

Philosophical and Educational Thought of Pestalozzi

Philosophical Thought of Pestalozzi

Pestalozzi was born on 12 January, 1746 at Zurich in Switzerland. His complete name was John Heinrich Pestalozzi. His father was a doctor and mother a housewife. When Pestalozzi was five years old, his father died. He left behind him three children. Now the responsibility of looking after these children descended on their mother. In the execution of this responsibility, the maid-servant of his father's time, Babeli, helped a great deal. Pestalozzi's mother was a simple and liberal woman, and Babeli helped them not for money but for serving them. It was natural for Pestalozzi to be influenced by these two. Pestalozzi developed the feelings of love, sympathy, cooperation, mercy and service from the very beginning.

The truth remains that Pestalozzi has not propounded any new philosophy, nor he has analyzed the philosophical principles propounded before him. But as a thinker, he had his own attitude towards life. And in the development of this attitude, he was immensely influenced by the religious nature of his mother and service of the maid-servant, who had served them selflessly after the death of his father. He was in agreement to Rousseau's views to some extent. He also learnt much from his contemporary philosopher Fischte. We shall try to limit and analyze his philosophical thought in metaphysics, epistemology, logic, axiology and ethics.

Metaphysics of Pestalozzi's Philosophical Thought

Pestalozzi believed in the soul and God, from this viewpoint some people consider him as an idealist. He considered the material world as real, so some people consider him as a realist. He considered the innate powers of man as the basis of his development, so some people consider him as a naturalist. But the reality is that he has not considered the material world as the ultimate truth like the realists, nor he has neglected the society like naturalists. He believed in the religion and eternal morality, so he is basically an idealist.

Epistemology and Logic of Pestalozzi's Philosophical Thought

Pestalozzi has looked at man in the background of whole mankind and whole

world. Besides laying emphasis on the realization of mind and soul, he also laid emphasis on the knowledge of real life. In his view, real knowledge is attained by direct experience and the realization of soul is attained by human service in the society.

Axiology and Ethics of Pestalozzi's Philosophical Thought

Pestalozzi has laid emphasis on abidance by religiosity and morality, but he did not believe in the external ostentations of religion. In his view, religion and morality are related to the heart. So long man does not develop the feelings of love, kindness, pity and service in his heart, and abides by them in his life, he cannot be called religious and moral. He considered love, kindness, pity and service as human values and emphasized on making them as the inseparable part of man's conduct.

Educational Thought of Pestalozzi

Pestalozzi's educational thought is based on his philosophical thought and psychological facts. We can see the clear imprint of Rousseau on his educational thought. He had carried out several experiments in the educational field, especially in the field of child education. He has arranged his experiences and thought in his books. From the viewpoint of education, three of his creations are of special significance — *Leonard and Gertrude*, *How Gertrude Teaches Her Children*, and *My Investigations into the Course of Nature in the Development of Human Race*.

Concept of Education

Pestalozzi has defined education as a development of man's inherent powers. He has analyzed human development on the basis of the growth of a tree. He clarified that the whole tree is inherent in its seed, and as the seed requires proper environment to grow from a seed to a tree, in the same manner, the whole man is inherent in an infant, and proper environment is needed to develop the infant into a man, and the most important role in this environment is played by education. During Pestalozzi's times, by education was meant to impart knowledge from outside. Pestalozzi presented his views just contrary to this opinion and said that by education is not meant to impose knowledge from outside, but is to express the innate powers of man towards outside and to develop them. This development should be natural, harmonious and progressive. He has defined education on this very basis. In his words, "Education is a natural, harmonious and progressive development of man's innate powers."

Aims of Education

Pestalozzi has laid emphasis on making man a good man by education. He believed that until a man is not made a good man, neither he can become happy,

nor the society can become happy. For it, he laid emphasis on the natural, harmonious and progressive development of man's innate powers at first; and then he laid emphasis on the development of human qualities — love, sympathy, mercy and others' welfare, etc. he emphasized on making man self-dependent in order to get him rid of his sufferings, and wanted to enable him to earn his livelihood. Besides, he wanted to impart the education of religion and morality. He opined that religion and morality only make man a man, and he wanted to start this process from the primary level itself. These aims of education as determined by Pestalozzi can be discussed as follows :

1. Development of Innate Powers of Man : According to Pestalozzi, man has three types of innate powers — physical, mental and moral. The first aim and function of education is to effect the natural, harmonious and progressive development of these powers.

2. Development of Human Qualities in Man : At the time of Pestalozzi, there was great deficiency of human qualities of love, sympathy, mercy, others' welfare and liberality in man. Pestalozzi laid much emphasis on the development of these qualities in man by education.

3. Making Man Self-Dependent : Most of the people in his country were grievous during his times. The chief cause of this grief was dependence on others, so he laid emphasis on making man self-dependent. By making him self-dependent, he meant to enable him to earn his livelihood. For it, he emphasized on the education of a vocation. It is called the aim of vocational education today.

4. Social Progress : According to Pestalozzi, the progress of a society depends on the progress of the individuals so he laid emphasis on the development of innate powers of man and on the development of human qualities in him and to make him self-dependent. All this would bring about the social development automatically.

5. Development of Religiosity and Morality : He wanted to base human conduct on religion and morality. He believed that these provide permanent basis to human conduct. In his view, this should be the foremost aim of education.

Curriculum of Education

Pestalozzi has basically expressed his thought on the curriculum for school education (for children from 3 to 13 years). In his views, the innate powers of children should be developed at first. For it, he emphasized on providing opportunities to the children for playing, observing things around them and observation of nature. He considered language as a means of expression, so he gave the first place to it in the curriculum of primary education. In his views, art and music too are helpful in the expression of feelings, so he included them in the school curriculum. Pestalozzi took specific interest in the education of the poor

and the deprived, so he laid emphasis on vocational education (agriculture, farming, spinning and weaving, etc.). He considered religion and morality as the basis of human life, so he stressed on their education right from the beginning. In his view, the education which does not train the children in human conduct is incomplete education.

Methods of Teaching

Pestalozzi was much influenced by Rousseau as far as teaching methods are concerned. He tried to base the educational process and teaching process on psychology. He described the three stages of child brain. First, **vague sense experience**. At this stage, the brain receives the shape of an object through sense organs. Second, **evident sense experience**. At this stage, the brain receives it clearly. Third, **classification stage**. At this stage the brain receives the real knowledge. In the view of Pestalozzi, the children learn in this sequence, so the schools too should provide opportunity to the children to learn in this sequence. He emphasized that the teaching of activities and feelings should also be done in the same order. He further said that in order to make thus obtained knowledge permanent, opportunities for exercise and repetition should be given to the students. Pestalozzi is considered to be the father of exercise and repetition method. In present time the thoughts of Pestalozzi regarding teaching are known as teaching principles. These principles are as follows :

1. Principle of Psychological Basis : Pestalozzi laid emphasis on the fact that the education of children should be based on their psychology, so should the teaching methods be. The children like to live independently, so they should be given opportunity to learn independently. The children are inclined towards activity, so they should be given opportunity to learn by doing. The children learn with their own specific rate, so they should be allowed to learn at their own rate. This is the reason that Pestalozzi has given prominent place to psychology in his teacher training programme.

2. Principle of Education through Senses : Pestalozzi considered senses as the basis of receiving knowledge. He also developed a method on this principle of education through sense organs, which is called *anschauung* in German language. In this method, the children learn by experience through senses, learn by observation and learn by doing. Pestalozzi imparted the education of shape (form), numbers and language by this method.

3. Principle of Mental Activity : Pestalozzi laid stress on this fact that the children should be given opportunities to learn on the basis of the stage of the brain. The children should be imparted the knowledge of objects, activities and feelings through direct sense experiences, after that their vague knowledge of first perception through senses should be transformed into clear knowledge, and finally,

the learnt knowledge should be given a permanent form through exercise and repetition.

4. Principle of Simple to Complex : Pestalozzi also laid emphasis on this fact that whatever is to be taught to the children, they should be given opportunity to learn the simple form of it first, and then complex and more complex. The children should first solve the simple problems of a fact and then they should be led to more complex ones.

5. Principle of Fixation : Pestalozzi laid special emphasis on the fact that so long a fact has not been fully grasped by the children, they should not be guided to the next fact.

On the basis of the above principles, Pestalozzi has also developed different methods for teaching and training of different subjects and activities. We shall discuss them briefly.

Development and Training of Innate Powers : Pestalozzi provided independent opportunities to the children for playing, observing and speaking. Besides, he gave them the opportunities for self-observation, self-activity and self-experience. It brought about automatic and spontaneous development of innate powers.

Language Teaching : Pestalozzi favoured commencing language education from dialogue. According to him, when the child has become skilled in speaking, then he should be taught how to read. After he has been taught how to read, Pestalozzi taught him vowels, then consonants and then words and finally sentences. Pestalozzi took writing as a mechanical art. For teaching how to write, he made the children exercise straight, diagonal and circular lines, then he made them write letters, words and sentences with their pronunciation.

Oral Arithmetic Teaching : Pestalozzi first taught oral arithmetic, and then he taught written mathematics. In order to teach oral mathematics, he used some objects available in the environment, he then asked the children for their addition or subtraction, and taught them multiplication and division. After oral practice, he did ask them for the solution of written problems.

Geometry Teaching : He imparted the knowledge of geometry by direct method. First he showed geometrical shapes to the children and then asked them to draw them and after it allowed them to see inter-relationships in them.

Geography Teaching, Nature Study and Industrial Education : Pestalozzi used observation method for geography teaching and nature study and he used the observation, exercise and repetition methods for vocational training.

Science Teaching : For science teaching, he used the observation and inductive methods and emphasized on planning teaching work on the basis of children's progress.

Moral Education : According to Pestalozzi, there is no need of providing moral education separately. The school environment and working system should be such that the children believe in God, love one another and cooperate with one another and serve one another. For it, he attached importance of maintaining father-son like relationship between teacher and students.

Discipline

Pestalozzi laid emphasis on affectionate behaviour with the children. In his view, the children should be given the education of discipline affectionately, and not by any type of punishment. When the children commit an improper conduct, they should be made to understand it with love. He believed that there is no question of children becoming indisciplined in an affectionate environment. In his words, "Discipline should be based on and controlled by love."

Teacher

Pestalozzi provided psychological basis to education. He expected of the teachers to have clear knowledge of the psychology of the children and teaching-learning process. He believed that when the teachers provide independent opportunities to the children for their development, they would function as the assistant in their spontaneous development and behave with them lovingly. He emphasised on maintaining father-son like relationship between teacher and students. He opined that the teacher should work with the spirit of service.

Student

Pestalozzi considered the child as the divine creation. He had a great love and sympathy to the poor and the deprived. He made arrangement of education for the children of this class. He laid stress on this fact that individuality of the child should be respected on the one hand; and social welfare should be considered on the other hand. Child's development should be effected in such a way as to bring about his development as well as the development of the society. He considered the child as the individual part of the society.

School

Pestalozzi's educationed thought is limited to primary schools. He was in the favour of transforming primary schools into homes, and creating loving and sympathetic environment in them. He opined that natural development of the children can take place in such an environment, and they can learn the true lesson of love, cooperation and service. Besides, he laid emphasis on running the schools in an orderly way. In his school located at Yavardan, he arranged education for 3 to 13 years old children. The education of children from 3 to 8 years was called **primary education**. There were no bindings of time table at this stage. The education for 8 years to 11 years of children was called **lower education** and the

education for children from 11 to 13 years was called **upper education**. These levels had regular time table. The periods were of 60 minutes duration each, and a brief interval was given after every period. There were a total of 10 periods. At last, the teachers and students assembled and the individual problems of the students were solved. Thus, the school work went on for about 12 hours, and most interestingly, the children were never tired or bored up.

Other Aspects of Education

Mass Education : Pestalozzi was a great supporter of mass education. In his view, education is the birthright of man. All his life, he engaged himself in the education of the poor and the deprived and made efforts for their betterment.

Women Education : Pestalozzi has not written anything separately as far as women education is concerned, but his view that education is the basis of social reform, makes the significance of women education evident.

Vocational Education : Pestalozzi knew that the chief cause of the poverty of the people was their not being self-dependent. He provided vocational education to the poor children in order to make them self-dependent.

Religious and Moral Education : Pestalozzi laid emphasis on making children good men, and for it he considered religious and moral education as necessary. In his view, religious and moral education should commence from the infancy itself, it should be conducted at homes as well as in schools, but this education should not be through verbal means, it should be conducted through the environment.

Evaluation of Educational Thought of Pestalozzi

Evaluation of an object, activity or thought is done on the basis of certain predetermined norms. Education is the process of development of man and is the process of meeting his prevalent needs and future aspirations, therefore the evaluation of an educational thought or practice should be done on the basis, how far it has proved to be useful in determining the form of education, or can prove to be. On this basis, we shall make an endeavour to evaluate Pestalozzi's educational thought and practice.

Concept of Education

Pestalozzi has taken the development process of man as the process of growth of a tree, and has determined the form of the process of education on this basis. He said, that as a whole tree is inherent in its seed, in the same manner, a whole man is inherent in an infant; the only function of education is to help the infant to develop into man. In his own words, "Education is a natural, harmonious and progressive development of man's innate powers."

In this context the first thing is that there is a fundamental difference in the development of man and growth of a tree; a tree has only physical growth, while man has to undertake all types of developments — physical, mental, social and spiritual. Second, a tree takes the form which is inherent in the seed; but man, besides taking the form of a person inherent in the infant, also takes the form of the person inherent in the environment; he learns the language of his environment and acquaints himself with the objects and activities of his environment. Third, a tree remains limited to its growth and man grows as well as develops all the time. From this view, Pestalozzi's concept of education can be termed only incomplete. We can draw from his views one thing, that is, man has the powers of his growth and development in the form of an infant, we should develop those powers first, and then we should make him the person what we want to make him.

Aims of Education

While determining the aims of education. Pestalozzi has kept before him all the three aspects of man — natural, social and spiritual and has determined the aims in the same order — development of innate powers of man, development of human qualities in him, making him self-dependent, progress of his society and bring about his spiritual development.

If we look at the aims of education as determined by Pestalozzi, we find that they include the development of all the three aspects of man — natural, social and spiritual; only its sub-aspects have not been clarified. At present, in place of using the term 'development of innate powers', the term 'development of his physical and mental powers is used'; in place of 'social betterment', the term 'social and cultural development' is used and in place of 'making man self-dependent', the term 'vocational education' is used. Because education is the responsibility of the state today, so the education of citizenship is also included in it. Because man is a progressive being so by education he is prepared for the present as well as for the future.

Curriculum of Education

Pestalozzi has basically discussed the education of children from 3 to 13 years of age, and has constructed the curriculum for them only. He has laid emphasis on playing, observing and nature study from the very beginning, and has laid stress on provision of the education of language, arithmetic, geometry, geography, general vocation (farming, spinning, weaving, etc.) according to their ability and capability.

The thoughts of Pestalozzi regarding the curriculum, that the curriculum for any level of education should be constructed according to the ability and capability of the children of that level and it should be based on activity and should pertain

to the field of experience of the children are accepted by all educationists. It is another thing that at present vocational education being based upon science and technology, cannot be started from the primary level, and in our secular country, the education of any specific religion cannot be imparted.

Methods of Teaching

Pestalozzi stands in the first line of those persons who have provided psychological basis to education and teaching. In this field, he was much influenced by Rousseau. He furthered the task of Rousseau — he constructed the Anschauung method, developed exercise and repetition method and developed teaching-learning maxims — proceed from simple to complex, proceed to the next fact when the previous has been clarified; and constructed different methods of teaching different subjects on the basis of these maxims of teaching.

The above teaching maxims of Pestalozzi are agreeable to all educationists. As far as language teaching is concerned, all are in agreement to start it from dialogue, but there is a difference of views about the teaching of letters and words. As far as learning Hindi is concerned, whatever maxim we may discuss, language education since ancient times has been in the format as recommended by Pestalozzi. Learning by doing in the teaching of other subjects is acceptable to everybody.

Discipline

Pestalozzi was a very kind person. He taught the poor and the deprived children, he loved them, and never wounded them with his words even. He expected this type of behaviour from other teachers too. According to him, the children should be given the education of true discipline by love, and even if they commit an error or behave erroneously, they should be guided with love, they should not be punished in any way.

In this context, it is our experience that giving punishment in certain circumstances is very beneficial, but we are in the favour of applying the principle of love in punishment; punishment too should be given with love, and not with anger.

Teacher and Student

Pestalozzi expected of the teacher to learn and understand the psychology of the children and teaching-learning process before commencing his teaching work, and then work in this field. He also expected from the teachers to behave with the children like their father and execute the task of teaching with a spirit of service. He considered the student as the focal point of education, he stressed the need of planning the education for children of any level on the basis of their ability and capability.

Today, all educationists agree with the views of Pestalozzi as far as the relationships of teacher and students is concerned, but the excess of everything is bad. Moreover, expecting the teachers to execute their teaching task with the spirit of service is expecting too much from them, the middle path would be more suitable in this field.

School

Pestalozzi has expressed his thought on the form of schools for the children from 3 to 13 years of age. He had changed his school into a home, in which there was such an affectionate environment that the children did not tire out even after ten periods of one hour each.

On the one hand, Pestalozzi talks of basing education and teaching on psychology, and on the other, he ran the programme of a total of twelve hours comprising ten periods of one hour each. Nobody can agree to these mutually contradictory views. The children are very active by nature, they cannot focus their attention on a subject for sixty long minutes, so no bindings of time should be imposed at the infant level; and a period at the primary level should be of thirty minutes and at the secondary level of 45-50 minutes.

Other Aspects of Education

Pestalozzi has described education as the birthright of the children. This is agreed upon the world over today. He laid stress on vocational education for the eradication of poverty. Today stress is given on it in order to raise the standard of life. He laid equal stress on the education of boys and girls. The whole world agrees with him on this point. Only his views on religious and moral education are somewhat narrow; he has talked of Christianity in the name of religion while the modern educationists lay emphasis on human values and morality.

Influence of Pestalozzi

Educational thought and practice of Pestalozzi has a great effect on educational principles and practice. Until his times, by education was meant imposition of knowledge from the outside, Pestalozzi stressed on developing it on the basis of innate powers. As a result, education came to be based on psychology and it came to be based on child psychology and learning psychology. Until then the children were kept under harsh control, Pestalozzi's influence transformed it into affectionate and sympathetic behaviour with them. The children were told information until then, Pestalozzi's influence worked to allow the children to learn by doing themselves. In brief, education came to be transformed as child-centred. In order to train the teachers in this art, he started teacher training. Truly, the present form of teacher training in any country was founded by Pestalozzi. The instruction method developed by his pupil Herbart, and play-way method

developed by his pupil Froebel are used the world over. Pestalozzi is considered to be the father of modern progressive education.

Conclusion

Pestalozzi lived his whole life in economic difficulties, so he knew the sufferings of the poor and the deprived. Truly speaking, he has expressed his views regarding the education of those children; it is another fact that his views are useful for the education of children of any class of the society. Pestalozzi is known for giving concrete form to the educational thought of Rousseau. He is among the first few people who tried to base the education of children on psychology and who made efforts to plan children education according to their ability and capability, and provided opportunities to the children to learn through senses and doing. He replaced punishment-based system by love-based system. His demand for mass education made him the great man of not only his age, but also for all ages. Pestalozzi was a great messiah of education.

Test Questions

Essay Type Questions

1. Discuss the educational thought of Pestalozzi.
2. Evaluate the contribution of Pestalozzi to education.

Short Answer Type Questions

3. What aims of education were determined by Pestalozzi?
4. Elaborate the teaching maxims as propounded by Pestalozzi.
5. Introduce the *Anschauung* method of Pestalozzi.

Objective Questions

6. Tick the right alternative :
 - (i) Where Pestalozzi established his first school?
 - (a) At his home
 - (b) At Ago
 - (c) At Bergdorf
 - (d) At Yavardan
 - (ii) For the children of which age group did Pestalozzi provide education?
 - (a) Birth to 5 years
 - (b) 3 to 6 years
 - (c) 6 to 11 years
 - (d) 3 to 13 years

Answers

6. (i) At his home

6. (ii) 3 to 13 years

