



Title:JOHN DEWEY & EDUCATION

Author:RADHIKA INAMDAR

Introduction-

John Dewey (1859 -1952) - In today's world of education the key word is '**Learning by doing**' has become the principle of our instructional system.

Teaching -Learning Process:

This idea was put forth by the famous educationist, Philosopher & the great Pragmatist John Dewey.

Before we turn towards the contribution of John Dewey, we must go through or have a look on the basic principles of Pragmatism on the basis of which Dewey has built up his own Theory or philosophy of education. Pragmatism builds on the intuition that experience is the proving ground in which the worth of things is made plain.

In simple words, Experience is the Real test of things according to pragmatism-

1. There are no ultimate truth and ultimate Reality.
2. Man's life is an in broken series of experiences.
3. Man can mould his environment according to his needs, interests and purposes.

Education is the development of all those capacities of the individual which will enable him to control his environment and fulfill his possibilities.

Education means continuous reconstruction of experiences. Problem solving is the true method of learning. Thinking is essentially facing the difficulties. On the basis of which Dewey has introduced the method of '**Learning by doing**'.

Dewey's Laboratory school-

He has founded the laboratory school in the University of Chicago in 1856. He made pedagogical experiments there in order to forge out the 'school of tomorrow. It was here that he evolved his educational philosophy expanded in '**Democracy and education**'. Every school felt his influence and every progressive teacher acknowledged his leadership. He spent two years in China eructating to teachers on the reform of education. He made a study of national schools of Turkey.

The school has four fundamental principles-

- 1) The school should be brought into closer relations with home and neighborhood.
- 2) The curriculum should have a positive value. It should be real and significant to the child's life.
3. Instructions should be related to every day experience. It should be made interesting by relating them to their studies of greater instinct value.
4. Attention should be paid to the individual needs and interests.

Deweys's school was just like an enlarged community. Students learned social life there directly. It was mixed school having three departments a) Shop work with wood and tools b) cooking c) Work with textiles. Both boys and girls were engaged in all the three types of occupations. Experiment and discoveries went side by side while learning the skill, pupil learned art, science, history, geometry etc.

In this school the elementary school life was divided into 3 periods, the play period for the age group (4 to 8), the period of Spontaneous attention (8 to 12 years) and the period of reflective attention (from 12 onwards).

There are no eternal values as such. The world is always in a state of change.

It is the philosophy of optimism.

John Dewey was inspired by Darwinian Theory of Evolution. He has done his Ph. D. in Philosophy.

He visited many Nations and wrote a number of books such as -

- 1) Democracy and education
- 2) School and Society.
- 3) 'How we think'
- 4) Reconstruction of philosophy and else.

According to Dewey "Education is a laboratory where philosophical distinctions become concrete and are tested.

Education is reconstruction of experience giving it a more socialized value through increased, individual experience by giving the individual better control over his powers "

Education is a process of living and not a preparation for future living.

'The school must represent present life, life as real and vital to the child as that which he carries on in home, in the neighborhood or on play ground.'

Regarding the method of learning Dewey has suggested the method of problem solving. He said that a person thinks only then when he found any problem in his way.

'Thinking is intelligent learning'

There are five steps in problem solving.

- 1) Recognition of Problem.
- 2) Observation of conditions able to think and make decisions based on reasoning.
- 3) Formation of rational elaboration or suggested conclusions.
- 4) Experimental testing
- 5) Verification.

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