BUILDING BLOCKS OF MIND: THEORY OF MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCE

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Intelligence is often described as the cognitive capacity of an individual. When it comes to intellectual capacity the test or method of measurement that always comes first in mind is the IQ testing; IQ stands for intelligence quotient. In layman’s term or in common language, intelligence is the ability of a person to understand and learn concepts and topics.

In previews years intelligence has always been viewed as a singular facet, something that can be measured numerically. IQ test for example is a way of testing cognitive capacity through series of tests which will be scored and tallied and then converted to a numeric value. Albert Einstein, the man who is considered as the Father of Modern Physics has an estimated Intelligence Quotient of 160 to 180. While Leonardo De Vinci, the famous mastermind of the Renaissance era, known for his masterpieces such as The Mona Lisa and the Last Supper, has a staggering IQ of 220. For reference proposes, an IQ score that 90-109 is considered average intelligence, 110-119 is known to be the superior intelligence, and the IQ of 120-140 is very superior intelligence. Any IQ score beyond 145 is considered genius.

For decades or even centuries, this is how a person’s mental ability is measures. In the recent decade, however, a Harvard University Professor came up with an interesting concept in which how intelligence viewed. Dr. Howard Gardner an American cognitive psychologist and Harvard Graduate School of Education Professor, is the pioneer of The Theory of Multiple Intelligence. In his 1983 book titled; Frames of Minds, he outlined the theory in which a person can have multiple facet of intellect.
Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligence has eight (8) types.

Verbal-linguistic Intelligence is the ability of a person to understand and learn languages. People who excel in this facet are usually multilingual.

Visual-Spatial Intelligence is the facet of intelligence which enables a person to see through the mind. They are usually learn and absorbed information better through visual presentation.

Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence on the other hand is the intelligence wherein the person is more innate in learning through movement. People with this type of intelligence are usually inclined in sports, dance, and other activities that require body control and coordination.

Logical-mathematical Intelligence is intellectual facet that deals with problem solving and mathematics. It is the ability to apply critical thinking in solving given problem may it be logical or mathematical.

Musical-rhythmic and harmonic Intelligence is the natural grasp for music. Musical prodigies usually belong in this facet of multiple intelligence. It is the natural skill in recognizing music and rhythm.

Naturalistic Intelligence is the type of intelligence which enables an individual to connect with the environment. A person with Naturalistic Intelligence is highly aware of nature.

Finally, the Inter-personal and Intra-personal Intelligence are two interconnected intelligence. Both are intelligence facet that is related to understanding emotions and feelings. The Inter-personal Intelligence is the ability to associate with other people. It is also known as the Social Intelligence which deals with empathy and compassion with other people. Intra-personal Intelligence on the other hand is the ability to understand one’s self. It is the intellect of fully knowing self motivation and drive.
Howard Gardeners theory depicts intelligence in a way where it is a building block instead of it being a whole singular aspect. A person can be intelligent in one or more aspect and can be absolutely bad in some, yet, they will still be considered intelligent. In his theory every people is intelligent, it is a matter of what aspect or aspects.

This theory challenges the current education system wherein students are subjected to one format learning system. If we consider Gardner’s theory, we will need to adapt the educational system to cater the learning capability of every facet. It is revolutionary theory which can help hone students’ ability beyond the cookie cutter way of education. It will prove that not every student has same level of capacity, thus, should not be categorized the same way. In the words of Albert Einstein himself, “If you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will forever think that it’s stupid”.

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