CHILD-CENTERED EDUCATION

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The Child-Centered Education finds the child as pivotal value of education. In a child-centered education, the curriculum is written with a thorough understanding of child growth and development. It should reflect the interests, needs, abilities and natural learning styles of children. The program should fit the children; the children should not be operated to fit the program.

The Child-Centered Education is based on the educational concept of the child is the center of the learning process. Rousseau insisted that education shall be based upon the "nature of the child". Like Rousseau, Pestalozzi emphasized the importance of the nature of the child and build his teachings around the natural, progressive and harmonious development of all the powers and capabilities of the human being.

Thorndike likewise, recognized the child's original nature, for whose education must be done. His intelligence, attitudes, interest and desires underlie the educative process. It is the function of the school to provide the necessary conditions and opportunities by which these innate tendencies can be developed and applied.

John Dewey was also in agreement with those who believed that education should center on the individual child, but he took the new view that the child must be considered as a member of the group. This view led to the development of what is generally known as "Child-Centered School". Insights into the child's nature and sympathy with the child's life are essential to efficient and successful teaching.

The program of the school must be developed with full recognition of the growth level of the child. The worker in an elementary school has always been aware of the
growth possibilities of the children. He must understand the common growth sequence so as to anticipate when children will most likely be ready for a certain type of experience. He must understand which kind of experiences and he must be able to recognize readiness for certain types of experiences. All these understandings and insights must be taken into account in planning and developing the school program.

The educational concept based on the nature of the child is that the learner must be the center of the learning process. The learner's original nature of the child is that the learner, the center of the learning process. The learner's original nature must be the starting point of his education. The aim of education is to lead the learner to grow in terms of knowledge, habits, skills, abilities and attitude; his original nature should be the starting point in the endeavor to accomplish his growth and development.

Hence the nature of the subject-matter should determine the nature of teaching. Likewise, the type of teaching to be used is also determined by the type of learning involved in the process. Different types of learning call for different types of teaching methods and techniques.

References:

Child and the Curriculum, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960; p 158