



Humanistic Approaches of Teaching and Learning

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ABSTRACT

A humanistic approach to teaching and learning focuses on developing a child's self-concept and intrinsic motivation towards learning and self awareness. The term "Humanistic approaches to education" covers a wide range of views and actions. A 'Humanistic' approach to education involves a move away from traditional behavior theories and practices towards a perspective that recognizes the uniqueness of each individual's perception, experiences and approaches to learning. Much of a humanist teacher's effort would be put into developing a child's self-esteem. According to Gage and Berliner (1991), students will learn best what they want and need to know. The emphasis here is on internal development and self-regulation. In our present society where knowledge is changing rapidly, this view is shared by many educators from a cognitive perspective.

INTRODUCTION:

A humanistic approach to teaching and learning focuses on developing a child's self-concept and intrinsic motivation towards learning and self-awareness. The approach has a long history, having appeared in various forms from the times of classical Athens and ancient Rome. Modern aspects have often been referred to as 'child-centred' or 'student-centred' and have developed from the work of key theorists Maslow (1954) and Rogers (1959). The theories stress the importance of an holistic approach to learning that recognise the importance of feelings and emotions as well the cognitive. The term "Humanistic approaches to education" covers a wide range of views and actions, from the setting up of Summerhill School by AS Neil through the ideas of "facilitative teaching" put forward by Carl Rogers to the more limited desire of many teachers to focus on the full development of their pupils.

DEFINITION:

A 'Humanistic' approach to education involves a move away from traditional behaviourist theories and practices towards a perspective that recognises the uniqueness of each individual's perception, experiences and approaches to learning. Humanism is often referred to as the 'third force' in psychology

INFLUENCE OF THE HUMANISTIC APPROACHES TO EDUCATION:

The humanistic teacher acts as a facilitator involving the pupil in participatory learning. In direct contrast to behaviorist approaches which hold that the individual is acted upon by the external environment, humanistic approaches hold that the individual 'acts upon' their environment, making choices and decisions to shape their personal world and learning. Each person will actively seek out his or her own life experiences and strive for personal growth. The influence of humanist theory on teaching and learning can be found in the following approaches: person-centred counselling, discovery learning, experiential learning, student-centred learning, co-operative learning and group work approaches. Teachers who wish to implement this approach are likely to

IMPORTANCE OF HUMANISM IN EDUCATION:

Every time a student ceases to be an unknown entity, develops as a person, and is recognized as such, that student suddenly becomes invested in his or her learning and begins to truly learn. If we deny that students have talents, or if we simply ignore their potential, we are not seeing the students for who they are or who they could be. Without connections,

human beings feel alienated and rejected. Yet in many learning environments, we are often telling students they need to forget who they are and what they like because there is work to be done. And so what could be exciting becomes, instead, the epitome of boredom. Then we try to entertain students in order to make learning fun again. We throw candies to our students when they get the answers "right," or we promise them all kinds of rewards. And we forget that learning would have been fun to begin with if we had not stripped it of its original interest through the sheer excitement of discovery. This richness is connected with understanding the essence of the adventure of being human with all the possibilities and flaws, with all the heartbreaks and joys.

HUMANISTIC APPROACHES TO TEACHING:

Humanism would concentrate upon the development of the child's self-concept. If the child feels good about him or herself then that is a positive start. Feeling good about oneself would involve an understanding of ones' strengths and weaknesses, and a belief in one's ability to improve. Learning is not an end in itself; it is the means to progress towards the pinnacle of self-development, which Maslow terms 'Self-actualisation'. A child learns because he or she is inwardly driven, and derives his or her reward from the sense of achievement that having learned something affords. This would differ from the behaviourist view that would expect extrinsic rewards to be more effective. Extrinsic rewards are rewards from the outside world, e.g. praise, money, gold stars, etc. Intrinsic rewards are rewards from within oneself, rather like a satisfaction of a need. This accords with the humanistic approach, where education is really about creating a need within the child, or instilling within the child self-motivation, where education is really about creating a need within the child, or instilling within the child self-motivation. Behaviourism is about rewards from others. Humanism is about rewarding yourself!

ROLE OF A HUMANISTIC TEACHER

Much of a humanist teacher's effort would be put into developing a child's self-esteem. It would be important for children to feel good about themselves (high self-esteem), and to feel that they can set and achieve appropriate goals (high self-efficacy). This form of education is known as child-centred, and is typified by the child taking responsibility for their education and owning their learning. This is so unlike an interested adult surfing through the internet, who derives satisfaction from learning something new, even though nobody is around to witness this acquisition of knowledge. If education is prepar-

ing the child for adult life, it would seem the humanist approach is the correct one.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF HUMANISTIC APPROACHES TO LEARNING:

1. PLACE OF THE CHILD IN TEACHING-LEARNING:

According to this approach student plays a central role in whole teaching-learning process. This approach believes in child-centered-education. This approach, considers that we should first understand the needs, interests, abilities, age level, attitudes, aptitude of students then try to organize teaching learning process according to these.

It emphasizes on reach, touch and teaches the child according to his nature, and interests. All teaching material and its process must be related to individual characteristics of students.

2. EMPHASIS ON INDIVIDUALITY:

According to this approach every individual has his own individuality. Teacher should respect and develop this individuality through education.

Individual differences should be respected and internal virtues of individual be developed. Teacher should understand this individuality and organize his/her teaching-learning process according to this individuality.

3. UNDERSTANDING THE CHILD:

According to this approach, we should understand the child first of all, and then teach him. We, as a teacher, should know our students, their interest, personality, capabilities and background environment and use teaching methods and content accordingly.

Because this approach believes in student centered education so before teaching, a teacher should understand students thoroughly.

4. METHOD OF TEACHING:

In this approach teacher should use methods of teaching which are based on psychological principles. Teacher should not use teacher centered and traditional methods of teaching in it.

Teacher should emphasize on active learning which could consider the learner. Teacher should use the methods which could teach according to needs, interests, abilities and attitudes of learners.

Learner's readiness, mental set and motivation are considered as basis for deciding the method of teaching to be used. So teacher should use learner centered innovative methods of teaching.

5. DISCIPLINE:

Teacher should not force student to be disciplined. He/she should encourage self discipline and self-control among students. Students should be given the responsibility of to be disciplined.

6. PLACE AND ROLE OF THE TEACHER:

According to this approach student plays a central role in teaching learning process. Teacher acts as a guide, friend or helper of the students.

Students should freedom to develop and make progress according to their own pace, needs and interests. Teacher should be considered as the milestone in the journey of total development of the child.

Teacher should not force his own methods and views on students but he should be only a guide in this development process.

7. IT IS A DEMOCRATIC APPROACH:

According to this approach students should be taught in democratic environment. He/she should provide a rich environment with a view to have their around development.

In the end we can say that this is a new innovative approach to teaching which advocates child at the centre of teaching learning process.

A teacher should understand the individuality of the learner and then organize his/her teaching learning process according to needs, interests and abilities of the learner. He/she should be as a guide only and students should be given chance to develop according to their own pace.

CONCLUSION:

It is imperative we recognize that education is made by individuals for individuals, who bring with them unique gifts and inclinations. However, this realization alone is not enough if we want to see the future generations flourish and thrive in creative, stimulating learning environment. We need to ensure that students feel supported in developing their talents and individualities by designing curricula that allow flexibility and freedom of intellectual exploration. Although benchmarks and goals are useful indicators of performance, they should not be envisioned as rigid parameters by which we must wholly abide. The Humanistic approach relies on the teachers ability to truly reinvigorate the "know thyself" motto even if it means that we need to rethink schooling as a whole.

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