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# Holistic Education & All Round Development

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## **Introduction: Holistic Education**

Holistic education is a philosophy of education based on the idea that each person finds identity, meaning and purpose in their life through connections to the community, to the natural world and to humanitarian values, such as compassion and peace. Holistic education aims to call forth from people an inherent reverence for life and a passionate love of learning. (Ron Miller) holistic education is concerned with the development of a person's intellectual, emotional, social, physical, artistic, creative and spiritual potentials. School around us aims to create "whole" individuals who are well balanced in their outlook on life and their personal understanding of themselves in relation to the world. This is done, not through an academic curriculum that condenses the world into instructional packages, but through direct engagement with the environment.

## **Holistic education nurtures a sense of wonder.**

Montessori, for example, spoke of "cosmic" education: Help the person feel part of the wholeness of the universe and learning will naturally be enchanted and inviting. There is no one best way to accomplish this goal, there are many paths of learning and the holistic educator values them all; what is appropriate for some children and adults, in some situations, in some historical and social contexts, may not be best for others. The art of holistic education lies in its responsiveness to the diverse learning styles and needs of evolving human beings.

## **(Philosophical Aspect of Holistic Education)**

Any approach to education must ask itself, what is the goal of education? Holistic education aims at helping students be the most that they can be. Abraham Maslow referred to this as "self-actualization". Education with a holistic perspective is concerned with the development of every person's intellectual, emotional, social, physical, creative and spiritual potentials. It seeks to engage students in the teaching-learning process and encourage personal and collective responsibility.

In describing the general philosophy of holistic education, Robin Ann Martin and Scott Fobes (2004) divide their discussion into two categories: the idea of Ultimacy and Basil Bernstein's view of Sagacious Competence.

### **• Ultimacy**

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1. Religious; as in becoming "enlightened". Spirituality is an important component in holistic education as it emphasizes the connectedness of all living things and stresses the "harmony between the inner life and outer life"
2. Psychological; as in Maslow's "self-actualization". Holistic education believes that each person should strive to be all that they can be in life. There are no deficits in learners, just differences.
3. Undefined; as in a person developing to the ultimate extent a human could reach and thus, moving towards the highest aspirations of the human spirit.

## • **Sagacious competence**

1. Freedom (in a psychology sense).
2. Good-judgment (self-governance).
3. Meta learning (each student learns in their "own way").
4. Social ability (more than just learning social skills).
5. Refining values (development of Character).
6. Self knowledge (emotional development).

## **Purpose of Holistic Education**

The purpose of holistic education is to prepare students meet the challenges of living as well as academics. Holistic education believes that it is important for young people to learn:

- About themselves.
- About healthy relationships and pro-social behaviour.
- Social development.
- Emotional development.
- Resilience
- To see beauty, have awe, experience transcendence and appreciate some sense of "truths."
- To consider their life's greatest challenges.
- To overcome the obstacles they face.

Now, it is predominantly popular culture (the media, music) and schools from which young people can learn about what it means to be human. But culture has its own agenda (not the welfare of children) and schools were not designed to prepare people for the world of work; to give them the skill sets that would help them up the ladder of material success.

## **Why Holistic Education?**

Parents, in increasing numbers, are seeking alternatives to mainstream education. Few could criticise the commitment to academic excellence that most schools and teachers have and work hard to actualize. But more and more parents realize that just learning academics is not enlightening, and they see young people in their communities suffering from a lack of needed learning and society suffering as well.

Parents worry about the negative social influence they see affecting their children. Parents see themselves having less impact on their children's behaviour, relationships, and attitudes than the media and marketing which directly targets children. As a result children's senses of themselves and self- images are under pressure. This pressure is expressed in:

- Increased competitiveness in many aspects of a child's social life, such as sports, out-of-school activities, and of course, school.
- Obsessive concern for their "look," from their body shape to their clothes.
- Violence in many forms, from the physical to the psychological and emotional.

Parents are also worried about negative learning attitudes they see developing in their children. Parents saw their children as infants eager to learn, and this eagerness dissipated as these same children's schooling increased. Learning becomes a necessary chore, driven by rewards and punishment, and too often devoid of direct meaning in their children's lives. Many parents also look at our current society in which social problem seem to be getting worse; in which those considered successful are too often greedy, corrupt, and brutal; in which families and communities seem increasingly dysfunctional; and they ask, " why aren't we as humans learning what we need to know in order to live good and meaningful lives?"

It doesn't appear that we will learn such things from learning more mathematics, literature or history. Parents see the need for their children to learn these other things as well as academics and they look for schools that give time, attention, energy and resources, to such learning. Parents generally do not come to holistic education from philosophical musings, but from a perceived need for their children that they feel is not currently met.

### **The specific objectives of holistic Education can be classified as below:**

1. To develop physical, Emotional, Mental, Social, Spiritual, Moral and psychological Aspects of a child in order to maximum utilization of their energy or strengths and minimize their weaknesses.
2. To promote the use and implementation of advanced Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in integrated management of Teaching-Learning process.
3. To establish mechanism for educational & research networking and capacity building in order to promote cooperation, knowledge transfer and research relates to education.

### **Some Strategies for Holistic Development:**

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Students preferred learning styles are identified and the development of all learning styles, for example:

- A range of teaching and learning strategies is used to accommodate learning styles, for example:
- Hands-on activities, individual and group work
- Cooperative learning
- Timetables, resources acquisition and access reflect the needs of students at all year levels.
- Curriculum structure has evidence of catering for diverse learning styles.
- Programs of work have evidence of a variety of learning and teaching strategies to cater for varying learning styles.
- Program addresses a range of learning styles through a variety of resources.
- Teaching is conducted in a variety of modes.

## Scopes of Holistic Education

On the basis of development Aspects of children:

- Physical Development
- Cognitive Development
- Psychological Development
- Spiritual Development

## On the basis of Holistic Curriculum:

- ICT
- Language
- Social & Environmental sciences
  - Sciences
- Mathematics
- Performing Arts
- Visual Arts
- Values based Education
- Leadership

## On the basis of Over-all Structure:

- Academic
- Sports
- Arts
- Parental Engagement
- Facilities
- Core values

## Conclusion

It is imperative to note that holistic education is not a specifiable model or ideology but an attitude or orientation of openness to the living presence of our children or students and to the complex and dynamic world around us. Holistic Education then is a pedagogical revolution. Holistic education seeks to liberate students from the authoritarian system of behaviour management that in the modern world we have come to call 'education'. But ultimately holistic education is far more than radical pedagogy. Holistic education opens up crucial

dimensions in learning. When learning is seen in an extended epistemological framework where science and spirituality are compatible, no longer contradictory, science acquires human sensitivity and consciousness becomes fundamental in the integration of the cosmos.

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