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SIGNIFICANCE OF LATERAL THINKING WITH REFERENCE TO SELF CONCEPT AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS - ACPNCEPTUAL APPROACH



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INTRODUCTION:

The dramatic increase in information and technology in the 20th century was accompanied by a need to know more about the physical structure and functioning of the brain. A teacher who is made aware of the huge untapped storage of human brain potential could be trained to disclose a learner's unused abilities, through adjusted education, thus informing learners of the intrinsic abilities of the brains. The society in which we live places much value on achievement. Hama check (1994:324) reports how research has shown that our achievement as individuals is more or less consistent with how we view ourselves. The educational process should be aimed at developing creative abilities among children. This can be achieved by acquiring students by teachers and parents real meaning of the

creative process and the ways and means of developing and nurturing creative thinking abilities

Meaning, Nature And Types Of Thinking:

Meaning:

Education is based on the safe assumption that one only has to go on collecting more and more information for it to sort itself into useful ideas. Cognitive abilities like thinking,, reasoning, and problem-solving may be considered to be some of the chief characteristic which distinguish human beings from other species including the higher animals. The challenges and problem faced by the individuals, or by society, in general are solved through serious efforts involving thinking and reasoning. The powers of thinking and reasoning may thus be considered to be the essential tools for the welfare and meaningful existence of the individual as well as society.

Nature Of Thinking:

Thinking is the base of all cognitive activities or processes and is unique to human beings. It involves manipulation and analysis of information received from the environment. Thinking is a higher



mental process through which we manipulate and analyse the acquired or existing information. Such manipulation and analysis occur by means of abstracting, reasoning, imagining, problem solving, judging and decision – making.

Types of thinking:

Thinking as a mental process,, is usually classified into the following categories. 1) Perception or concrete thinking. 2) conceptual or abstract thinking. 3) Reflective thinking .4) Creative thinking. 5) Critical thinking. 6) Vertical thinking. 7) Logical thinking. 8) Lateral thinking.

Lateral thinking:

Martin Luther King Jr.,(1947,p.41) said “ The function of education,, therefore, is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Thinking involves the deeply cerebral manipulation of information, as when we form concepts, engage in problem solving, reason and make decision. Edward de Bono divides thinking into two methods 1) vertical thinking, or traditional thinking; and 2) Lateral thinking which involves looking at problems in different ways and finding solutions from new angles. Lateral thinking is closely related to insight, creativity and humour. All four processes have the same basis. But whereas insight creativity and humour can only be prayed for lateral thinking is a more deliberate process. It is as definite a way of using the mind as logical thinking but a very different way.

Definition:

According to Jill Jesson “Lateral thinking is a way of thinking that seeks a solution to an intractable problem through unorthodox methods or elements that would normally be ignored by logical thinking (Nelson Zagalo and Leonel Morgado, 2011, p.232). It is a creative skills form which all the people can benefit enormously.

Self concept:

In order to understand the behaviour of people in interaction, one must understand how they conceive of the situation and themselves/ the way a person understands the world is therefore mediated by the conceptual systems of their culture and time, although the constructed nature of this understanding is masked to varying degrees.

Meaning:

The term self-concept refers to the individuals’ perception or view of him. It refers to those perceptions beliefs, feelings, and attitudes and values which the individual’s perception on his abilities and his stats and roles in the outer world. It can be further explained that one’s innate self is nothing but the self-concept. This concept is influenced by ones physical self. Personal appearance, dress and grooming, by abilities and dispassion, values, beliefs and aspirations.

Definition of Self-concept:

Gergen (1971) “The system of concepts available to the person in attempting to define himself”.

Rosenberg (1979) “The totality of the individuals’ thoughts and feelings with reference to himself as an object”

Review of Related Literature:

Osmond (1994) discovered a child stating that he did not actually think he was 'dumb' but that the system and what is expected of students at school made him look 'dumb'.

Battele (1992) emphasises the problem which many face, which is that once an individual or child's self – esteem is ingrained into its self-concept it becomes very difficult and challenging to alter, and it will remain stable and certain. Therefore he argues that unless we tackle confidence and low self-esteem at a young age with students from dyslexia will unintentionally be setting a precedent for the rear of their lives.

Pandey, A.K. (1989) "A study of divergent thinking in relation to scholastic achievement cognitive style, self-concept and interest pattern".

Objectives:

1) to predict DT from four predictors, i.e. Scholastic achievement, cognitive style, self concept and interest pattern. 2) To test if DT varies in different combinations with respect to the predictors. 3) To identify if there is a common factor accounting for unique constellations of cognitive and affective correlates of DT.

Major findings:

1. There was a significant relationship between DT and cognitive style, self-concept, interest pattern and scholastic pattern.
2. The Above factors were good predictors of DT.
3. There was a significant relationship between fields-dependent and field-independent cognitive style on the criterion of DT. 4) There were unique constellations of cognitive and affective correlates of DT existing in terms of common factors.

Significance of relationship between lateral thinking and self concept:

Self concept and lateral thinking has its root in several factors of one's life. In some ways the self-concept is a reflection of one's social environment. What may be referred as the "looking glass self" (Mead, 1934). The self is an amalgam of lower-level self-aspects: experiences, traits, relationships, social roles and identities, environments, abilities and beliefs. These lower level self-aspects may then be arranged into higher order self domains (e.g. an individual self, a relational self). As the lower level self-aspects change, the higher order self-domains they are a part of shift in the degree to which it is activated as a part of the general self-concept. Changing the content of the self-concept does not necessarily mean that the person has a more or less complex self-structure. Self-structure describes the degree to which the cognitive associations among self-aspects are integrated with each other or compartmentalized from each other.

People with integrated self-structures activate multiple domains of the self when a particular set of aspects are made salient. Whereas people with compartmentalized self-structures set of aspects are made salient. Often, content-related self concept change is an adaptive response to changing life events and commitments (Bower 1988, Sedikides, 1992). The self-concept functions in the same way as other cognitive structures. People come to understand the self in the same way they understand the definition of objects and people in cognitive schemas. Generally, when people are self-aware they are more likely to act on the basis of personal standards, values and attitudes related to their established self-concept thus creating a system of general cognitive maintenance rather than modifications (Carver and Schemer, 1978, 1982, Dural and Wicklund 1972; Schemer and Carver, 1977,

1980).

Conclusion:

New environment can facilitate change in the self-concept and lateral thinking because they 1) Increase a person's self –awareness and 2) make the applicability of personal standards ambiguous. This causes the person to search external sources for clues as to how to act, feel and think and these changes in self-relevant dimensions generate a shift in the self-concept. Most people who move to a new environment redefine who they are over time whether or not they expect to change or want to change. Most relocation experiences involve meeting new people. Joining new groups, and adopting to the new physical surroundings. As these experiences become more frequent, individual begin to internalise those new aspects until they feel 'me'. Acquainting oneself with new places and people need not result in a dramatic alteration of self-definition as was the case of Lt. John dunbar in "Dances with Wolves", but these transitions can lead to new perspective on the self and how the self is expressed, The current research programme and others that follow may provide some insight into this process of self-concept change and the cognitive and behavioural consequences resulting from it.

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