

A Bibliography For Invitational Theory and Practice

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The earliest roots of invitational theory are found in William Purkey's classic discourse *Self-concept and School Achievement* (1970). Following its publication, Purkey, Avila, Siegel and others began to crystallize the assumptions and beliefs of what they called "invitational education." During the past twenty years, an extensive bibliography has been generated on the research and practice of invitational theory. The bibliography of published works and research papers has been compiled for individuals interested in invitational theory (The invitational model), and is presented in this issue of the *Journal of Invitational Theory and Practice*.

As one examines this bibliography, it is apparent that invitational theory is an evolving rather than static conceptual model. Entries in the bibliography further elucidate the major underlying concepts and assumptions of the theory and seek to expand and refine these concepts and assumptions. Most entries in the bibliography describe applications of the model. Authors have applied invitational theory to concerns of school, college, health, and business settings. The areas of nutrition, counseling, college attrition, clinical experience in dental programs and college teaching have received much attention.

Invitational theory has been most often applied to the concerns of schools: teaching, counseling, staff development and administrative functioning. It appears that invitational education first focused on how to develop schools that encouraged positive self concept development in children and increased quality of staff and teacher functioning.

One also may examine the bibliography in a temporal fashion. The International Alliance for Invitational Education is beginning its third decade. Each decade of its existence reveals a different emphasis.

Between 1970 and 1980, the overwhelming focus of invitational theory was the public school setting. Articles focused on teaching, staff development and school environment. Only one article applied invitational theory to a setting beyond grades K-12. That article applied invitational education to the teaching of post-secondary students.

An explosion of articles, books and presentations about invitational theory characterized the 1980-1990 decade. Bibliographical entries demonstrate the

continuing development of the concepts and model and the areas to which it can be applied. Authors asked, "What is invitational education?" and "Why invitational education?" Refinements of the theory and practice of invitational education were a major focus of the decade. Invitational teaching and invitational learning were examples of concepts created during this time period, indicating a refinement and creation of special focuses within the broader scope of invitational theory.

In addition to the refinement of the theory and model, individuals from every imaginable setting began applying the approach. What had earlier been called "invitational education" became more than a theory and practice for schools. It also became a model for practice in colleges, mental health agencies, businesses and hospitals. Entries during the 1980-1990 decade reflected many concerns of our society. There was more of a focus on at-risk students, cultural diversity, school discipline, college attrition, and parental involvement in schools.

Many grants were written during the 1980 decade to help address some of the concerns of students, schools and colleges. These research proposals had a major focus on the at-risk or disconnected student. The goal of these grants was to create more positive school environments for everyone in school instead of separating the psychological or physical dropout from other students. Such separation was thought to create a stigma that worked against the development of positive self-concepts and academic achievement.

In 1990, the invitational model became a structure for research and practice in changing school climate. Specific plans, strategies and programs developed at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro were designed to improve school environments, enhance self-concept of students and staff, and create a more positive climate for learning. For example, "The Five-P Relay" (Purkey, 1991) describes in detail how a school can examine the programs, policies, people, processes, and places characteristic of the school and make changes that enhances the quality of learning and student development.

The beginning of the 1990's already includes signs of tremendous growth for invitational theory. In 1990, invitational theory, the invitational model, and invitational living became concepts which have expanded the purview of invitational education. These new concepts are the focus of the most recent entries in the bibliography and upcoming projects of the Alliance. A monograph, *Advances In Invitational Thinking* and *The Journal of Invitational Theory and Practice* are two examples of movement toward an expansion of invitational concepts and applications.

Although there has been much refinement and expansion of invitational theory, it continues to be based on the perceptual tradition and self-concept theory. As noted earlier, *Self Concept and School Achievement* may be considered the seminal work upon which all later entries are based. The

invitational model had its genesis in the study of self-concept and perceptual psychology. As the importance of self- concept and perception became more accepted as important for behavior, invitational theory emerged. It was developed as a method of creating environments in which self concept could be enhanced and human potential more fully developed.

The following bibliography offers a summary of the literature and research published and presented about invitational theory and practice since its inception. Future theorists and researchers interested in studying and expanding this foundation will find this listing helpful. As with many emerging theories, much of the literature and research is found in non-refereed newsletters and journals. The future acceptance and application of invitational theory will be influenced by rigorous investigation, scholarship, and publication in noteworthy sources.

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