelude paper (1) drew on the methodology of *Historiography* to establish a valid historical overview, and of standard *Thematic Analysis* to generate predictions relevant to program structure and delivery. My predictions

... there is no published philosophy for the delivery of chiropractic education. I argue that 'Constructivism' and 'Existentialism' are approaches from the philosophy of education that are able to correct this omission'



1. Ebrall P. A philosophy for chiropractic education in the 21st Century: A contextual prelude. *Asia-Pac Chiropr J.* 2020;1:036 apcj.net/papers-issue-1-1/#EbrallEducationPhilosophy
2. Palmer College of Chiropractic. The Palmer Family Heritage/History of Palmer College of Chiropractic. <http://www.palmer.edu/about-us/history/palmer-family/>
3. Faulkner TJ. The chiropractor's protégé. Rock Island, The Association for the History of Chiropractic 2017: p 298.

were neither reflexive (ie not self-fulfilling) (4) nor did they express unrealistic optimism for events that would personally benefit the oracle. (5) I still hold their currency.

My philosophical lens

In previous papers (6, 7) I have taken the world view of a Pragmatist and have also used Semiotics. (8) In my writings on education I have taken the role of a *Constructivist*. (9) In this paper I write on the matter of chiropractic education using the lenses of *Constructivism* and *Existentialism*. I will explain my understanding of these terms and their meanings as I apply them to chiropractic education.

Does the chiropractic literature report a philosophy of chiropractic education?

The literature of chiropractic seems silent on the question of '*a philosophy for chiropractic education*'. Admittedly the journal literature of chiropractic is young, dating from the launch of the *Journal of the Canadian Chiropractic Association* in 1957. (10) From 1979 the *Index to Chiropractic Literature* has indexed every paper published in recognised chiropractic journals and magazines serving the profession. For a brief period in the 1940s there was the journal of the *National Chiropractic Association* (NCA) which from an educational perspective was promoting the interests of Nugent and Watkins whose ideas conflicted strongly with those of BJ Palmer who led the original chiropractic institution founded by then bought from, his father DD Palmer.

As far back as 1997 Adams and Gatterman reported '*the vast majority of current chiropractic educational research studies are descriptive in nature and receive no external funding. These studies are usually presented at chiropractic conferences and published in chiropractic journals*'. (11) A decade later Mrozek et al (12) added little: '*research studies in chiropractic education have been conducted on the 7 cited thematic areas, much have focused on instruction, curriculum, assessment, and faculty development. Research studies on areas recommended in the 1997 article, such as patient centeredness and continuing education, are less evident*'. There was no mention of any philosophy of chiropractic education.

My search of the *Index to Chiropractic Literature* did not return any papers expressing a coherent '*philosophy of chiropractic education*'. I used the advanced screen with the search terms [education] and [philosophy]. This returned 83 articles on 25 February 2023. Some of these were cited abstracts but on the occasion of me seeking one particular abstract from its claimed publication it was not returned. Mirtz presented a '*treatise for a new philosophy of chiropractic medicine*' (13) but failed to address how it could be taught. Mirtz, as with Walker, (14) writes as a post-realist wanting to remake the discipline of chiropractic in his own image and thus the

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4. Buck RC. Reflexive predictions. Cambridge University Press. 14 March 2022. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/philosophy-of-science/article/abs/reflexive-predictions/5B71BD92C2CA940F2095967E5CD9E436>,
 5. Beaton C. Humans Are Bad at Predicting Futures That Don't Benefit Them. The Atlantic. 2 November 2017. <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2017/11/humans-are-bad-at-predicting-futures-that-dont-benefit-them/544709/>.
 6. Ebrall PS. Antagonists, Protagonists, and the General Chiropractic Council: A Pragmatic Narrative of Eminence-Based Chiropractic. *J. Philosophy, Principles & Practice of Chiropractic*. 2020;July 27: Pages 37-48.
 7. Ebrall P. The Paraphysiological Space of Manipulation: A Pragmatist's Appraisal. *J. Philosophy, Principles & Practice of Chiropractic*. 2020;May 4:8-17.
 8. Ebrall PS. Semiotics in the education of chiropractors: facilitating learning by quantifying an abstract object. *RMIT J eD*. 2007; Volume 2, Issue 2.
 9. Ebrall PS, Nest A, Walker L, Wright D. Palpatory literacy and the subluxation complex: developing a model to represent what we think we feel. *Chiropr J Aust*. 2006; 36:127-36.
 10. *Journal of the Canadian Chiropractic Association*. Home. <https://chiropractic.ca/jcca-online/about-jcca/>.
 11. Adams AH, Gatterman M. The state of the art of research on chiropractic education. *J Manipulative Physiol Ther*. 1997 Mar-Apr;20(3):179-84. PMID: 9127256. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/9127256/>.
 12. Mrozek JP, Till H, Taylor-Vaisey AL, et al. Research in Chiropractic Education: An Update. *J Manipulative Physiol Thera*. 2006;29(9):762-73. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0161475406002788>.
 13. Mirtz TA. A treatise for a new philosophy of chiropractic medicine. *Chiropr Man Therap*. 2017;25,7. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12998-017-0138-y>
 14. Walker BF. The new Chiropractic. *Chiropr Man Therap*. 2016;24:26. DOI: 10.1186/s12998-016-0108-9.

profession which attaches to the discipline, without much consideration as to how this could be achieved let alone taught.

A hand-search of my own library showed that in March 1979 Kleynhans gave specific philosophical objectives in his *Submission to the Victorian Institute of Colleges for Approval and Accreditation of an integrated degree course leading to a B.App.Sc. (Chiropractic)* at the Phillip Institute of Technology (PIT) in Melbourne Australia. (15) I give an extract from that document as Fig. 1 and have previously addressed this matter. (16)

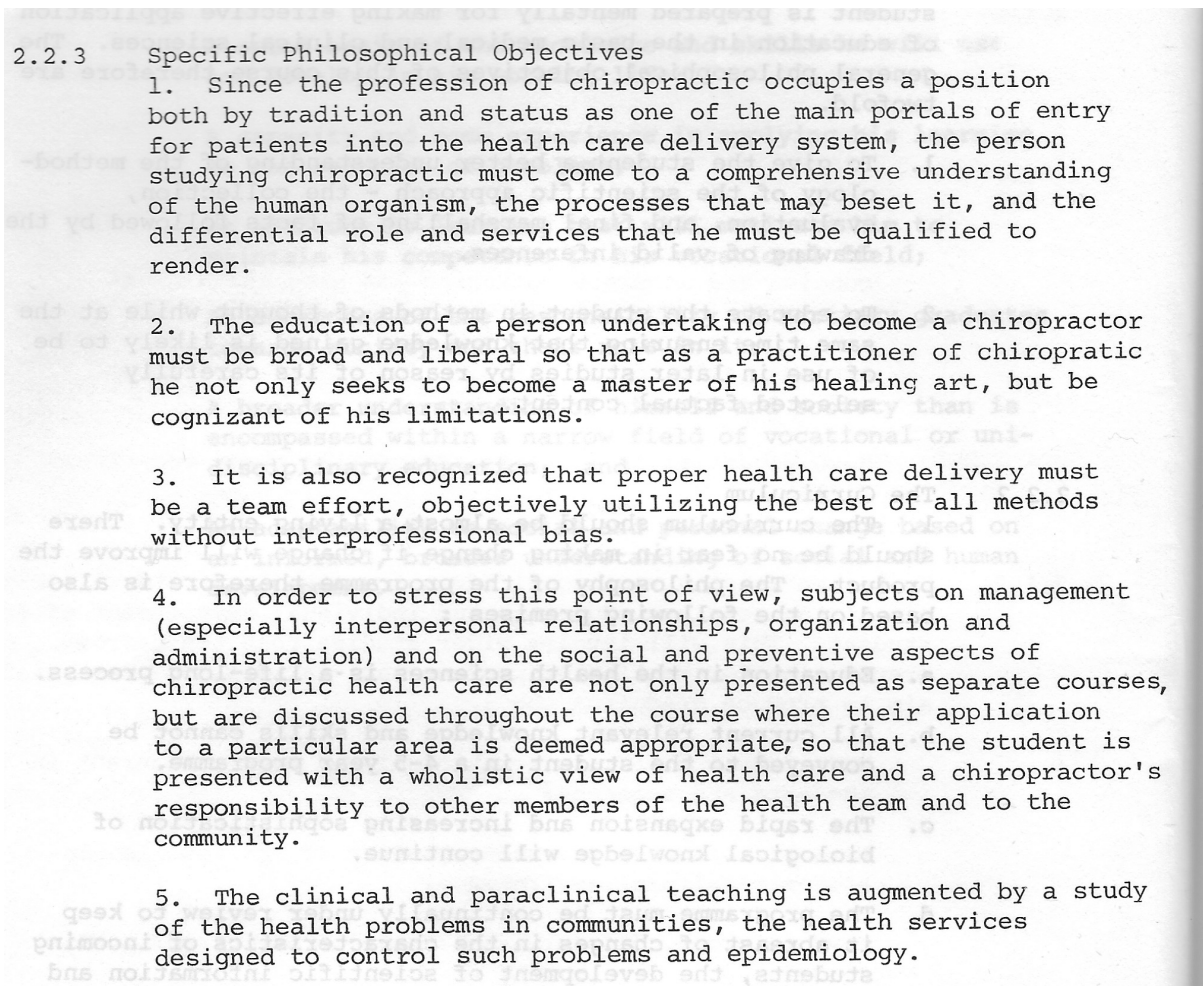


Figure 1: Extract from submission by PIT giving the Specific Philosophical Objectives of the proposed chiropractic program

I give this as an early example of leadership in chiropractic education at a time when the formal ideas of there being any philosophy of education required for the teaching of chiropractors were nascent. In this regard Kleynhans is seen as a leading educator and while his 5 points given as 2.2.3 above (Fig. 1) are rudimentary they clearly demonstrate essential characteristics of the form of delivery of the curriculum, beyond the content of the curriculum itself. Kleynhans gave substance to the vague idea of Nugent dating from 1941 that *'the underlying principles and*

15. Kleynhans AM. Submission to the Victorian Institute of Colleges for Approval and Accreditation of an integrated degree course leading to a B.App.Sc. (Chiropractic). Phillip Institute of Technology. 1979. A copy is held in the library of the writer.

16. Ebrall P. The establishment of the International College of Chiropractic (ICC) Melbourne. *Asia-Pac Chiropr J.* 2022;3:2. apcj.net/Papers-Issue-3-2/#ICC.

philosophy of the scientific method are far more important than the facts a student must learn' (17, p. 14).

A number of returned papers during my searching of the literature addressed the teaching of philosophy as opposed to the philosophy of teaching. Among these was Coulter's '*An Institutional philosophy of Chiropractic*' (18) which expressed difficulties in bringing academics together on one agreed philosophy of chiropractic. While reporting that he tried this in 2 institutions he was silent on any '*philosophy for education*', as was I in a 2010 paper (19) which talked about teaching a '*philosophy of chiropractic*', as do most institutions. I did not speak then to any philosophy of 'how' to teach it.

None of the remaining papers meet the inclusion criteria of [arguing for a philosophy of education for chiropractors] or of [chiropractic education]. Similarly the *WFC Education Conference* in 2000 (20) addressed '*philosophy in Chiropractic education*' and remained silent on any philosophy for an educational framework to deliver the philosophy of the discipline. The noted *Journal of Chiropractic Education* (21) often carries articles reporting improvements in teaching methods, however there seems to be very little that addresses the question of an institutional philosophy for chiropractic education, the '*how*' so to speak for delivering all courses within a program of chiropractic education in a coherent and aligned manner within which one or more philosophies of education are applied.

Fox, of the *New Zealand College of Chiropractic*, has reported that '*lecturers ... utilise a construct of philosophy that is neovitalistic in nature*' (22, pp. 76, 77) and varied in the ways in which vitalism was delivered in the classroom. I remain unsure whether this represents a '*philosophy of education*' or a means of teaching the '*philosophy of chiropractic*'. Fox notes that very few lecturers assessed '*vitalism*' as a Learning Outcome, however did note that there was a certain culture pervading the institution that was favourable towards the inclusion of vitalism as an institutional strategy.

There are many papers and some academic presentations (abstract only) on the periphery touching on teaching methods and the need to include philosophy but in the holistic content of a program, only Gatterman (23) and Wiles (24) have come close to the idea of a philosophy for the process of education. I discuss their papers below.

Gatterman, Nelson, and Wiles

Gatterman is a highly regarded chiropractic author, well known for introducing chiropractic's '*patient-centred*' paradigm; yet she published an important paper (24) outside the chiropractic literature. As a paradigm meant to be '*a model for chiropractic education and research*' it did not argue a specific philosophy for either education or research, however inferred that education would be strengthened by being delivered in a '*patient-centric*' manner. Gatterman stated '*Chiropractic first principles and existing health care paradigms were identified and integrated with the characteristics of chiropractic practice described in sociological studies of the chiropractic profession*'. She concluded that '*a patient-centered paradigm ... incorporating the principles of*

17. Nugent JJ. Chiropractic Education. Outline of a standard course. Department of Education, National Chiropractic Association. c. 1941.

18. Coulter ID. An Institutional philosophy of Chiropractic. *Chiropr J Aust*. 1991;21(4):136-41.

19. Ebrall PS. The Teaching and Learning of the RMIT Brand of Chiropractic Philosophy. *Chiropr J Aust* 2010;40:164-9.

20. Philosophy in Chiropractic Education. WFC Education Conference. 2000. https://www.wfc.org/website/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=53&Itemid=130&lang=en.

21. *Journal of Chiropractic Education*. Home. <https://meridian.allenpress.com/jce>.

22. Fox M. Vitalism in a chiropractic programme: A New Zealand case study. [Thesis]. Auckland University of Technology. 2017.

23. Gatterman MI. A Patient-Centered Paradigm: A Model for Chiropractic Education and Research. *J Alt Comp Med*. 2007;1(4). <https://doi.org/10.1089/acm.1995.1.371>,

24. Wiles MR. Designing a 21st Century chiropractic educational program: A time for reflection, a time for action. *J Chiropr Educ*. 2020;34(2): DOI 10.7899.

vitalism, holism, humanism, conservatism, naturalism, and rationalism’ should form the basis of curriculum development and delivery. This 15 year old paper holds as current advice.

I am looking for a philosophical framework within which one could embed Gatterman’s patient centred paradigm and am proposing that *Constructivism* and *Existentialism* are suitable philosophical frameworks to achieve this.

In a similar way that Mirtz (13) and Walker (14) each proposed a re-invention of the profession, Nelson et al (25) proposed chiropractic should be a *‘spine care’* profession, with a curriculum to deliver such outcomes. The paper did not present a philosophic framework for such a curriculum but this did not prevent Wiles, who established the first new chiropractic program in the United States since 2003, absorbing and implementing those views. Wiles stated *‘the goal of the [his] new program was to create a curriculum focused on evidence-based health care practices, it was also possible to use best evidence in the design of the new curriculum’*. (23)

Wiles cited no supportive evidence from the education literature which I find odd as he holds an EdD and would be familiar with that literature. His paper failed to address the question of how his new model, one which held Nelson’s view of *‘Spinal care as the defining clinical purpose of chiropractic’* would be taught. Wiles concluded *‘The professional experience and judgment of faculty members and the wealth of information in the medical education literature provide guidance in re-visioning what a curriculum should look like to support the future of the chiropractic profession.’*

In other words, there was no guidance at all and I can only conclude that the philosophy of education under Wiles is *‘the Eclectic Approach’* (Table 1). In February 2023 the *Council of Chiropractic Education* (CCE) must have thought likewise as it placed that program on probation, (26) citing the need for evidence of that program’s *‘processes for assessment of student learning’* among other matters, *‘data on the meta-competency outcomes’*, and to provide evidence of *‘student achievement of each MCO within the newly implemented clinical assessment plan and [to] demonstrate processes to verify MCO achievement for all students, prior to graduation’*.

Is there an historical philosophy of chiropractic education?

My literature searches have not returned a *‘philosophy for chiropractic education’*. I note the education of chiropractors commenced as the *Palmerian System* (27) and soon split to others while BJ Palmer narrowed his father’s premise until coming into conflict with an assemblage of those dissidents and their subsequent institutions which had diverged from the Palmers’ approach. These dissidents later created the NCA in opposition to BJ Palmer’s group, the *International Chiropractic Association* (ICA). (28)

The NCA group were anti-Palmer for they were indeed against Palmer’s curriculum and I see them as the forerunner to the *‘evidence-based’* post-realists (29) of chiropractic today. The NCA group wanted chiropractic education to be a parallel of the medical curriculum which flowed from the 1910 Flexner Report. (30)

25. Nelson CF, Lawrence DJ, Triano JJ, et al. Chiropractic as spine care: a model for the profession. *Chiropr Osteopat*. 2005;13:9.

26. Public disclosure notice. Keiser University College of Chiropractic Medicine (KUCCM). Council on Chiropractic Education. 21 February 2023. https://www.cce-usa.org/uploads/1/0/6/5/106500339/2023-02-21_public_disclosure_notice_-_probation-.pdf?fbclid=IwAR33pe36Ga51nKoJza53u4UKotsrs_J37Q0MTJTmsr9703t1fdXzXB5C-Po.

27. Richards DM, Emmanuel E. Recovering Chiropractic through Systems Thinking. *Chiropr Hist*. Winter 2022/23;42(2):14-26. By subscription only.

28. International Chiropractic Association. Our History. <https://www.chiropractic.org/about-us/our-history/>.

29. Ebrall P. Changing chiropractic’s subluxation rhetoric: Moving on from deniers and vitalists to realists, post-realists, and absurdists. URL Asia-Pac Chiropr J. 2022;3.3. apcj.net/Papers-Issue-3-3/#EbrallRhetoric.

30. Duffy TP. The Flexner Report--100 years later. *Yale J Biol Med*. 2011 Sep;84(3):269-76. PMID: 21966046; PMCID: PMC3178858. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3178858/>.

Watkins, a vocal anti-Palmerian stated 'I do believe that at this time one of the required subjects in early chiropractic education should be an advanced course in the fundamentals, principles, methods, and attitudes of science', (31) a direct reference to the perceived lack of basic sciences delivered by Palmer. Nugent himself held that 'Effective September 1, 1941, schools shall conduct a course of four years of eight months each, and not less than 3600 hours'. (17) The most negative requirement from Nugent was for future teaching staff to be graduates of a college within the NCA group; an incestuous imposition. (17, p. 16)

Following the Flexner report there is no doubt that the NCA wanted chiropractic to be a pseudo-medical program. Nugent demanded courses in 'Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Bacteriology, and Syphilis'. (17, pp. 11, 21) It is reasonable to think that Nugent's desire was for a doctor of chiropractic to be the equal of a graduate from a medical school.

Walker presented his 'New Chiropractic' in 2016 (14) which was essentially a re-statement of his long-held position given 21 years earlier (1995). (32) Walker took the post-realist approach and condemned "'practitioner ideology" and "practitioner values and circumstances"' as 'self-serving and dangerous notions [which] should not be entertained'. Walker's recommendations were given without any philosophical framework and it is this of which I am critical as it is the same omission committed by both Palmer and Nugent.

I am not talking about the philosophy of chiropractic

Any 'philosophy' of the chiropractic discipline, often packaged as 'chiropractic philosophy' is a completely separate matter to the topic of this paper, the *Philosophy of Chiropractic Education*. There are very many views on the profession's philosophy about what it is and does to the extent it is not practical to attempt even a short summary. It is sufficient to state that 'chiropractic philosophy' is considered by me as a way of thinking that should pervade the chiropractic curriculum; it is more important than just being a unit of learning worthy of inclusion within a program of chiropractic education, also nor should it be a paid add-on for graduates.

My concern in this paper is to describe a philosophy for the delivery of such a program. I appreciate that there are polarised views on what constitutes 'philosophy' within the chiropractic discipline and these conflicting divisions are of no interest in this paper.

Philosophies of education

In my Table 1 I summarise seven (7) philosophical approaches to education. Those which inform my own practice are *Constructivism* and *Existentialism* on the basis that a blend of these requires (i) a common institutional purpose, (ii) ownership of that purpose by all academics of the institution, and (iii) expression of that purpose through class-room delivery of an agreed curriculum. I see this as an approach that places responsibilities on the learner similar to those which will be experienced in private practice by creating a learning environment of social values and professional ethics. It is anticipated that these would later be exhibited in the profession by graduates.

There are other approaches to determining a philosophy of chiropractic education. Lynch (33) talks of teacher-centred philosophies, student-centred philosophies, and society-centred philosophies. The *Stanford Encyclopedia* (34) admits the field is difficult to delineate then seems

31. Watkins CO. Chapter IX, Chiropractic Education. In: The basic principles of chiropractic government. National Institute of Chiropractic Research. 1944. Schrader version, from the collection of Keating Jr. p. about 28.

32. Walker BF There are many changes I would advance, In: Reggars J, Ed. What about the next 100 years [Commentary]. COMSIG Review. 1995;4(3):57-60. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2050382/pdf/cr043-057a.pdf>.

33. Lynch M. 5 things that educators should know about the philosophy of education. The Edvocate. 1 May 2017. <https://www.theedadvocate.org/5-things-that-educators-should-know-about-the-philosophy-of-education>.

34. Philosophy of Education, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Revised 7 October 2018. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/education-philosophy/>.

to lose itself in esoteric philosophical dimensions that are more descriptive of philosophical instruction than of the pragmatics of the learning and instruction required to produce a graduate chiropractor. *Britannica* proposes the question as Janus-faced, looking inwards to the parent discipline of philosophy and outwards to education practice. (35) I accept this view.

Table 1: Philosophical approaches to education, modified by Ebrall for chiropractic education

Philosophical approach	How it is expressed, and its perceived weakness
Perennialism	Chiropractic students would learn ideas that are long-lasting and true, the truths being those found within the discipline. The weakness is the inability of chiropractors to agree on the discipline's truths.
Essentialism	Focuses on moral and intellectual standards including righteousness and virtue. The weakness is that the skills required to be a chiropractor become secondary. This may be the source of what I call 'post-realism'. (29)
Progressivism	Chiropractic students will learn best in real-life situations hence the thrust is to transmit the society of real-world practice to learners. This is essentially a Master/Apprentice model with the weakness being the uncontrollable variations in the characteristics of the Masters.
Constructivism	Chiropractic students are active agents engaged in constructing their own learning. The class becomes an environment of learners and learning leaders in which the experiences of the learners are valued. The weakness is the need for trained learning leaders to funnel learning items in a timely and cumulative manner. It allows greater intellectual freedom than the 'problem-based' learning approach.
Existentialism	The chiropractic student is responsible for themselves and chooses what is right or wrong for themselves. While this approaches the Shinto perspective of my own real-world philosophy, the weakness is the lack of a central, agreed context amenable to the myriad of external regulatory bodies. It may be effective when combined with Constructivism guided by a Learning Leader respectful of both the student and the external legislative requirements with a view to achieving a harmonious and synchronous balance.
Social reconstructionism	Chiropractic students are taught to change society and the profession. This reflects a liberal (leftist) view that students will provide solutions to all perceived problems within the discipline. Its weakness is its idealism and the lack of attention to fundamental clinical skills and arts.
The eclectic approach	As the name suggests this is an approach of no specific method where individual instructors deliver what they think best at the time. I see this as the scenario of an instructor or an institution without any philosophy of education. Its main weakness, apart from lacking a uniform institutional position, is the cycle of unteaching, the negative curriculum. Here for example a certain principle of chiropractic is taught and assessed in one year, then a counter position is taught and assessed in a later year, or worse, at the same time. From a pragmatic perspective this is how I see the majority of chiropractic programs especially those in Australia where individual universities impose their views on a conglomerate of divergent educators. I also see this among programs that are emerging especially in the United Kingdom.

After: Yussif. What is the philosophy of education? Classroom Management Expert. 1 June 2019. <https://classroommanagementexpert.com/blog/what-is-the-philosophy-of-education/>.

Other chiropractic academics may be attracted to Lynch's different ideas, but it is my position as a pragmatist to agree with Yusiff's pragmatic approach given in Table 1. As Barrow and Woods (36) report the core questions resolve to:

- i. 'what is involved in the idea of educating a person or the idea of educational success' and
- ii. 'what are the criteria for establishing the optimal balance between formal and informal teaching techniques'?

35. Philosophy of Education. Written by Harvey Seigel. Britannica. Last update 23 February 2023. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/philosophy-of-education>.
 36. Barrow R, Woods R. An introduction to the philosophy of education. London, Rutledge. 2006. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203969953>.

For me, *Constructivism* and *Existentialism* provide acceptable answers. Perhaps the more important question of Barrow and Woods is (iii) 'How trustworthy is educational research?' and it is here that I admit I take little notice of reports of educational research published in the discipline's literature. I say this while accepting I am a contributor to such reports and retain a healthy skepticism including of my own work which says 'the ideas are interesting but the evidence is not conclusive'. Educators do themselves an injustice when they do not pay attention to the published reports of others, but should, in my view, take the pragmatic approach of reading widely the work of others attempting to improve the quality of their own participation in the education of chiropractors. We are all learners.

As an over-arching Pragmatist it is expected for me to align with Dewey, considered the 'Father of Pragmatism', however on many occasions I do not. An exception where I do agree strongly is with his 1934 position that there is a need for a 'philosophy of education'. (37)

Chiropractic education is a serious matter

Coyle and Tolar in 1995 (38) grandly observed that 'Although education was central to chiropractic endeavour in the 1890s, [chiropractic education commenced in 1897] it is in many ways a forgotten stepchild in the 1990s'. I accept this second observation to remain true and applicable to our current situation as the discipline has moved into the 21st Century.

It is evident that chiropractic academics are publishing very little (39) if anything at all to describe their craft. I accept that there are some engaged academics placing attention on ways they may improve their courses. However, my contention remains that this work is within a philosophical vacuum. I agree with Gatterman (24) that chiropractic education is better when patient-focused and acknowledge that some academics act in this manner, but they are silent on the philosophical approach they are using to best achieve this outcome. I am yet to find their reports in the literature.

I agree with Wiles (23) that a new program is ripe with opportunities to 'do things differently', but what 'things' has he shown us that he will do differently, and which philosophical framework will envelope these efforts? In other words, what can others take from his propositions? The CCE took its own concerns and I think that one paper about a new program which then becomes forced into probation is barely a meaningful contribution to the literature; unless it is to serve as a warning.

It may well be that chiropractic education as it is delivered in North America, whether by Wiles or others, actually has little to share with the world as 'best practice'. Perhaps it has become entrenched in set ways with formulaic classes. In a Guest Editorial in the *Chiropractic Journal of Australia* in 2001 (40) I made a distinction between what I saw as the Americanisation of the Chiropractic curriculum where I believed that Globalisation held more value. My intention was to show that the curriculum could and should reflect different philosophical approaches to learning and not simply replicate the American curriculum of the day, which is really the 1940s Nugent curriculum. (17) Could it be that Wiles was simply using modern technologies to perpetuate the Nugent model, notwithstanding its lack of a guiding philosophy? At that time I had helped implement chiropractic programs in Japan, South Korea, and Malaysia, and believed I held a reasonable idea of how each country interpreted Palmer's philosophy. The approach of Wiles seemed vacuous at the time. (personal communications)

37. Dewey J. The need for a philosophy of education. University of Chicago Press. 1934. <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/pdf/10.1086/656072>.

38. Coyle BA, Tolar RL. Chiropractic education: Fearless youth yet new horizons and distant scenes. *Top. Clin. Chiropr.* 1995;2(2):31-40.

39. Hoskins W, Pollard H, Reggars J, et al. Journal publications by Australian chiropractic academics: are they enough? *Chiropr Osteopat.* 2006;14:13. DOI 10.1186/1746-1340-14-13.

40. Ebrall PS. Guest editorial. Philosophy in chiropractic education: the importance of globalisation as opposed to Americanisation. *Chiropr J Aust* 2001; 31:1-7.

The Transnational Curriculum

The *Transnational Curriculum* (TNC) is an emerging method of Chiropractic program delivery in countries across Asia and East Asia. It is being developed and implemented in the knowledge that there are more people living within this region of the world than outside it, yet beyond Hong Kong and Singapore chiropractic is established to any extent only in countries outside this region. (Fig. 2, (41)) This part of the world is grossly under-served by chiropractic educational institutions and the TNC is one way that this lack of education to produce quality Chiropractors is being corrected.



Figure 2: From 'Staggering facts about the world population'. (41)

Constructivism and Existentialism

Constructivism is an education philosophy, not a learning method. So while it encourages students to take more ownership of their own learning, it doesn't specify how that should be done. (42) It is used as an andragogical approach across subjects and is suited to collaborative small group learning, an integral approach within the TNC. The emphasis is on students collaboratively building their understanding of a topic or issue. Zaphir (42) stresses that '*teacher professional standards require them to build rapport with students to manage behaviour, and expert teachers tailor lessons to students' specific cultural, social and even individual needs*'. It is a characteristic of the TNC that it avoids Americanisation (40) and promotes Globalisation by giving prominence to each country's specific cultural and social needs.

The philosophical objective of leading each learner to construct their own knowledge of chiropractic opens a very broad understanding of what chiropractic may be. The TNC is based on the literature which provides evidence that the predominant practice of Chiropractors is *Conventional* (43) and *subluxation-centric*, a long-term historical clinical concept. (44) To this end the TNC utilises the *Universal Meaning of Subluxation* (45) within a revised *Chiropractic Hierarchy of Evidence*. (46)

The epistemology of *Constructivism* is concerned with the logical categories of knowledge with an ability to justify these. To this end the idea of subluxation is taught in a manner that a student can construct for themselves by assembling relevant clinical findings from a patient examination conducted with due diligence. Constructivism also provides the learner ample exposure to experiences that will help them build their knowledge, and to this end the TNC has a greater density (over 1,500 hours) of clinical placement with structured learning where the *Constructivist* approach facilitates the learner's preparation of publishable case reports. (47)

41. Team Ferns N Petals. 10 Staggering Facts about World Population You Must Know. fnp blog. 4 July 2018. <https://www.fnp.com/blog/10-amazing-facts-about-world-population>.

42. Zaphir L. Knowledge is a process of discovery: how constructivism changed education. The Conversation. 13 December 2019. <https://theconversation.com/knowledge-is-a-process-of-discovery-how-constructivism-changed-education-126585>.

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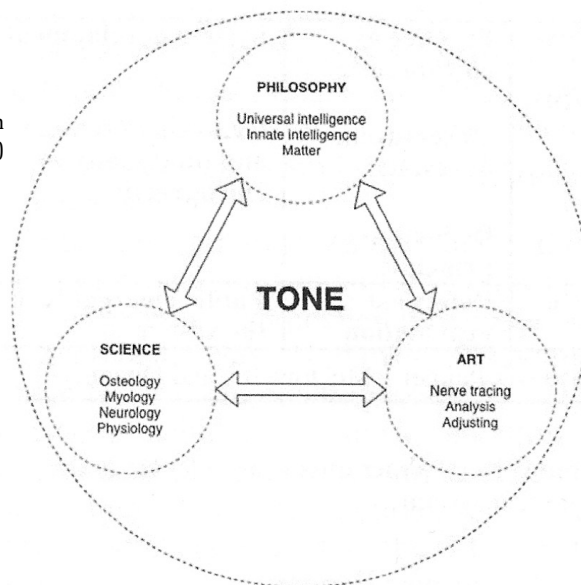
In recognition of the *Perspectival Truth* (48) involved with the identification and correction of the chiropractic subluxation, the philosophy of education embedded in the TNC includes *Existentialism*. It provides 'a rigorous methodology for describing lived experience, as well as an interpretative approach to individual experience'. (49)

Drew makes the point that *Existentialism* focusses on 'the student's freedom and agency to choose their future', (50) which is seen as critical to the success of a chiropractic program in an emerging country where the profession will be formed by the program's graduates. As Existentialists each graduate will carry the responsibility to make authentic choices and it is the responsibility of the program's leadership group to align these choices with the Humanistic intent of chiropractic as a natural healing method. Existentialism is Humanism as a philosophy that believes we should focus on enhancing human life.

Discussion

Early in 2023 Richards published his understanding of the 'Palmerian System of Chiropractic'. (27) His Figure, reproduced below as Fig. 3, provides an evidence-based guide to the contents of a chiropractic curriculum. There will be learnings in 'philosophy' (the main concepts are given), 'science' (Richards identifies the relevant fields) and of course the 'art' of chiropractic (where neurology is emphasised). This model of Palmer's System provides a model for the teaching of it, that is, the chiropractic curriculum. It includes McDowall's emphasis on 'tone' (51, 52) as the resultant of optimal functioning (53) reflective of adjusting (correcting) subluxations. Details of the contents and structure will be discussed in a future paper.

Figure 3: Richards' model of the Level 1 Palmerian System of Chiropractic. (27)



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53. 'functionating' is defined as the present participle of functionate and is the term used by Palmer, and Smith, Langworthy and Paxson, cited by Brosnan* and found in 8 papers in PubMed in the context of highly complex functioning, particularly at microscopic level in genes, and also at the cellular level regarding malignant tumours including those of an androgenital nature. *Brosnan C. Alternative futures: Fields, boundaries, and divergent professionalisation strategies within the Chiropractic profession. *Social Science and Medicine* 2017;190: 83-91.

Constructivism and Existentialism

My choice of *Constructivism* and *Existentialism* form my philosophy of chiropractic education and inform the andragogy for the TNC. This does not seem to be a decision that can be defended or justified, however I am able to argue in its favour and give some ideas about how each was formulated during my approach to this topic.

Between 1995 and 2022 I had deep immersion in the training of chiropractors in Tokyo, Japan. The curriculum from *RMIT University* was translated, delivered, and assessed in Japanese. Thus began my acculturation which was accelerated by repeating the process in South Korea in Korean, and then in Malaysia. I worked in English for the establishment of two programs in Queensland and for the two-times re-writing of the program at *RMIT University*. My prime responsibility was academic integrity which I embedded within curriculum development and student assessment. When all is said and done I have shaped, delivered, and assessed about 8 culturally sensitive curricula in different sociocultural environments over some 33 years. Each of the programs I worked with became fully accredited. Given Wiles (23) raised as significant the matter that he was responsible for one new program, in English in the United States, he should have done better with accreditation. And he should have developed a Philosophy of Education for *Keiser University's* chiropractic program, (54) except it was not so much Chiropractic as '*chiropractic medicine*', whatever that may be.

It is an evolutionary development for me to now be concerned with determining a philosophy for a program of chiropractic education. In the same way that it has not been a concern of other chiropractic institutions, it has not been a concern of Australian Universities. I note Giuriato's work at *Macquarie University* which has an emphasis on improving curricular content and look forward to her explorations should they come to include the *Philosophy of Chiropractic Education*. It may be that the question of a *Philosophy of Education* is mute amongst chiropractic educators, as are concepts of multicultural education. (55) My summation of this situation is that chiropractic academics seem most interested in '*what they deliver*' to students, not in '*the how and why of delivering it*'.

Motivation for this paper

The motivation for my paper is the demand of various National agencies for evidence-based curricula in which an integral element is a statement of the philosophy of education of a particular curriculum. To address this my small team has developed the following statement:

'The philosophy of chiropractic education integral to the delivery of the *Transnational Curriculum for Chiropractors* draws on a blend of Constructivism and Existentialism, where students are considered as Learners and are responsible for their experiences with discovery-learning led by ethical, informed chiropractors in small groups to build a body of evidence for their own future professional practice, a set of psychomotor skills appropriate to their own somatotype which optimises the unique therapeutic intervention of chiropractors, being spinal correction mostly by hand, with the view to aid an individual (patient) to achieve their optimal level of functioning, and who are Humanitarians, conscionable and ethical in their sociocultural interactions.'

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55. Hammerich KF. Commentary on a framework for multicultural education. *J Can Chiropr Assoc.* 2014;58(3):280-5.

Conclusion

An interpretation of the above statement would be weak should one suggest it is eclectic, allowing academics to teach what they want and students to take what they need. To the contrary, it provides a rigorous framework within which all academics are required to hold the same uniform view of *Conventional Chiropractic* (43) and to deliver a constant message of empowerment to learners based on the *Universal Meaning of Subluxation* (45) as it informs the *Palmerian system* of Richards. (27)

Learning is led in small groups to reinforce concepts of intra- and inter-professional cooperation while the Constructivist approach facilitates learners to construct their own version of chiropractic which meets the established sociocultural norms set by example and the content which is learned.

This empowerment is guided by the specific socio-cultural needs of whichever Nation and State in which the program is delivered. The Existentialist element puts onus on the Learner to develop their own philosophically-based application of the standards, morals, and ethics of that society, and to ensure they stand by that understanding in their delivery of patient care.

Some graduates will deliver chiropractic care in a multi-discipline team in a hospital or other government-funded clinical environment, others will deliver patient-centred care in a lean-to-shelter with a dirt floor, as I have witnessed in the Philippines.

There are no accreditation standards that can specify how any one individual person should or could do this; the magic of delivering the best care at the right time comes from the heart of the practitioner, and I hold the view that a mixed philosophy of chiropractic education that blends *Constructivism* and *Existentialism* is most likely a potent way to empower tomorrow's chiropractors.

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