

Maria Montessori (1870 -1952)

Life sketch:

- Born August 31, 1870 Chiaravalle, Marche, Italy
- Died May 6, 1952 (aged 81) Noordwijk, South Holland, Netherlands
- Resting place Noordwijk, Netherlands
- Nationality - Italian
- Education University of Rome La Sapienza Medical School
- Maria Montessori's name is famous all over the world as an originator of a new system of pre-primary education for young children.(Montessori method)
- Known for Founder of the Montessori method of education
 - She believed that children should be free to find out things for themselves and to develop through individual activity.
- Occupation Physician and educator
 - Religion -Catholic

History of the Montessori Education Approach

- Montessori founded the first Casa dei Bambini, or 'Children's House' on January 6, 1907 for normal children.
- Dr. Maria Montessori's first class consisted of 50-60 children, ages 3-6, and most of them suffered from malnutrition and were shy and fearful since they lived in the slums of Florence, Italy.
- Montessori found that the children needed very little persuading to do everyday tasks, puzzles or other interesting activities which allowed them to not direct their energy toward destructive behaviours.
- She described the ages from three to six as a particularly sensitive time during which young children are especially attuned to acquiring knowledge from and about their environment.
- To enrich their experience, Dr. Maria Montessori developed a "prepared environment", of child sized furniture and material, to adapt to the surroundings to the child's natural size and behavior. □ This helped the children to feel relaxed and comfortable which created a will to learn.

□ Through this interaction and experience, the children developed an extraordinary high level of intellectual and social ability at young ages.

MONTESSORI METHOD-

The Montessori method

- It is a child centered alternative educational system developed by Maria Montessori.
- The Montessori method is based on the fact that children learn directly from their environment & relatively little from listening to a teacher talking to a class.
- The Montessori method provide a stimulating child oriented environment in which children can explore, touch and learn without fear.

key components

- Respect each child
- Make children the centre of learning.
- Encourage children to learn by providing freedom
- Observe children
- Prepare the learning environment
- Introduce multi-sensory learning materials
- Auto education –main goal of this method.

Characteristics of Montessori method

- Montessori method is self activated.
 - It is based on profound respect for the child's personality as an individual.
 - It is based on the child imperious need to learn by doing.
 - The learning environment is positive ,non threatening and noncompetitive
- Children learn through activities that involve exploration, manipulation, order, repetition, abstraction and communication

Educational Principles of Montessori

□ The philosophy of Montessori method emphasizes the individual child's initiative & independence allowing him or her to progress through an orderly series of structured learning activities at his own pace. It is based on the following principles;

- Principle of instinctive learning
- Principle of development from within
- Principle of independence & freedom
- Principle of intrinsic rewarding & non punishing.
- Principle of individual development
- Principle of auto education
- Principle of sense training
- Principle of motor training

- It helps to unfold his individuality & personality Development of individuality
- To develop individuality in natural & spontaneous manner Freedom
- No interference with teacher Self education
- Proper physical training to become self dependent Muscular training
- Sensory organs are 'gateway of knowledge' Sensory training

The children's houses

□ Montessori designed a structural environment in which children could choose freely from a number of developmentally appropriate activities. This structured environment designed for children is called children's house.

Educational Contributions

Scientific Concept of Education

- She gave us observation, experimentation and other scientific methods in education.
- She never insisted on material and method as the last words in the field of child education.

- She rather gave a scientific approach to education by breaking away from old traditions.
- She developed a unique system of early childhood education named Montessori system which has been used effectively with mentally retarded, physically handicapped, normal and gifted children.
- children's house that initiates & facilitates auto education.
- Montessori developed a series of standardized sensorial materials called didactic apparatus.
- She discovered that children have basic needs and natural tendencies & when these are met the children progress rapidly.
- She observed that young children learn best through the use of their senses .They need to touch,feel,move, see,hear,smell & taste. This discovery opened the new era of sensory learning in the field of pre primary school education.
- She replaced the word 'teacher' as the word 'directress' as she thinks that the function of the teacher is to direct & not to teach

Emphasis on Individual Teaching

- As against collective and class reading, Montessori stresses individual treatment of each child.
- Because of individual differences in physical and mental make-up, each pupil should be observed, studied and handed in a different manner.
- Thus, like the modern educators, she made child as the "unit of teaching" in place of class.

Psychological Approach to Education

- Like Froebel, she has also given emphasis on sense training, which is based on psychological principles.
- She has advocated auto-education in an atmosphere of freedom and in the spirit of play.
- She has also emphasized child's development from within through his own efforts. All these principles have made learning more important than teaching, which is universally accepted today.

Love and Respect for Small Children

- In her own words, “The child’s soul which is pure and very sensitive requires our most delicate care”.
- For her “child was God, her school was the temple and deity of the temple was the essence of childhood.”
- The profound love for children that she had compelled her to travel from one corner of the world to another to start institutions for them.
- She also stayed in India from 1939 to 1951 and conducted a number of training courses for teachers in her system of child education.

Aims of Education

- Development of Physical(body) & Intellectual(knowledge)
- Development of individuality(Inner personality)
- Motor Education Sensory Education Language Education
- Discipline
- Complete Freedom
- Discipline can’t be stop from outside.

The role of teacher

A guide, observer, coach, facilitator & overall manager

- Montessori system teaches of individuals instead of groups.
- It utilize autodidactic (self correcting) equipment for introduction and learning of various concepts
- No Interference in children activities
- Teacher should provide the opportunity for development of Children’s personality.

School

- Montessori developed a school named ‘Children’s house’. In this school, several rooms and garden were there. Students had to take care of garden , play, study and rest there. It designed such that children can develop their personality .It was set as like residential /family home (furniture, domestic materials etc) to develop domestic duties. Many things were there like ‘Didactic apparatus’, Gym, common room, lunch room, laboratories, room for manual work

MAJOR WORKS

- (1909) Metodo della Pedagogia Scientifica applicato all' educazione infantile nelle Case dei Bambini
- (1910) Antropologia Pedagogia • (1913) English edition: Pedagogical Anthropology
- (1914) Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook
- (1934) Psico Geometrica (Spanish) • (2011) English edition: Psychogeometry
- (1934) Psico Arithmetica • (1971) Italian edition: Psicoaritmética

AWARDS

- First early childhood educator nominated for Nobel Peace Prize.
- French Legion of Honor
- Received Honorary Doctorate of the university of Amsterdam.
- Officer of the Dutch Order of Orange Nassau.

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MERITS

- This system is very useful for children between 3-6 yrs age.
- This system appears to be very psychological, as the interest & abilities of children are duly taken care of in organizing play activities for them.
- Through this system opportunity for development of personality in an unrestricted manner
- Through this system children pick up practical knowledge useful in one's personal & social life

DEMERITS

- This system was initially developed for dull & handicapped children,ie,it is not very useful for normal & brilliant children.
- The didactic material are quite costly. It is difficult to provide the same in a school situated in localities of poor parents.

- This system takes too much time in imparting some knowledge to children.
- It is not easy to procure suitable teachers for this system.

Conclusion

- The system of education introduced by Maria Montessori has been praised by several educationists. It has brought about a change in the traditional perspective of education. This system is now widely popular in many parts of the world

THANK YOU