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Learning Theory- Howard Gardner

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Howard Gardener's theory of Multiple Intelligences has been embraced widely

throughout the world, most specifically in the United States. Gardener's views of learning were

humanistic and geared towards education for every person. Education is one of the most

important aspects of life, Gardener's ideals meant to prove and reflect this by showing the

importance of well-rounded and fortified knowledge. Capabilities can only reach within the

realm of one's personal knowledge. In Gardener's own words, "the performance of

understanding that try matters are the ones we carry out as human beings in an imperfect world

which we can affect for good or for ill" (Gardner, 1999). He believes that intelligence is larger

than just a simple noun that is only accessed or achieved in one way, but is channel through

several different methods (Smith, 2008).

Howard Gardner has proven that the "norms" of learning development can't be

categorized or designated to any specific time frame. He views intelligence as "the capacity to

solve problems or to fashion products that are valued in one or more cultural setting". He devised

eight "signs of an intelligence": potential isolation by brain damage, specified goals, progression

of building knowledge and signposts for various stages, evolutionary history and plausibility,

support from psychological review, parallel concurrences with new psychometric discoveries

and an identifiable encoding method (Smith, 2008).

Gardner disliked the idea of generalized testing, and feared the generalities that result from it. He believed that learning and the process of acquiring information could vary too much from one mind to the next. This method of data collecting would have too many inaccuracies to be applied or even considered on a large scale. This type of testing could lead to improper labeling and future misguidance. Research based on the functionality of the brain would gather data that supports his inferences (Smith, 2008).

Gardener believed in seven basic types of intelligence: two mainly focused on and geared towards public education, three specific to artistic brains and two less common that are categorized as "personal intelligences". All seven of these intelligences are found within a single individual and often act simultaneously when configuring brain functions (Smith 2008). Gardener explains that the most difficult aspect of harnessing the brain's full potential is understanding "how to best take advantage of the uniqueness conferred on us as a species exhibiting several intelligences" (Gardner, 1999). In his view, questions are more important than the answers to coax. The constant production of proactive questioning is the best measure of intelligence (Gardner, 1999).

Howard Gardner's practices and beliefs of learning theories aren't exactly "written in stone", but they have attributed greatly to the development of modern progressive education systems. (Smith, 2008). He has set new direction in the minds of many educators and their rituals of teaching.

References:

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