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PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

By: Kshyama Sagar Meher

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MRP ₹ 240/-

Published by:

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Typesetting by: *Competent Computers*

Printed at: *Novelty Printer*

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QUESTION PAPER

(June - 2019)

(Solved)

PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

Time: 3 Hours]

[Maximum Weightage: 70%

Note: (i) All questions are compulsory.

(ii) All questions carry equal weightage.

Q. 1. Answer the following questions:

Describe the characteristic features of development during adolescence period. Discuss its implications for teachers.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-3, Page No. 18, Q. No. 3, and Page No. 21, Q. No. 6.

Or

Describe phenomenological and social learning approaches to understanding and development of personality and their points of difference.

Ans. Phenomenological Approach

Carl Rogers, G. Kelley and Kurt Levin suggest that subjective experiences determine an individual's personality.

Carl Rogers' Self-theory: Carl Rogers believes that forces within a person cause changes in his behaviour. He suggests that higher spiritual forces have self-fulfilling experiences. He terms behaviourist approach as mechanical.

Structure of Personality: Organism and the self are the two basic concepts that constitute Roger's theory of personality. Organism is the centre around which an individual undergoes all his experiences. He believes that every individual has the potential for self-actualization. He also believes that human behaviour is goal-directed. According to Roger, the totality of human experience is included in phenomenological field.

Dynamics of Personality: Rogers contends that every individual strives to improve his self. His theory of self-actualisation is close to Maslow's theory of self-actualisation. Rogers argues that every individual has the potential to reach self-actualisation and it is his innate ability. However, Maslow says an individual

attains self-actualisation after all his needs are fulfilled. According to Rogers' theory, a person with self-actualisation is satisfied with a higher self-concept, while Maslow says a person achieves self-actualisation in some areas.

According to Rogers, there is no specific stage in personality development. He says an individual constantly seeks growth. Social experiences become catalyst for personality development. An individual attains self-actualisation if he is loved and respected by others, has faith in himself and his abilities, has a clear understanding of the goals and is aware of alternative choices available for self-growth.

A person passes through different types of experiences. He also forms a self during the course of life. After the self is formed, he allows into his consciousness things which are appropriate and rejects those which do not fit in.

Evaluation, interaction with others and experiences lead to formation of a self-structure. He gives importance to individuality in the development of personality.

Kelley's Theory of Personal Constructs:

According to Kelley, thinking, judging and anticipating shape human behaviour. He does not believe that instincts mould human behaviour. Man has the ability to control and predict his life.

Structure of Personality: An individual's experiences and his interpretation of them shape his personality development. In the next step, experiences mould into attitudes which become the core of the personality.

Dynamics and Development of Personality: Kelley says internal forces and energy make an individual activate organism. He believes instincts make a man an inert machine. He also says that living organisms get motivated.

He does not say in detail how personality develops. His belief is that personality develops gradually since personal constructs emerge from experiences. He gives great importance to rationality in personality development.

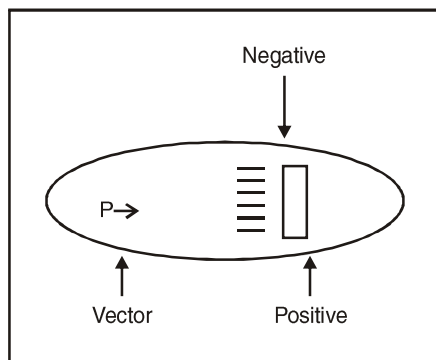
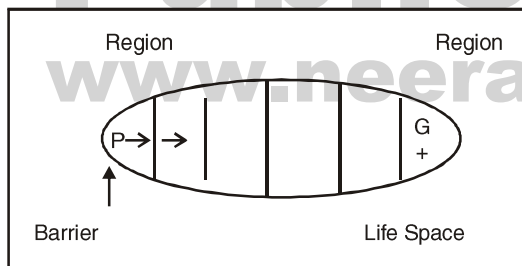
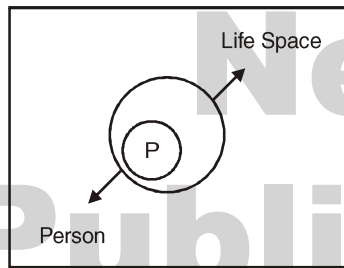
Kurt Levin's Theory : Kurt Levin's theory is called field theory. The basic concepts in field theory include typology, barrier, life space, regions, vector, valence and conflict.

Typology refers to the properties of figures which do not go with the change even in the process of constant transformation.

Barrier works as resistance to psychological locomotor.

Life space is the relation between the personality and the environment. Life space causes behaviour change. Mathematically it is written as:

$B = f(P, E)$ This implies that behaviour is the function of environment and personality in the life space.



Region: Region refers to each part of life space in which a person can move without any restriction.

Vector: Magnitude and direction are represented by vector.

Valence: Valence can be negative if it is not attractive and it can be positive if it is attractive.

Social Interest: Social interest means an individual's social participation like cooperation, interpersonal relationship, empathy and identification with group norms. Adler says social interest is latent and inborn quality of an individual.

Neo-Freudians: Notable neo-Freudians include Erich Fromm, Horney, Sullivan and Erikson. These psychologists have adopted psycho-analytic approach to explain their theories.

Erich Fromm: Erich Fromm view on personality has a sociological approach. He believes man's feeling of isolation and loneliness produce certain needs:

The Need for Relatedness: Man wants to make a relationship with the nature to get rid of the trouble he is in after he cut off from the nature.

The Need for Transcendence: Man rises above the animal instinct with this need which can be achieved through love and hate.

The Need for Rootedness: Man needs to look for his roots in society.

The Need for Identity: It is a man's desire to have an identity.

The need for frame of reference: Man looks for stable relationship with others in society.

Development of Personality: According to Fromm, there is no specific age for personality development. He says personality can develop even during adolescence if there is strong external influence. Childhood experiences have strong impact on personality development. An individual differentiate between "I" and "not I" in different situations. The child feels isolated when he stays away from parents.

Karen Horney: According to Karen Horney, cultural factors play an important role in personality development. Human being is constructive and not destructive. She suggests the following principles of development.

Optimism-positivism: She believes that man has many positive elements that influence personality development.

Sample Preview of The Chapter

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PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

*PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES OF EDUCATION
IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS*



Learning and Teaching – Psychological Perspective

INTRODUCTION

William James defines psychology as the science of mental life, including its phenomena and their conditions. Phenomena refer to feelings, desires, cognition and mental facts. In modern time, psychology is defined as the scientific study of mental processes, experiences and behaviour.

Education is related to psychology because modification of human behaviour is possible through learning and teaching. Educational psychology is the study of psychology in education. It studies the developmental characteristics of growth of human mind. It seeks to improve practices in the field of education. In this chapter, we will discuss the role of psychological findings in education, understand the concept of learning and teaching and the role of teacher in teaching and learning.

CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Educational psychology covers the theories of human learning and instruction including their development, evaluation and application. It assists the teacher to apply effective teaching strategy and methodology in teaching and learning.

Educational psychology focuses on three elements—learner, learning process and learning situation.

Learner: The key in teaching and learning is the learner. Understanding the psychological characteristics and developmental trends in the learner is very important. A person passes through different stages – infancy, childhood, adolescence and adulthood. They have different psychological features – abilities, needs, interest, aspirations and adjustment problems. Understanding all these is needed for effective education.

Learning Process: It is the process of modification in human behaviour, improvement in performance, understanding new concepts and recognize thinking. In psychological perspective, learning process is how people learn, the impediments in learning and how an effective learning takes place.

Learning process covers everything what a learner does during learning such as perceiving, thinking, remembering, identifying, writing, talking and computing. In learning process, educational psychologist strives to know why a person learns, why a person does not learn and how effective learning happens.

Learning Situation: It refers to indoor and outdoor learning environment. Learning situation includes all factors and conditions that have an impact in the learning process. They include the class room setting, the teacher, the school environment, the family circumstances, teaching aid and the library facilities. Understanding the learning situation is important for effective teaching and learning.

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Psychological perspective of teaching and learning covers the following:

- (i) How human growth and development take place, how they are influenced by heredity and environment; trends and maturation in social, moral, emotional and intellectual development; how motivation happens; differences in human development; cognitive and psychomotor abilities and development of various skills.
- (ii) Understanding nature and process of learning; what are the factors that affect learning; different theories and learning; creating motivation in learners; understanding nature and learning skills; understanding mental abilities including thinking, reasoning and judgement; different attitudes towards learning.
- (iii) Different types of personalities and adjustment mechanism; understanding mental health; exceptional characteristics in children; and various group dynamic and socialism in people.
- (iv) Various methods and techniques in educational psychology; statistical methods; and implementation of research for effective teaching and learning.
- (v) Evaluation and assessment of human abilities; preparation of psychological test and their applications.

Thus, application of various methods and theories of psychology for effective learning and teaching is covered in the psychological perspective of education. A teacher has to understand and apply these methods and theories in the process of teaching and learning.

LEARNING: PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION

Learning refers to change in a person's knowledge and behaviour. The modification may or may not be correct, good, conscious and deliberate. The change happens because of interacting with other person or environment. Learning does not include change in physical attributes because of maturation or illness or injury. Cognitive psychologists state learning as mental activity which cannot be seen directly such as judgement, thinking, solving problems and remembering. On the other hand, behaviourists say learning causes change in behaviour.

Learning means acquiring new skills, knowledge, attitude and habits. It causes progressive changes and enables people to achieve their goals. It makes a person operate differently and assists in overcoming obstacles. In learning, an activity originates and changes by reacting to the environment.

There are three perspectives of learning: (i) cognitive theories, (ii) behaviourist theories, and (iii) neo-behaviourism.

Cognitivist Views on Learning

Cognitivist views believe that learning is an internal change. It is the change in thinking, emotion and ability of a person. Some cognitivists view overt learning behaviour as symptomatic. They say learning reflect real changes that take place internally. Jean Piaget, Jerome Bruner, Robert Gagne, David Ausubel and Lev Vygotsky champions of the cognitive views on learning.

According to cognitive theories, intervening variables or intervening process plays an important role in learning. They argue that learning is not a mechanical link between stimulus (S) and response (R). The organism controls S and controls, directs and changes R as per the requirements. Mind as an intervening variable directs and controls the behaviour. They say both the learner is a dynamic energy in the environment, but both the learner and environment act and react in the learning process. This is also called field theory.

Behaviourists Views on Learning

Behaviourists believe that learning is changes in behaviours which can be seen. Some old behaviourists rule out change in thinking or emotion because of learning. John Watson coined the term "Behaviourism" for the first time. Famous behaviourists include John Watson, Ivan Pavlov, B.F. Skinner and E.L. Thorndike.

According to behaviourists, learning takes place because of a strong connection between stimulus (S) and response (R). Any change in the external energy that brings a response is called stimulus. For example, in a phone call, the call/caller is the stimulus and the receiver is the response. This is also called connectionist theories or stimulus-response theories.

Neo-behaviourist Views on Learning

Neo-behaviourists believe learning causes changes in internal processes such as thinking and emotion as well as in observable behaviour. They believe changes in behaviour can be seen and are influenced by internal changes. This is also called neo-cognitivist theory.

Aristotle's view was we learn in three situations: when things are similar, when they are in opposite and when they are contiguous. These are called principle of similarity, principle of contrast and principle of continuity respectively. The principle of contiguity is significant because it explains learning by association.

TEACHING: PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Teaching is an interaction between the learner and the teacher. It is deliberate and involves a series of activities. In teaching, the teacher plays a crucial role as an instructional expert. He facilitates learning. He guides the learners, assess their learning experience and act accordingly for effective teaching. The teacher

possesses pedagogical content knowledge. He acts as counsellor and assists the learners in the learning process.

Thus, teaching has the following features:

- (i) It involves a series of behaviours on the part of the learner and the teacher.
- (ii) It involves interactions/relationship between students and teachers.
- (iii) It is a deliberate act with an objective.

Thus, teaching is an interactive activity involving communication with an objective to assist learners to learn the ways they should behave.

Teaching facilitates learning. It is the process of delivery and transformation of knowledge. An effective teacher is warm, enthusiastic and supportive. He should organise the classroom with proper curriculum and objectives. He manages teaching by making and maintaining rules. He allows flexibility and rewards the successful learners. An effective teacher employs didactic teaching. He uses knowledge to understand and resolve problems in teaching. He also knows how to mould content into curriculum.

Effective teaching can be studied as the science of instructional planning and delivery and the art of shaping the environment in which learning takes place. Psychologists have been trying to understand the link between teaching and learning.

For effective teaching, the teacher should have knowledge, enthusiasm and clarity in thinking. An effective teacher reviews, explains and checks the learning process. He maintains the pace and level of difficulty as per the requirement. He re-teaches if needed. An effective teacher is thoughtful and inventive about teaching. They do not apply just certain specific techniques, they plan how to teach, solve problems and overcome difficulties in the teaching and learning process. Teaching has to be specific with regard to task, time, place, content and participants. Teachers have to act as guides for the learners. They have to be innovative with every new subject.

Those who criticise teacher-centred teaching point out that teaching by breaking materials into small sections and imparting them with clarity and correcting responses of the learners is only transforming knowledge to students from teachers.

Teachers should be competent. They should invent new strategies as per the need. They should have some routines. At the same time, they should be willing to break from the rules. They should depend on general theories. At the same time, they should have situation specific insight. They need to know their students to make the teaching and learning effective.

SIGNIFICANCE OF PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

Understanding the Learner

The psychology of learning and teaching means application of psychology in education. It deals with the processes, problems and product of learning and teaching. Psychological methods and techniques are used in understanding the mental, emotional and psycho-social growth and effectiveness of teaching. It studies the psychological aspects of teaching and learning situation.

Understanding the Teaching-learning Process

The psychology of learning and teaching helps in understanding learner's capacities, potentialities and shortcomings. It also involves understanding the problems in the teaching and learning process. It deals with the application of psychological principles following psychological research and investigation for effective learning. It aims at finding out the nature of the learners and work towards harmonious development of the child keeping in view the age, ability and aptitude of the learner.

Psychological bases of Curriculum

Curriculum should be prepared keeping in view the psychological characteristics of children. The psychological findings on learner's development are required for preparing curriculum for effective teaching and learning. Teacher needs to understand the learner's endowments and plan his teaching as per the need. Teaching method may differ as the teacher has to apply it keeping in view the development trends.

Classroom Implication

The psychology of teaching and learning assists teachers know the teaching and learning process. It deals with the learner, the learning process and the learning situation. These three aspects are interrelated and the teacher must understand all these aspects for effective learning and teaching.

ACTIVITIES

Q. 1. Identify the areas in which psychology plays an effective role in teaching and learning process with suitable example. Write in about 100 words.

Ans. Psychology plays an effective role in understanding learner's abilities, needs and interest; making learning process effective; creating conducive learning situation and in measurement and evaluation. Psychology is required in understanding how learning happens, obstructions in learning and how an effective learning takes place. With psychological techniques, a teacher understands how a learner perceives, thinks, remembers, identifies and writes. Educational

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psychologist tries to know why a learner learns and how learning process can be effective. Psychology helps a teacher in creating better learning environment. Conducive class room setting, environment, family circumstances and teaching aid are required for effective teaching and learning.

For example, if a student is not at all interested in study, the psychology will help the teacher to understand why the child is de-motivated. He can study him through psychological tests, observation and other assessment methods.

Q. 2. Based on the discussion on the psychological interpretation of learning, briefly discuss the role of psychology in the teaching-learning process in about 100 words.

Ans. Psychology has an important role to play in the teaching-learning process. Whatever may be the learning – internal changes or observable behavioural modifications – it is the mind that intervenes in the learning process. Without mind – thinking, a person cannot learn. He has to apply his mind and thinking. Thus, learning is a psychological process. A person cannot learn if he does not think and react. The response comes when stimulus excites the nervous system and mind. The learning occurs following interactions between persons or between the learner and the environment. Learning is not physical changes due to maturation or physical illness.

Q. 3. A teacher finds from self-appraisal that his/her techniques are not effective in facilitating learning. What should he/she do to make these effective.

Ans. The teacher needs to find out the problems in his teaching and learning process. First, he has to understand the learners – their abilities and mental, emotional and psycho-social growth. He should understand the teaching and learning situation. The teacher should set goals and should have clarity in planning and thinking. He needs to review, explain and checks periodically to know the effectiveness of learning process. He has to be inventive about his teaching. He has to be particular with regard to task, time, place, content and participants. Teachers should act as guides for the learners.

QUESTIONS FOR CRITICAL REFLECTION

Q. 1. They say, “Science is what the scientist does”. Can we say, “Teaching what the teacher does”. Or is there any other way that teaching can be defined?

Ans. Teaching is the most fundamental part of a teacher’s job. It is more obvious than inspiring, motivating and forming relationships. The act of

teaching is personal. No two teachers are the same. Teaching depends on the teacher’s personality, his experiences and his ambitions. His pedagogy – teaching style – is shaped by all these characteristics.

Effective teachers find balance between a curriculum – centered and a student-centred approach. They make learning fun, as stimulating, engaging lessons are pivotal to a student’s academic success. Teachers also inspire students to ensure their success and encourage them to fulfil their potential. Teachers can also be a trusted source of advice for students weighing important life decisions. Educators can help their pupils pursue higher education, explore career opportunities and compete in events they might otherwise have not thought themselves able to.

Q. 2. What does psychological perspective in teaching and learning involve? Reflect and explain.

Ans. Teaching involves a series of activities that a teacher and students carry out. The teacher plays a crucial role as an instructional expert. He facilitates learning by creating suitable learning situation. He guides the learners, assesses their learning experience and acts accordingly for effective teaching and learning. He acts as counsellor and assists the learners in the learning process. The teacher must possess pedagogical content knowledge. Thus, teaching involves a series of behaviours on the part of the learner and the teacher. It involves interactions between students and teachers. It is also a deliberate act with an objective. Thus, teaching is an interactive activity involving communication with an objective to assist learners to learn the ways they should behave.

For effective teaching, the teacher needs to have knowledge, enthusiasm and clarity in mind. An effective teacher reviews, explains and checks the learning process. He maintains the pace and level of difficulty as per the requirement. Teachers should be competent enough to motivate students. They should invent new strategies as per the requirements and situations.

Q. 3. In so far as explanation of learning is concerned, neo-behaviourist occupies a connecting link or it is a middle path between the two extremism of behaviourism and cognitivism. Explain.

Ans. Neo-behaviourists support both the behaviourist views and cognitive views on learning. They believe learning leads to changes in internal processes such as thinking and emotion and causes changes in observable behaviour. They believe changes in behaviour of a person can be seen and are influenced by internal changes.

Neo-behaviorists believe that human behaviour cannot be fully understood simply in terms of observable stimuli and reactions. They say the analysis of some central regulatory mechanisms is also required.