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The Study of Pragmatism School and its Effects on Educational Management

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ABSTRACT

Pragmatism is a Greek word which means word or a beneficial task. Generally, pragma is a philosophy that says usefulness of an act and the principal of pragmatism is that any action with a good ending is good. This is the answer pragmatism gives to the question that is the criteria for a hypothesis to be actual? This philosophy was formed in America. Practical aspects are more important than theoretical aspects in Americans point of view. Basically, American culture is more adaptable than activism, for this culture is diverse, with heterogeneous, inconsistent elements. American culture lacks deep and roots and a unified tradition. American nature is composed of different and heterogeneous nations with little cultural background; therefore, it does not pay much attention to old tradition. Pragmatism is a type of attitude, method, or philosophy that considers the practical results, thoughts, and beliefs of man as the main measure for determining their value and truth. The only chain that linked them was a belief to the practical method of science and a faith to the fact that this method is on sane thinking, and incase the philosophy wants to get out of its limited boundaries, it should base its structure on pragmatism which is based on working, expertise and the experience of pragmatism philosophy. This philosophy is an emotional, experimental, and experiential one. Pragmatism is a pure American Philosophy that considers human brain as the source of any decision making and believes that the value of any thought and belief depend on its practical benefits. John Davie, the American Philosopher, puts forward the most hypotheses in this school and believes that whatever related to human instinct is the result and product of the culture of the society. He also believes that this philosophy should act as an efficient and effective tool that should serve human. In this school, the attention is paid to the active schedule and syllabus and the active students. The main task of education is selecting the activities that will result in a deeper understanding. Students' interest and tendency in selecting the experiments is at the second level of importance. A teacher's task is to motivate and direct the interests. A school should be like a bee hive. The teacher should help the students to understand the present time and its problems with regard to past experiences and use the present experiences as a means of developing experience in the future. In the view of this philosophy, an education that focuses only on information and knowledge does not have any value. The value of each concept is within its practical results. The ambience of the class should bring up democracy and direct students' attention to individual values and their thinking power (Shariatmadari, 2002). The task of educational management is teaching and educating human. The evolution, changes, and survey of management focus on the methods and procedures which derive from world view, ideology and the beliefs of the society. Pragmatism is one of the schools that have a deep influence on educational management which we still observe in educational systems. Educational objectives are changing, education should be equal for everyone, and the experience obtained at school should prepare students for their real future social life, which is the effect of pragmatism on education and educational management. In this article, pragmatism, educational management and the effect of pragmatism on educational management is studied.

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INTRODUCTION

Pragma means act or a beneficial task or activity. It was born in America. It is also called practical philosophy, activism, or tool philosophy. Pragmatism is derived from the Greek word pragma which means action. Charles Piers, the American philosopher and scientist, used this term for the first time in 1878. The

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world view of pragmatism is based on experiment in its general concept; i.e. understanding, feeling, thinking, judging, comparing, describing, and regarding the relation between the tasks. Pragmatism which is also called thinking system or activism was formed against the idealism. It influences the quality and the system of education [2]. Pragmatism is a philosophy that considers human beliefs and thinking and practical results the main measure for determining values and their truth. Many Americans accepted this school with open arms. Americans pay attention to practical aspects more than theoretical aspects. Basically, the American culture is in accordance with the philosophy of activism because it is a diverse culture with congruent and heterogeneous elements that lacks deep roots and unified traditions. American culture is composed of different nations with little cultural background; therefore, they do not pay much attention to traditions. Individualism and supporting changes and varieties are the features of this nation and they like philosophies like activism, interaction, tendency to tools and experience.

Pragmatism is a kind of tendency, method, or philosophy that considers human beliefs, thoughts, and practical results the main measures for determining its value and truth. Pragmatism considers education an active dimension of philosophy. It also believes that philosophy is born from education not vice versa.

History and Pioneers of Pragmatism

Pragmatism represents a totally familiar approach in philosophy; i.e. empiricist approach. Pragmatism was mainly developed by Sanders Piers, William James, John Davie, and became a universal thinking system. Piers regulated pragmatism; James developed Pragmatism while Davie connected it to materialism.

Pioneers of Pragmatism

Rejecting older philosophies, pragmatists such as Charles Sanders Piers (1839 - 1914), William James (1842 - 1910), George Herbert Maird (1863 - 1931), and John Davie (1859 - 1952) believed that philosophy should be used to solve human issues (Philosophy Schools and Educational Thoughts, Gerald Geotec, Dr. Mohammad Jafar Pakseresht, p115).

Charles Sanders Piers (1839 - 1914):

Charles Sanders Piers is the founder of pragmatism movement in America. He believed that pragmatism is not a world view but a thoughtful method whose aim is enlightenment. Education needs a goal which is higher than social and individual welfare. Only a high and top goal will embrace the development of both wisdom and love. The goal of education is not separated from the goal of living and life. His main thought was that act is the base of and benefit to any thoughts and ideas which will result in value and dignity and originality. He was under the influence of the developments in Physics. An eight-volume series of article comprise his writings.

William James (1842 - 1910):

William James made philosophy generalized, valid, and justifiable. He made pragmatism a systematic philosophy. Anything happening outside will be true and real in case it is useful and profitable for us. Philosophy is born from education. The correct thought is the one that leads us to success in our life. True Faith and belief are the ones that help us meet our goals in the present life. Our children are born with a scientific spirit. An idea is true only when we can act upon it. Spirit is the collection of our mental lives. He was under the influence of Psychology. His writings include the principles of psychology, various types of religious experience and activism.

John Davie (1859 - 1952):

He is the founder of the philosophy of education. He is the most influential educational contemporary philosopher in the world. The main task of philosophy is not solving philosophic issues but solving human issues. He calls any kind of philosophy, the philosophy of education. The only freedom, in his opinion, is the freedom of wisdom and thought. He describes education as the constant rehabilitation of experience. He considers education and learning a natural phenomenon among human beings. He also considers the principle of sustainability and continuity, the principle of interactions and mutual relation, the principle of social control, the principle of freedom, and the principle of objective as the main principles of education. He is influenced by developments in sociology and biology. School and Society, Kid and Syllabus, How Do We Think?, and Democracy and Education are his writings (John Davie, translated by Seyyed Aliakbar Mirhosseini, 1996).

Factors effecting the development of Pragmatism in America:

1. European immigrants;
2. Dynamic and social mobility of America;
3. Believing individual freedom;
4. Emphasis on technology and science;
5. Democracy; everybody should be able to live together and build the society together. There is nothing fixed in nature, this is the principle which pragmatism believe.

Epistemological aspects of philosophy of pragmatism:

1. Ontology: There is no God unless and only if it has benefits for the society and individuals.

2. Epistemology: Insight and cognition are gained through interactions between human and nature. Insight is proportional and it depends on the situation. It is gained through intelligence. The main way of epistemology is experience and solving problems.
3. Axiology: changes are valuable in case they are beneficial and useful. Values are proportional. In case values are satisfying and beneficial in certain circumstances, they will act like a credit and license for behavior.

The effects of cognitive aspects (Epistemology) in education:

Sometimes, John Davie considers education exactly the same as growth. Growing up in physical, moral, and mental aspects is an example of continuity (The Principles of Education, Ali Shaariatmadari, p 69).

Ontology: the aim of education is within education. Education is life, not getting prepared for future life. Its educational objective is that the purpose of each activity is within that specific activity. All objectives are flexible and changeable. Education and upbringing is totally child oriented. It is variable and uncertain.

Epistemology: The child learns about the world. The content of the official lessons are in accordance to the issues the child is facing. Group discussions are for learning lessons and the core for all educational activities and the child's needs and interests. The teacher prepares and provides educational situation according to students' interests. The methodology and procedure for solving issues compromise teaching methodology.

Axiology: education does not emphasize on a specific value. In moral education, the relation between knowledge and morality is very important. Also, there is no conflict and opposition between needs and morality.

Three main principles of Anthology:

1. Change: Everything is changing in the world and changing the reality is the ultimate. Pragmatism is the relation between human and his environment (the key to Davie's theory).
2. Experience: is the base of cosmology and pragmatism. Experience includes feeling, perception, thinking, judgment, comparing, description, and moral movement and paying attention to the relation between the tasks. Experiment is the result of the mutual impact of the individual and the environment.
3. Profitability of the action and task: believes the principle of change but always considers its own benefits. The measure to see if the benefit of cognition is true or not, is its profitability in action which can be learned and understood through solving problems and issues.

It can be concluded from these principles that values are variable according to experience and changes.

The impacts of Pragmatism on Education:

1. Syllabus: includes resources that teacher foresees and predicts with regard to the probable activities of the classroom. The syllabus is based on thinking and exercise. The content of the lessons should be selected from the ordinary experiences of individuals' lives. It also should include different skills a child may need in the present and future life.
2. Teaching methodology: is the same as the basic features of thinking and thought. The best way is solving a problem or an issue because it is a way of getting prepared for life. The syllabus is dynamic, active, experimental, planned and with regard to the students' interests and motivations. It also depends on how active the students are.
3. School: Each school has three basic and primary tasks and duties:
 1. It should reflect good aspects of the society (it should introduce the students an elegant society);
 2. It should simplify the complicated issues of the society;
 3. It should make coordination, mutual understanding, and sincerity among students. It leads to sharing information, thoughts, and opinions and it also creates unity which is vital for social life.
 4. The teacher acts as the students' guide and colleague. The teacher and students should exchange and share their experiences. The teacher should make his students to think through conducting surveys, researches, and studies. Both the teacher and the students are constantly learning. Both should guide and help each other. Davie emphasizes that teachers should be constantly educated in order to change and amend and improve education.
 5. The students: requires motivation, interest, and encouragement (Davie). Education should be according to the students' capacity and ability. Each student should be treated and taught according to his/her capacity and talents. The syllabus, the content, and teaching methodology should be compiled according to the differences between a child and an adult. There should be collaboration and mutual relation between the students on one hand, and the students and their teachers on the other hand.

The process of solving a problem by John Davie's method:

1. Clarifying the problem;
2. Guessing (identifying the reason);
3. Considering possible solutions;
4. Selecting the best solution;
- and 5. Implementing selected solutions and reaching to a conclusion.

The principles of the philosophy and education in Pragmatism:

1. Education is its source and origin.

2. Education shapes the child and makes him/her active, creative, and innovative.
3. Each person in the society can and has the right to occupy and hold his/her suitable position.
4. Students should always take an active role and be active.
5. The process and procedures are more important than the goal and the result of the action.
6. Through personal activities, the child learns more in comparison to imitation and copying.
7. Cognition and identification should be an active and alive task.
8. Believing the evolution exists in the curriculum, student's life, experience, and present life.
9. School is a pilot and small sample of a bigger society. Students will become aware of and familiar with their rights, duties, and the moral issues.
10. Through conducting surveys, the student faces the scientific problem and issues and tries to solve them [2].

Some deficiencies and shortcoming of pragmatism based education:

1. Not believing the goal of Creation (not determining an ultimate goal for education);
2. Determining a humanistic feature whose morality is under the influence of the society;
3. Considering usefulness and benefits as the measures for truth (whatever is true which has benefits);
4. Over emphasizing on the methods of solving a problem (emphasizing on experimental cognition);
5. Everything is proportional (poisoning human culture and upbringing);
6. The goal and the means are the same (protests against looking forward to the future and setting goals for it);
7. Emphasizing on growth and development without determining the right path.

Educational management:

Educational management is a branch of management science and knowledge whose domain of research and application is within educational organizations such as universities and schools. Educational management includes activities whose main objective is learning.

Education is a developing entity; it means it provides the society and the learners with the chance of growth and development in a long run. In some countries, Department of Education is an organization with cultural and ideological goals.

Educational experts believe that improving management procedures and the educational managers' ability and qualifications plays a key and determining role in developing and even improving the schools because well-informed and qualified managers can substantiate and fulfill the goals with lesser expenses but higher quality by benefitting from their talents, capabilities, expertise knowledge and their working experiences [9].

Educational management includes planning, organizing, guidance and monitoring, executing and managing all educational related activities. What has been focused in the evolution of management and is in controversy in the management is the management methods and procedures not the nature of the management. These methods and procedures are derived from the world view and the ideology of the society (Management in Education; Ahmad Safi).

The task of educational management is educating and shaping and building humans; therefore, the goal of education is to bring up expertise and professional people.

Survey of Evolution in Educational Management:

Although management science has emerged more than a century ago, studying in the field of educational management started after World War 2. The science of management passed its evolutionary phase through classic and Neo classic periods and got in to its modern period. As a result, educational management entered a world in which management scientific framework has been formed and set within organizations and nobody felt that experts in the field of education should research and study the fundamental and basic principles of management. Whatever has been studied and learned under the title of theories of educational management has its roots in the theories of other branches of management, especially industry and commerce and it includes Gabba and Gotzeles who tried to analyze the theory of social systems in schools. Actually, the theories and principles of management are the same in all its branches. In case there would be a difference, it is the result of trying to accommodate these general principles and theories of management with the nature, objectives, goals, and functions of a specific organization. The most important common characteristics of new educational management are as follows: 1. Educational management includes expertise concepts, knowledge, and skills that should be studied and investigated. Short time educational experience along with the constant study of management and behavioral science will make managers more ready to take their roles and do their tasks. 2. The function of new management is based on the real point of view of the organizations. Since no general management theory has been set yet so that we can design an ideal organization or office system, it is required to draw managers' attention to realities of educational environment, including understanding organizational behavior and management. Therefore, the first theory is an attempt to explain the behavioral phenomenon within the organizations which are not fully understood. 3. The scientific base of new management is the behavioral science. In order to understand the real nature of educational entities, studying psychology, anthropology,

economy, sociology, and politics is required. The content of the knowledge in these sciences make the managers familiar with research procedures and analyzing facts within the organizations and human behavior. 4. Changes in educational management is inevitable. With these fast changes in the world, innovation is highly needed and required in educational entities and organizations. The path school managers pass through is full of unfamiliarity. In order to get familiar with these phenomena and adjust themselves with changes, they should have the skill and ability to fight with archaic attitudes. The need to change requires a deeper understanding of the nature of the change and how to make changes [9].

The effects and influences of Pragmatism on Educational Management

1. Training teachers for changing and improving education (because educational goals are ever changing).
2. Preparing syllabus and curriculums (because they should be foreseen and predicted).
3. Equality of educational chances.
4. Benefitting the collaboration of teachers, students and their parents in decision making (because a school is a small society where students should experience themselves and they also should learn that unity is vital to continue and survive).
5. More attention to laboratories at schools (to get and obtain experience for collaborative life).
6. Providing students with more educational chances and opportunities (because education is child oriented and based on his/her interests).
7. Solving problems is the teaching methodology (because it is a way of getting prepared for life and facing problems and difficulties).

Conclusion:

Like any other schools, this school also had its influence on education. Its nourishing time was the time of Davie. In his philosophical writings on education, Davie introduced school as a place and the teachers as the main society makers.

The main idea of pragmatism is the usefulness of the content of human thoughts.

The philosophers of this school believe that learning at school is living; therefore, school should be the same as the real society out of school. So the syllabus should be practical.

Paying too much attention to experimental realities prevents us from looking at many deep aspects of human nature and limits education to learning provisioned and specific knowledge.

Davie's philosophy pays attention to experience, activity, and solving problems which changed out attitudes towards education.

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