

BOOK REVIEW

**Book Information.** Human Values in Education, Rudolf Steiner, Anthroposophic Press. London. (2004). \$22.72, Pages 198. ISBN: 0-88010-544-5.

*“When we deal with young children, we are faced with beings who have not yet begun physical existence; they have brought down soul and spirit from pre-earthly worlds and plunged into the physical bodies provided by parents and ancestors” (Steiner, 2004).*

Symptoms or behaviors called symptomatic by Steiner (2004) explain how interactions in the classroom only look at the physical presence around teachers and students. However actually, intrinsic value is very crucial to prioritize. The intrinsic value in students who need to be touched is their heart and soul to get to know each other better. Teaching classically with the view that the existence and readiness of students are the same is a way of thinking that should be addressed to present an unpretentious "open classroom climate" filled with love, care, and togetherness.

Students or schools will develop both in the context of lessons and the character of students by getting a learning process and experience that meets their expectations (Steiner, 2004). Modern education reform is an educational program, but it is vital to see humanist and human values as dignified individuals. Legislative theories and policies are reinforcements to create an atmosphere of education and learning that focuses on how to be intellectual and training students to see aspects of social interaction and good climate relations in the learning process. Characteristics of teachers and students as real humans and individuals must continue to be developed and have personalities that can touch students from the emotional and affectionate side and have a serious concern. Based on this need, Steiner's thoughts were born and explained how knowledge about humans is based on an Anthroposophical approach based on a spiritual basis by learning to love as a maintenance effort

in responding to reality. A book entitled Human Values in Education was published in 2004, which collected ten themes in lecture lectures in Arnheim, Holland, during 17–24 July 1924 with approximately 198 pages.

This book consists of ten chapters that, as a whole, describe the basics of education that prioritizes the principle of humanity in student-teacher relationships in schools. Through experiences at the Waldorf school (1919), this paper presents direct observations of how to educate with love, according to students' natural development. It offers education as an artist in various learning situations. All chapters are explained in clear language to guide the reader in exploring human values. Like a student, lectures inspire us to learn about the nature of human education. Build an authentic experience for real learning. Spiritual basics involving the spirit and soul as God's gift to humans become a significant need and are often forgotten. Therefore, even though it has been offered since 1924, this book is still very relevant for formulators and practitioners of education and curriculum.

The experiences recounted in this book will leave you stunned for a moment and think about why these methods have never occurred to us. In a simple but exciting way, we will find interesting discussions because they are rarely presented in western thought, which always favors the power of science. Steiner tries to find a gap between teaching practice and theory that emotionally arouses interest in educating people based on spiritual values and emotional closeness. The humanist approach is the strength of this book amidst the biased educational reforms described above. It is hoped that the book study will inspire readers and writers in developing human education reforms. In a real sense, it has the art of education itself.

The main focus of the problem in this book is the gap between the nature of education and human existence as individual beings. The characteristics of education that teachers and students are individual human beings and how to make it happen have been forgotten in the various reforms aspired to. Steiner tries to explain that the teacher must be aware that what he is doing has a significant impact on change. This

means that educational reform has philosophically separated and limited theory and life. Children are used as experiments because they do not approach their hearts and souls. In addition, education does not deal with the realities of life between students and teachers. Even emphatically, Steiner mentions that this is a symptom of crime in society.

Steiner tries to conclude that teachers need to understand humans without dismissing the problem. By relying on the power of love as excellent knowledge and the basis of proper education, a teacher has succeeded in understanding the real need, which is spiritual itself. The essence of the spiritual in question is to see humans from beginning to end as a whole. Lecture lectures are presented for us to see that spiritually, students as human beings are not only physically but also mentally and spiritually.

On the other hand, how to realize such education is clearly expressed through an anthropological approach through the art of education either through pictures, involving language, motion, and attracting real life into the classroom. Not only that, but Steiner also mentioned how the role of parents is significant in the development of children. Therefore, the teacher conference at the Waldorf school builds on the experience of how the meeting of parents and teachers is indeed crucial. On the other hand, it is recommended the importance of training for teachers in managing classes for children and staying away from advice that limits teachers in educating. The training should develop the teacher's ability to make in-depth observations of individual cases.

The recommended teaching practice is more developed on the child's spiritual side: reading reality from the physical through his soul and spirit. This need to understand is seen as the art of loving. Seeing the relationship between child and teacher is true love. Philosophically, education is defined as an effort to understand the human world through the senses and the mind. Understanding the development of a child's soul and spirit will depend on how we think and feel. So a teacher needs to approach life in a right and lively way. Trying is always influenced by abstracted spiritual life. Not limited to theory and forgetting spiritual essence.

The overall interest in the anthropological approach developed by Steiner directs education on human existence as a whole from beginning to end. A living essence of the longing and effort of the human soul who lives today. This means that education animates life in the future so that

renewal is not abstract but develops human beings. Do not deny the existence of humans and live in mere abstraction. This style of education leads us to animate reality with spirit. It defines education as an art that must return the real world to schools. Cultivate with love through a genuine attitude in the development of teaching. Not just to be an "idol."

A strong critique of modern education as a reflective effort of the previous approach has moved away from life and education. Steiner's thinking refers to modern-day education, too intellectual (aimed at professors, teachers, experts). They deny humans and live, leaving the framework of civilization. The demands on children are categorized as abstract and far from educational values. On the one hand, the Greek and Roman civilizations offered a synergy between motion and logic. How to educate the body that allows the spirit to work actively so that children feel enthusiastic in class? The answer is with art through true love. An actual teaching practice that underlies how to educate through thoughts, feelings, and ways of acting. The teacher cultivates the class through a humane approach: it is not limited to abstraction and dissolves into a learning resource.

Criticism of the condition of education has proliferated in recent decades, especially in the modern age. Various studies have tried to reform education in style based on various perspectives. In Hall, E & Hall, C's book *Human Relations in Education*, first published in 1988 and rewritten in 2005, explains that human relations in education are fundamental. The learning climate is defined as ourselves and the groups and communities we live in, defined as an experience. Supporting this, Raley and Preyer (2010), in their book *Philosophy of Education in the Era of Globalization*, also explain that basically, the essence of education is respect for oneself and others. Both of these opinions view that education is still limited to mastery of knowledge. Building relationships between humans is a more productive experience than just using textbooks. Hall, E & Hall C emphasize that the experience-based approach positively impacts human relationships. This condition supports Steiner's opinion about human nature. Although not directly explained by Hall, E & Hall, C, with experience as a learning climate, it can be categorized as education that has humanized humans. Because through experience, there is a process that is experienced and felt so that

learning will be very close to both the teacher and the child himself.

However, Hall, E & Hall, C have not seen the spiritual side in humans, which is the main point of Steiner's way of educating. Experience is still defined as the construction of buildings to gain knowledge even though, in the end, it uses learning such as literature and art. In Taylor, G.R, and MacKenney, L (2008), through their book *Improving human learning in the classroom: theories and teaching practices*, reveal that learning is a change in performance through activities, practices, and experiences. Their study tries to continue Bandura's theory, the middle way between behavioristic and cognitive theory, namely through modeling. The learning center is focused on children through experimentation but still leads to knowledge activities. The realm of learning still favors children's ability to understand information even though they have tried to draw real life in the classroom. In other words, as explained by Steiner, how to educate is still focused on the physical, not on the soul and spirit, that human nature is whole. In addition, outside influences such as family have not been part of the development in these two books.

On the other hand, these two books provide input so that Steiner can use the Waldorf model to critique existing theories and increase educational developers' knowledge base. The spiritual essence that is rarely touched is precisely the balance between science and art. Even in the western world, education is more directed at the mastery of science and technology, which should be realized that its origin is spiritual. Through pedagogic studies based on the spirit and soul as the essence of understanding humans, education in schools can last a long time and answer future challenges. Back to the things of nature, it should be a supporter of the learning objectives. This thinking is reinforced by Ma'arif, S (2018) that the integration between science and art in pedagogic concepts is possible as an example of education in Indonesia, such as Islamic boarding schools that encourage education in public awareness.

In addition to the above, Wise Bauer (2018), through his book *rethinking school: how to take charge of your child's education*, reveals that although education in schools has experienced rapid development, it has not been able to develop the diversity of students' intelligence. Class is limited to the group's shared interest so that it kills or suppresses the variety of individual interests. Susan explains that classes were not based on age equality in most countries' early

history of education but shared interest in subjects. People of various ages can be in the same class as long as they are interested in the same subject. The class system based on age group was introduced in Prussia (Germany and surrounding areas) in the early 19th century to restore military power by instilling a fighting spirit and regenerating Prussia's pride as a warlike nation. Prussian leaders organized schools like military units. Various countries later adopted this concept, so it became the norm. Although the class system based on age group is difficult to avoid, for Susan, the learning system must consider students' different bits of intelligence and preferences by summarizing compulsory subjects and giving more room for elective subjects. This choice, if interpreted, leads to life skills as possessed by students.

Based on the two previous thoughts, Susan shows her existence more to the interests and talents of children, which in Steiner's context leads to what Weldrof does, which focuses more on talent. Therefore, for Steiner, the next problem is ways to teach children in a lively and able way to communicate. The life brought to the classroom should form the foundation to help children feel they truly belong to their teacher. Why is that? Because the learning process in the classroom educates children to become real human beings in society. Ki Hadjar Dewantara (2013) explained that education is advancing the perfection of life according to the nature of conditions that are in harmony with the world of children. Schools like huts should guide children's growth according to their nature through the intelligence of the mind and the basis of human life. The philosophy of educating by nature is the child himself. Ki Hadjar Dewantara's thoughts are very much in line with Steiner's that the continuity of children's growth and development is a need that must be understood in teacher education. Education, especially teachers, need to see the potential of children because it is following their soul and spirit, even more physically, for how to build their soul and self, be creative, and have the skills to prepare for the future of students, so that role models are needed from teachers and school community (Adha, 2010; Zulyan et al., 2014; Abidin et al., 2015; Wijaya et al., 2020).

Kaliannan, M & Chandran, S.D (2010) also added that education in human values also needs to involve the role of parents. This means that to achieve the success of the role of teachers and students must also be supported by parents. So in

this book, Steiner explains how one of the goals of the teacher conference at Weldrof and holding a parent-teacher meeting is to be a bridge and social support to achieve the understanding that is imbued with the quality of the feeling soul. However, for Ki Hadjar Dewantara (2013), the tri-center of education, namely family, school, and community, is integral. So in this study, it can be clearly explained that education for children is not the responsibility of one or two parties but everyone because outside parties also influence them.

In line with that, John Holt (1960) explains that the lack of meaning in school is one of the causes of student failure, and intelligence through behavior based on interests and talents is the alternative. However, for Neil Postman (1995), we need to involve the spiritual and intellectual dimensions to create a public space for society in redefining school values. Schools must pay attention to how students' survival is temporary for themselves and many people. This opinion supports Steiner's opinion that a spiritual element is a force among abstract knowledge, including arithmetic or arithmetic, which sometimes makes them lively and intelligent while studying art. However, it should be realized that in the end, it does not make arithmetic unimportant for children, but recommends that we educators not force children to master arithmetic even though on this side children feel oppressed because of accusations that make them not independent.

Therefore, criticism of abstract science should be accepted as a search for reducing its more actual teaching methods. It leads to real life in the community and is adapted to student life. As Steiner explains, the process can involve play that life in the classroom all comes from life. Teachers can use pictures and songs through the senses to move students to happy values.

In essence, criticism of schools that have not been able to cultivate the diversity of potential and answer the problem of education itself. How to create and design strategic teaching concepts for children and education. Timothy D. Walker, through his book "Teach Like Finland: Teaching Like Finland," explains how Finland finds a balanced pattern in overcoming problems in schools, such as teacher quality, student welfare, educational content, school leadership style, cooperation between parents, schools. And community leaders. All of this is based on Finland's nature or purpose of education. Proper education is freedom without oppression. They are freeing students and teachers to develop

themselves without prioritizing competition alone. Students are required to know and master various skills according to their interests and talents. Therefore, Walker proposed five ingredients of happiness, namely well-being, sense of belonging, independence, mastery, and mindset.

Paulo Freire (1972) in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* introduces the concept of bank-style education as a tool of oppression. Knowledge is only granted from someone who is considered to know to someone who is considered not to know. So what should be done to create independence without oppression, namely creating critical awareness with problem-solving skills, sharpening contradictions, seeing facts through experience with problems, dialogue, and communication? Gilbert bovine (1986) in Santrock (2002) has a life skills training program with an approach that aims to prevent, guide, and empower young people to develop their competencies. The components in these skills include 1) providing information on long-term and short-term consequences; 2) decision-making skills; 3) problem-solving skills; 4) social skills training; and 5) self-improvement on learning principles. This study explained that human nature in education should indeed be a priority in education. Interests and talents are potential for children to develop according to their nature. The presence of education is not just to fill but to turn into self-empowerment in the future of the next child.

So the next urgency is how education for teachers must be revitalized in training programs that develop themselves in anthropological ways of educating—training the teacher to understand human needs on a spiritual basis by strengthening the true love. Through thoughts, feelings, and actions that educate children, they will feel fully human. This book provides stimulus and suggestions for an interest in human development and education often overlooked in teacher training. Actual teaching practices that bring the real world into the classroom should be done. Life must be drawn into the classroom to keep it away from the child, not the other way around.

This book is worthy of review because it inspires readers and provides space for teachers to develop themselves according to the needs of children (Sudirman, 2021). The teacher must realize himself as a human being as the child himself is human. Classroom teaching is developed to strengthen the diversity of

intelligence and student preferences to develop according to human nature to advance the perfection of life and build students' moral intelligence in a sustainable manner (Borba, 2008). The school learning system must pay attention to self-potential so that children have life skills in the future based on spiritual values, namely true love.

The final evaluation of this book review inspires us to be enthusiastic about teaching. Steiner has presented the spiritual side as the essence of education so that how teachers and students are fully human. This characteristic is often forgotten in reforming education and instead favors intellectuals as the prominent reformer. It is not impossible, but education should not deny that humans are alive so that it does not leave the framework of civilization. Anthroposophical is an expressive approach to the fact that human existence is recognized for its existence. This study leads us to animate education as a reality with spirit. It is hoped that through human values in education, we as students, educators, parents, and education policymakers can understand the direction and purpose of educating children. The primary foundation is love as a form of nurturing that strengthens the reality of education.

#### Declaration of Competing Interest

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