

## Idealism

### Introduction:

we will begin to look at four different philosophies of Education. In general, these philosophies have been created and have been supported by a lot of proponents and each of these philosophies has a lot to offer us teachers. The first of these philosophies is idealism let's look at what idealism is?

- Idealism simply says that ideas are the only true reality, and the only thing worth knowing.
- now ideas are generated in the head and ideas have to be translated.
- these are thoughts they are in our heads they have to be translated into language and then put forward.
- This way, people developed ideas and old ideas led to newer ideas and newer ideas led to yet newer ideas.
- This way, lots of ideas and lots of information and knowledge was created.
- so the focus of idealism is on the mind, the brain and the thinking because that is the fountain from where all ideas emerge and ideas can be good ideas also can be bad.
- now as a philosopher, when you are trying to follow a certain philosophy you have the option you don't like a certain idea of a philosopher don't use it and don't work with it ,
- on the other hand, you like the idea of another philosopher use it.

### Further explanation:

- According to Ozmon Craver, Idealism is the oldest systematic philosophy of the western culture which is a believe that ideas are the only true reality.
- According to Orstein Levine, Idealism philosophy begin with a philosophical belief claiming that material things are imaginary, and that material things do not exist independently but only as constructions in the mind.
- Idealism as a school of philosophy believes in mind and idealizes it.
- It asserts that material world is not the manifestation (demonstration) of reality. It, therefore, attaches supreme importance to the study of man and his mind.
- idealism is the group of metaphysical philosophies which assert that reality is mentally constructed, or in other words reality is immaterial.
- Idealism means when we see things in an ideal or perfect manner.
- Idealism focuses on “what could be ?.

- It is a theory that states that our reality is shaped by our thoughts and ideas.
- Realism on the other hand, deals with the fact that reality has an absolute existence independent from our thoughts, ideas and consciousness.
- An idealist usually set the goals which may not be achievable. It may not be good to search for the good and lost in a world of fantasy and unachievable goals.
- On the contrary, realists are more rational. They plan to set the goals carefully. They can achieve their targets in a given timeframe.
- Idealism makes people see things in a hopeful manner, thereby shaping situations based on their own ideas.

### **Exponents**

- Plato 427-347 BC
- Kant 1724-1804
- Hegel 1770-1831
- Froebel 1732-1852
- Socrates

### **Principles of idealism:**

1. It is based on ideas and values. It supports spirituality. And the material world has no value.
2. Body is false and soul is true. According to idealists, body is matter and we can touch it. Therefore, being material, body has no value. In comparison, soul is the actual thing and it has value.
3. Material world is mortal (فانی) and values are eternal.
4. Mind and spirituality are only essential. They constitute reality, not body and matter.
5. Spiritual man is the supreme creation of God and he must strive for self-realization.
6. God is the source of all knowledge.
7. Values are absolute and unchanging and are so called spiritual values: truth, goodness & beauty.
8. What is ultimately real is not the object itself but the idea behind it.
9. Freedom of mind is the highest virtue: a necessity of realizing spiritual reality.

- **Epistemology of Idealism:** Epistemologically, idealism manifests as a *skepticism* which says that certain knowledge (in which we are 100 % sure) is impossible (e.g. as idealism says that it is uncertain that material world has a value). [Skepticism is a questioning attitude or doubt toward knowledge claims that are seen only as beliefs. For example, if a person is skeptical about claims made by their government about an ongoing war then the person doubts the accuracy of those claims. In such cases, skeptics normally recommend **not disbelief** but **suspension of belief**, i.e. maintaining a neutral attitude that neither affirms nor denies the claim. This attitude is often motivated by the impression that the available evidence is insufficient to support the claim.]
- **The metaphysics of idealism:** Concerning metaphysics, idealists believe that the ultimate real world is spiritual and immaterial world because of the fact that human mind and thought process are certain and has more value than the material world which is uncertain and unstable (e.g. climate changes, floods , disasters, etc). Values and ideas have greater value than the **changing world of matter** (ozone layer depletion and other unstable natural environments). .....
- **The Axiology of Idealism:**
- Idealists believe that ideas and values are the knowledge that is fixed, stable and eternal. Idealists' values are traditional and unquestionable which means that idealists abide to these values without negotiation. E.g. if someone or something is beautiful, it means there is no need to negotiate on this, and this knowledge about value (beauty) is fixed, stable and eternal. Everywhere, and whenever we go (in past, in present and in future beauty has the same value).
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## EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- In idealism, the aim of education is to discover and develop each individual abilities and full moral excellence in order to better serve society. The curricular emphasis is subject matter of mind, literature, history, philosophy and religion.

### A) AIMS OF EDUCATION:

- The following aims are stressed by idealists which are said to be the chief contributions of the idealistic philosophy to the field of education.
1. **Development of Human Personality:**
    - Idealists consider the development of human personality as the supreme idealistic objective of life. Exalt the personality is the core philosophy of idealism. According to Ross, “**Human personality is the supreme value and constitutes the noblest work of God.**”
  2. **Development of Morality:**

- Development of moral sense is another important aim of education which, according to idealistic philosophy, enables the child to differentiate between just and unjust, good and evil, right and wrong and beauty and ugliness. Education helps the child by nurturing his will power which can be ignited by the correct appreciation of truth, goodness and beauty.

### **3. Universal Education:**

- Idealism lays stress on self-realization which can be possible by providing education to all without any differences and discriminations. As such, the aim is to provide opportunities to realize the self.

**4. Development of Inventive and Creative Powers:** The important aim of education according to this school of philosophy is to develop and foster the inventive and creative powers of the child so that he can mold the environment to suit to his needs and purposes. He should harness the forces of nature in such a way that these should render him the best possible service.

### **5. Enrichment of Cultural Heritage:**

Since man is the creator of his own culture by dint (power) of his creative activity, he should try to preserve, transmit and improve it according to the best of his capacity. Thus, education helps him/her to contribute the best to the enrichment and refinement of his/her culture.

**6. Development of Complete Man:** The aim of education, according to idealists, should be the fullest development of child and man which implies harmonious and all-round development-physical, intellectual, social, moral, spiritual and aesthetic aspects of individuality.

### **7. Simple Living and High Thinking:**

- Simple living and high thinking should be the aim of education according to idealists. A person who lives a simple life thinks high which paves a way for his personal development and refinement.

**B) METHODS OF TEACHING:** This philosophy does not advocate any special method, but touches a host of methods to fulfill the aims. Methods like questioning, discussion and lecture are very important. Both inductive and deductive methods are advocated.

#### **1. Discussion**

#### **2. Lecture method**

#### **3. Questioning:**

- a. In questioning, when a student ask a question, teacher doesn't answer but listens to the question and in return the teacher ask a question from that student.
- b. This way, students are forced to think and find an answer. Then, students ask another question, and the teacher follows the same procedure and ask a question from students.
- c. So, through this process of questions going back and forth people found the answer that is how mind develops.

- d. Teachers are not machines to answer questions as they don't have all the answers to the students questions but what a wonderful way to return the question to the student and make the students in the classroom think.
- e. When students are thinking in the classroom, learning is happening, But when students don't think in the classroom and just follow the lecture and memorize the concepts, training is happening.