E-Content

B.Ed.

Educational Ideas of Froebel

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Objectives:

Dear students, after going this e-tutorial you should be able to understand

1. Froebel’s Kindergarten philosophy of education.
2. Froebel’s educational thought with special reference to play way method.

Introduction

**Friedrich Wilhelm August Frobel** (21 April 1782 – 21 June 1852) was a German educator, a student of Pestalozzi, who invented the kindergarten- ‘the children’s garden’ in 1837 and one of the most influential educational reformers of the 19th century. He attached an immense significance to native ability of children and advocated sympathetic regard for these. He believed children needed a place where their unique desires and potentialities could be cherished, encouraged and helped to flourish.

(Source: [https://www.communityplaythings.co.uk/learning-library/articles/friedrich-froebel](https://www.communityplaythings.co.uk/learning-library/articles/friedrich-froebel))
Educational Thought of Froebel

- Friedrich Froebel was of the idea that children should be trained as soon as possible to become creative members of the bigger society.
- Froebel's vision was to excite a pleasure and love for children and to provide a novel but small world- a world that became known as the Kindergarten.
- Kindergarten is the place where children could play with same age group and experience their world of independence.
- Frobel believed that every child possesses whole educational potential by birth and an appropriate educational environment is required to support the child to grow and develop in an optimal way.
- Frobel among educational reformers totally opposed the cultural imposition theory through their belief that adults should not enforce their views and ways upon young children of society.
- Froebel was of the belief that what is needed to each child's level of development and willingness, not what is estimated by society.

Four Basic Components of Froebel's Philosophy of Education

1. Free self-activity
2. Creativity
3. Social participation

Self activity and Play

- Froebel believed that exciting voluntary self-activity among young child is the essential form of pre-school education.
- Self-activity is defined as the development of qualities and skills that make it possible to take an invisible idea and make it a reality.
• Self-activity involves devising a purpose, planning out that purpose and then performing on that plan until the purpose is understood.

• One of Froebel's important contributions to early childhood education was the theory of introducing play as a means of involving children in self-activity for the purpose of externalizing their innate nature.

• Froebel's understanding of play is characterized by free play which seeks all of the child's imaginative powers, thoughts and physical movements.

• It was continued by indicating that play designates a child's mental attitude and should not be identified with anything performed externally.

• A child should be given complete freedom from the prerequisite of following any given or prearranged system of activities while he is engaged in playful self-activity.

• Froebel's beliefs regarding play is concluded as through stimulating play that produces self-activity, the ultimate goal of the child is the completeness of growth which brings about the understanding of his potential powers and frequently carries him from one plane of educational growth to another.

Gifts

• To assist children in their development of moving from one plane of educational growth to another, Froebel provided the children with various exciting activities to boost their creative powers and abilities.

• Froebel designed a chain of instructional materials that he called "gifts and occupations", which confirmed certain relationships and led children in comparison, testing, and creative exploration activities.

• A gift is an object provided for a child to play with such as: a sphere, cube, or cylinder, which helped the child to understand and internalize the concepts of shape, dimension, size, and their relationships.

• A gift is an object used to train the sense of touch and sight of children and also gives them the idea of size and surface and to teach them a correct idea of number. The sphere, cube, or cylinder are the basic forms of gifts.

• The occupations are items such as paints and clay which the children could use to make what they wish.
• Through the occupations, children externalized the concepts existing within their creative minds.
• Through the child’s own self-activity and creative imaginative play, the child would begin to understand both the inner and outer properties of things as he shifts through the developmental stages of the educational process.

**Importance of Family**

• A third component of Froebel’s educational plan involved working closely with the family unit.
• Froebel believed that parents provided the chief as well as the most reliable educational influence in a child’s life.
• Since a child’s first educational experiences occur within the family unit, he is already familiar with the home atmosphere as well as with the activities carried on within this setting.
• Naturally, through creative self-activity, a child will duplicate those things that are in a direct and real relationship to him, especially things that he learns through observations of daily family life.
• Froebel believed that providing a family setting within the school environment would provide children with opportunities for interacting socially within familiar field in a non-threatening manner.
• Focusing on the home environment occupations as the foundation for beginning subject-matter content permitted the child to develop social contact skills that would prepare him for higher level subject-matter content in later educational developmental stages.

*Froebel (1907)* urged teachers and educators to respect the sanctity of child development through this statement:

“*We grant space and time to young plants and animals because we know that, in accordance with the laws that live in them, they will develop properly and grow well. Young animals and plants are given rest, and arbitrary interference with their growth is avoided, because it is known that the opposite practice would disturb their pure unfolding and sound development; but, the young human being is looked upon as a piece of wax or a lump of clay which man can mold into what he pleases*” (p. 8).
Motor Expression

- Motor expression, which refers to learning by doing as conflicting to following rote instructions, is a very important feature of Froebel’s educational principles.
- Froebel did not believe that the child should be placed into society’s style, but should be allowed to shape his own style and grow at his own pace through the developmental stages of the educational process.
- Corbett (1998) upholds Froebel’s doctrines that a child should never be hurried in his development but he needs to be involved in all of the experiences.
- Each stage requires seeing the relationships of things and ideas to each other and to the child so that he can make sense out of both his subjective and objective world.
- It was further agreed that development is continuous, with one stage structuring upon another, so that nothing should be skipped through haste or for any other reason as the child moves through the educational process.
- Teachers should attempt to recognize each child's individual level of development.
- Inspire appropriate educational growth can be offered.
- Froebel believed that imitation and suggestion would unavoidably occur, but should only be utilized by the teacher as instruments for supporting students in formulating their own instructional concepts (Dewey, 1990).

Conclusion

Friedrich Froebel was of the idea that children should be trained as soon as possible to become creative members of the bigger society. He advocated children needed a place where their unique desires and potentialities could be cherished, encouraged and helped to flourish. Froebel did not believe that the child should be placed into society’s style, but should be allowed to shape his own style and grow at his own pace through the developmental stages of the educational process. Teacher should endeavor to recognize each child's individual level of development.
Check Your Progress

1. What do you understand by Kindergarten?
2. Explain in your own words the relevance of Froebel’s thought of education in Indian education system?
3. Why Froebel preferred play way method?

Suggested Online Resources

www.epgp.inflibnet.ac.in
https://swayam.gov.in/
http://cec.nic.in/E-Content/

Suggested Readings