What is the Importance of Attention and Interest in Education :-

Attention and interest are inter-connected and mutually dependent. They are like two sides of a coin. To pay attention to an object, a person or an activity is to have interest in them. Mc Dougall has very cogently said, “Interest is latent attention and attention is interest in action.” It is the interest which determines one’s attention. Interest is always hidden in the act of attention.

It is a fact that there is close relation between attention and interest. Each of our interests may be regarded as a powerful stimulus to draw our attention to a particular thing, person or an activity. The motive which governs, our attention is still interest which can only be satisfied, if we attend to this object. At times there might be some indirect relation between attention and interest, but it cannot be denied entirely. For example, a child’s interest in constructing models may lead to the learning of mathematical problems.

Attention and Interest in Education :-

Course - 1
Sohini Bhattacharyya

Since attention and interest are inter-related, students are to be made attentive by making the teaching-learning process interesting. If the pupils can be made interested in the lessons, then the problem of inattentive will not arise.

This will also help making education effective, as well as efficient. With a view to making the teaching-learning process interesting, so that students will be attentive, the following suggestion may be considered.

(1) The child has certain natural or innate urges, drives and instincts. He will be interested in those matters in which his instincts or natural urges are satisfied. Hence, in the teaching work, the child’s psychological needs and interests are given emphasis.

(2) The child’s interest change at various stages of his development. The teacher must be acquainted with these changes and provide learning experiences according to their needs and interests. For example, in infancy there is interest in imaginative plays and activities, in childhood there is interest in group activities and in adolescence, in love and adventure. The teacher should provide suitable subject matter and activities according to these special interests, so that pupils can learn and gain adequately.

(3) The methods of teaching should be adopted according to the physical conditions and natural interests of students. For example, at the Nursery and Kindergarten stages, the teacher should organize imaginative plays and utilize toys for teaching. In the primary stage stories may be told and group activities be organized for teaching various lessons.

(4) The Subject matter to be taught to children should not be too difficult nor too simple. It should be within the range of understanding of the students concerned. When, the students find the lesson too difficult or too simple, their interests' flag and the problem of inattentiveness crops up.

(5) With a view to making students interested in education, the goals and objectives should be made clear to them. The well-defined aims and objectives will motivate them and create new interests. This will help them to learn further.

(6) In order to sustain the student's interest in the lessons, the teacher should impart new knowledge on the basis of old knowledge and experience. When the learner sees a connection between the old and the new knowledge, he can be attentive to his lessons

(7) The teacher should have love and affection not only towards his subject, but also for his students. He should work with interest, enthusiasm and sincerity, so that his students will be attentive to his lessons.

(8) The teacher should make his lesson interesting and appealing, introducing novelty and variety of approaches. This will enable the pupils to pay due attention to his teaching.

(9) There should be adequate use of audio-visual aids in the teaching-learning process. New media and materials like radio, television, films, slides, pictures etc. can help the teacher to make his lessons attractive and interesting. This will be useful for promoting learning efficiency to the same object, for some time we attend only to some aspects of it more clearly than to others. Attention is thus selective being limited to a narrow field. Bhatia has rightly said, "Most of our achievements in life are due mainly to this selection. If we try to attend to everything without limiting our range, we will not be able to achieve anything."

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