HUMANISM IN EDUCATION AND MANAGEMENT OF TEACHING-LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

The concept of humanism in education is not a new concept. The ideas introduced by Maslow, Sartre, Schiller, Schulz, Erickson, Roger, etc. have influenced the social and educational framework since a long time. This school of thought has been attracting attention of people who are the stakeholders of social and educational processes in our society and the all over world. The humanistic approach emphasizes the importance of the inner world of the learner and places the individual's perceptions, sentiments and feelings at the front of all human activities and development. Due to this shift of focus, education and pedagogy moved away from the previous behaviorist approaches, and as a result, a new kind of education known as humanistic education emerged. Subsequently, the educational system has witnessed some important development that occurred in all aspects of education. The traditional roles of teachers and learners were redefined and the previously authoritarian teaching practices were replaced by learner-centered classrooms. This paper looks into and discusses about the basic tenets of the humanism and related issues as well as it entails the implications of humanistic ideology for management of teaching-learning and its stakeholders. The paper accentuates the significance of humanistic education and pleads for a more sensible and sincere role of teachers and other stakeholders for the betterment of education.

KEYWORDS: Humanism, Education, Teachers, Humanistic Techniques, Humanistic Philosophy

INTRODUCTION

"Humanism" is a philosophical and ethical stance that emphasizes the value and centrality of human beings in the worldly phenomena, individually or in group, and generally relies on rational thinking and corroboration rather than on established belief system. The concept of the term *humanism* has been changing with the gradual and successive ideological changes that have been, in some or the other way, associated with it. Generally, however, humanism refers to an ideology or school of thought that revolves around some notion of a "human nature".

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1808 Bavarian educational commissioner Friedrich Immanuel Niethammer coined the term *Humanismus* to describe the new classical curriculum he planned to offer in German secondary schools, and by 1836 the word 'humanism' had been absorbed into the English language in this sense. The term 'humanism' gained universal acceptance in 1856, when it was used by the German historian Georg Voigt to describe Renaissance Humanism'. The Renaissance movement thrived, perpetuated and prevailed in the context of Italian Renaissance to revive classical learning. This human development centered notion of term 'humanism' was prevalent in Germany at about the same time. Karl Marx, Ruge and some other 'Left Hegelians' used this term and propagated it to substantial expansion during this era.

HUMANISTIC EDUCATION

With regard to the rationale behind the humanistic education, the humanistic philosophy grew out of a reaction to the neurotic and mechanistic currents implicit in psychoanalysis and behaviorism and their description of human nature. Alder (1927) then Maslow (1943) paved the way in giving credence to a scientific approach to the role of higher human motives and values in understanding human behavior.

Gage and Berliner (1992) categorized the humanistic psychology into three main parts. The first category emphasized on 'individual self-worth'. The second category gave primacy to human being's feelings; and the third category equated 'personal, social and moral development' of an individual at par with his academic development'. This pattern of thinking gives importance and primacy to the individual. If we consider it in a school setting then the importance given by this thinking is to understanding the worth of students. It acknowledges the dignity and rights of students as that of unique human beings with every individual being on a path of self-realization and self-actualization. Also under the framework of humanism, a student's feelings and aspirations are respected giving due attention to the emotional aspect of learning, leading to the development of a student's positive self-concept and self-respect or self-esteem. This in turn develops self-efficacy of an individual. Humanistic concept of education focuses on learning which has a bearing on students' perception about their own persona and inner-self. Humanistic dimension of educational process intends to educate the individual in totality. The other emphasis is on bringing out the uniqueness of each individual. The term 'self-actualization' here means developing to the level of one's fullest capability and possibility. For a long time the ideological conflicts amongst scholars was continued revolving around the humanistic education which attempted to give importance to primacy of the individual. Though the curricular content is not overlooked or neglected in a class that uses humanistic techniques, in fact an affective or humanistic approach is adopted in which

students are encouraged to be expressive, to narrate and describe their own world-view including about their own-self. They are motivated to be open with others and share their feeling with their peer group.

In summary, among the main premises underlying 'humanistic education' the following are at the core of the framework of education:

◈ A principal purpose of education is to provide learning and an environment that facilitate the achievement of the full potential of students.

◈ The schools have dual responsibilities of students' personal growth as well as cognitive growth. Therefore educational process should deal with both the dimensions of human beings—the cognitive or intellectual and the affective or emotional aspects.

◈ For a significant learning, feelings of an individual must be recognized and channelized appropriately.

◈ Significant learning is discovered for the betterment of oneself and that subsequently leads to the betterment of society.

◈ The potential of human beings needs to be actualized.

◈ A healthy peer-group relationship is more conducive to learning.

◈ Learning about oneself is a motivating factor in learning.

◈ Increasing one's self-esteem is a motivating factor in learning.

Implications of Humanistic Education for Teachers and Policy Makers:-

The implications of humanism in education are of utmost importance for teachers and all the stakeholders. Many scholars and thinkers of humanistic education have worked on this specific issue. Some of the important implications are discussed in the following section.

One of the main goals of educational practices has been mentioned by many scholars to be encouraging the power of critical thinking in students. This implies that in the process of learning the students are actively engaged in a deep mental process. The students should be treated as independent thinkers who are capable of consciously undergoing specific cognitive processes, such as inferring, analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating. Teachers who are regarded as facilitators should consequently provide the nurturing setting for learners to develop their understanding in cooperation with others.

⌘ Focus should be given to develop a discourse community of students, where they actively participate, negotiate for shared meaning, do self-assessment, be aware and sensitive towards their self-actualizing potential, become engaged in learning by doing, and learn 'how to learn'.

⌘ The implications of a humanistic approach for the educational administration should be the motivation for growth and learning which is implicit in every individual. The task of policy makers and decision maker is to create the organizational environment and its activities in such a way that people can achieve their own goals by pursuing towards the collectively defined ends of the institution.

⌘ The administration should ease the competencies of teachers and students to make the best use of their potential by removing undue obstructions and creating an environment of mutual trust, value, and prizing. Everyone should be motivated to take part in the organizational process, become responsible, share initiative, etc.

¤ In-service training for teachers should be organized to develop in them sensitivity towards becoming facilitators for students learning process so that they could understand students' persona and assist and facilitate them accordingly for their better development.

¤ Every learning experience should be considered within the context of assisting the learners to develop a sense of personal identity and associating that identity to the realistic future goals.

¤ Appropriate teacher education programme should be conceptualized to foster good interpersonal skills and induce counseling learning or whole-person learning.

CONCLUSION

The main principles and features of humanistic education were discussed in this paper and a detailed analysis was also presented with regard to its educational implications for various stakeholders. The main proposition behind the humanistic education emphasizes that the affective aspects of students' learning are as important as the cognitive aspects, and therefore every student in the classroom should first be looked at as a human, then a learner. With holistic approach we would be able to facilitate students' learning and their overall development of personality in a more effective way.

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