GRACE

The Montessori Method

"The child seeks for independence by means of work; an independence of body and mind"

Maria Montessori

Maria Montessori was an educational theorist born in 1817. She was an activist for the rights of women and children(Mendoza et al, 2021).

Learning through play and self-discovery is one factor which was highlighted by Montessori. She believed that hands-on play led by the child would encourage curiosity, independence and initiative. The Montessori method also recognises how children learn from mistakes, much the same way that adults (Mansio Montessori of Geneva, 2023).

Montessori believed that it was vital for children to have an appropriate environment to learn in (Mendoza et al, 2021).

A Montessori classroom will resemble more real-life situations in comparison to a standard, modern-day classroom. Teachers tend to give a larger range of task options and avoid time frames (Mansio Montessori of Geneva, 2023).

Who Was Maria Montessori?

Examples of some of Montessori's toys would include building blocks, sewing equipment, puzzles, and simple arts and crafts supplies. Many of these toys would be neutral in colour to avoid overstimulation of the learner (American Montessori Society, 2024).

Children in Montessori schools are given the freedom to experiment, play and learn by themselves within reason. Montessori also referenced the importance of nature and the outdoors. This would also be incorporated into her learning environments (Isaacs, 2012).

How does the Montessori Method support knowledge and Skill Development?

- Improved Cognitive Ability
- More meaningful views of the world
- Better understanding of how things work
- Greater sense of independence
- Discovery and understanding of nature and environment
- Improved life skills
- Linking of subjects
- Deeper understanding of volume and capacity
- Improved knowledge development
- Promotes creativity and independence

Montessori Accademy (2018)

Demangeon et al (2023)
Denervaud (2019)
Flemming et al (2019)

How can Montessori learning be assessed and planned in education settings?

Planning
- Play based
- Interests of the learner
- Areas for different resources
- Ensuring that that all resources are returned to specific areas
- Breaks and lunch at the same time
- Planned outdoor learning

Assessing
- Observation
- Behavior
- Identifying and Observing
- Understanding patterns
- Avoiding potential bias's

- Curriculum for Wales guidance

Murray (2023)
Johnson (2009)
Hwb (2020)

How is this theory relevant in primary schools today?

It is noted that there is limited research available to investigate the efficacy of Montessori practices in mainstream schools, however there are similar factors and practices carried out in both learning environments, which aid the knowledge development and skills of primary school age children.

- Manipulative Materiel (Akabor, 2015)
- Accessibility (Blaszczak et al, 2021)
- Nature Exploration (Rothmeyer, 2019) (Harris, 2017)

WHAT ARE THE CRITICISMS?

- How does this concern children with ADHD

(Syracuse University, College of Arts and Science, 2024)

(Montessori Toddler, 2023)

- How much does a Montessori Primary Education Cost?
- Is this fair?

(Maria Montessori Institute, 2024)

(Office for National Statistics, 2021)

(Sapientia Montessori, 2024)

NOW LET'S SUMMARIES…

- To conclude, there is reasonable evidence to suggest that the Montessori method is effective for the development of children of a primary school age. This is supported by Demangeon et al (2023), Denervaud (2019) and Flemming et al (2019), all of whom recognize a range of skills and knowledge that can be achieved and nurtured in this environment.

- Although there is reasonable evidence for the efficacy of children attending Montessori specific schools, there is very little showing the positive impact that some of these aspects could have on children attending mainstream primary schools.

- The assessment process in Montessori may not be as thorough as testing of pupils attending mainstream secondary schools, therefore possibly questionable in its validity.

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