



EXISTENTIALISM

Philosophy of Education



Why am I here?

Why do I exist?

What is my
purpose in life?

What is my
essence?



What is EXISTENCE?

From the Latin words...

ex
(out)



stare
(to stand)



Exsistere
(to stand out)

To appear

To arise

To become

To be

What is ESSENCE?

Meaning
Purpose
What it is
Nature

What is Existentialism?

- ❑ It is the modern philosophical view which takes the **TAO** as its starting point.
- ❑ It is **subjective**.
- ❑ Humans possess **free will** and stand in an absurd and meaningless world or universe.
- ❑ Every individual is **unique**.

What is Existentialism?

- ❑ Individuals have to take **responsibility** for their own actions and shape their own destinies.
- ❑ Emphasis on human responsibility and judgment in ethical matters.
- ❑ The individual is the sole judge of his or her own actions.

What is Existentialism?

- ❑ Human **freedom** is understood precisely as the **freedom to choose**.
- ❑ “**Existence precedes essence.**”
- ❑ Human persons **do not possess the essence**; they make choices that **create their own nature**.

What is Existentialism?

- ❑ Choice is vital and inevitable to human existence; even the refusal to choose is a choice.
- ❑ Freedom of choice entails risk, responsibility, and commitment.

What is Existentialism?

- ❑ “At birth, man lacks human nature, Man creates himself; what he is, he himself made. Man is only what he himself wills himself to be. Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself...” (Sahakian and Sahakian, pp. 563-565)

What is Existentialism?

- ❑ Will (loob or nakem) enables man to make a conscious decision of what he will be.
- ❑ Will/loob/nakem = Choice
- ❑ Choice or decision makes one responsible for the effects of his choice not only to himself but also to others since his choice also affects other people.
- ❑ Human existence is the starting point of thinking.

What is Existentialism?

□ Existentialism deals with:

- concreteness of experience
- personal concern
- commitment
- uniqueness of the individual

What is Existentialism?

□ The values of existentialism are:

- **freedom of choice**
- **individual dignity**
- personal love
- creative effort

What is Existentialism?

Factors that affect freedom of choice
(Calderon, 2004):

1. Influence of the family, especially the parents
2. Influence of peers and associates
3. Religious orientation
4. Social approval
5. Cultural patterns

What is Existentialism?

Factors that affect freedom of choice
(Calderon, 2004):

6. Financial status
7. Psychological traits, especially intelligence
8. Sex
9. Health and physical fitness
10. Education

What is Existentialism?

- ❑ Existentialism on **Metaphysics**: Reality is subjective, with existence preceding essence. Existence creates essence.
- ❑ Existentialism on **Epistemology**:
Knowing is to make personal choices. To choose or appropriate what I want to know.

What is Existentialism?

- ❑ Existentialism on **Axiology**: Values should be freely chosen.
- ❑ **Educational Implication**: Classroom dialogues stimulate awareness that each person creates self-concept through significant choices.

The Proponents

- Among the best-known existentialist philosophers are **Sören Kierkegaard**, **Martin Heidegger**, **Jean-Paul Sartre**, and **Albert Camus**.

Sören Kierkegaard

(1813-1855)



- ❑ Danish philosopher born in Copenhagen
- ❑ The father of existentialism
- ❑ Human existence is always individual in character, never social.

Sören Kierkegaard

(1813-1855)

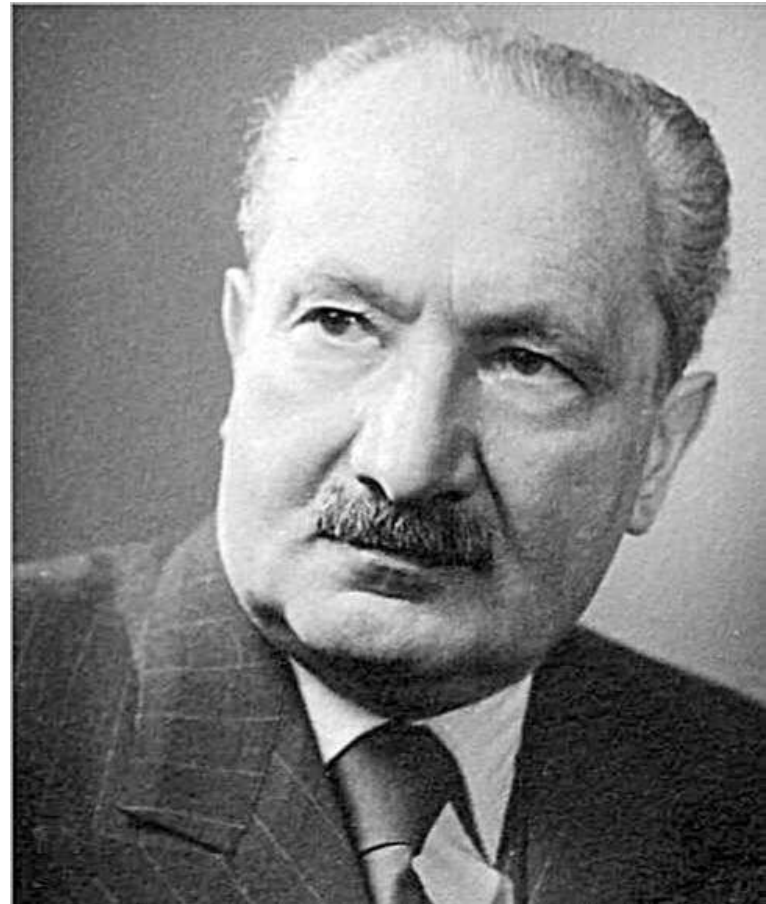


- ❑ Man functions, grows, develops, makes choices, suffers, experiences intense feelings, and faces God as an individual. (Sahakian and Sahakian, p. 553)
- ❑ **“Life is not a problem to be solved, but a reality to be experienced.”**

Martin Heidegger

(1889-1976)

- ❑ German philosopher whose work is associated with phenomenology and existentialism
- ❑ His ideas have exerted influence on the development of contemporary European philosophy.
- ❑ **“Every man is born as many men and dies as a single one.”**



Jean-Paul Sartre

(1905-1980)



- ❑ French philosopher and principal spokesman for the existentialist movement in post-war France
- ❑ An atheistic existentialist
- ❑ Arguably the best known philosopher of the twentieth century

Jean-Paul Sartre

(1905-1980)



- ❑ **“Existence precedes essence.”**
- ❑ Essence is created by existence; human nature is a product of existence.
- ❑ Man first exists without purpose or definition, finds himself in the world and only then, as a reaction to experience, defines the meaning of life.

Jean-Paul Sartre

(1905-1980)



- ❑ According to him, since there is no God or designer to give man a purpose, it is up to the individual to choose the life they think best.
- ❑ We are responsible for everything we do.
- ❑ **“Man is condemned to be free.”**
- ❑ **“The destiny of man is placed within himself.”**

Albert Camus

(1913-1960)

- ❑ French-Algerian journalist, editor and editorialist, playwright and director, novelist and author of short stories, political essayist and activist—and arguably, although he came to deny it, a philosopher.
- ❑ Opposed systematic philosophy



Albert Camus

(1913-1960)

- ❑ Dealt over such questions as the meaning of life in the face of death.
- ❑ **“I would rather live my life as if there is a God and die to find out there isn't, than live as if there isn't and to die to find out that there is.”**



Aim of Education

- ✓ To help students understand and appreciate themselves as unique individuals who accept complete responsibility for their thoughts, feelings, and actions.
- ✓ To educate the whole person, not just the mind, since feeling is not divorced from reason in decision making.
- ✓ To help the learner become fully his authentic self.

The Existentialist Curriculum

- ✓ Learning is self-paced, self-directed.
- ✓ Students are given a wide variety of options from which to choose.
- ✓ Students are afforded great latitude in their choice of subject matter.

The Existentialist Curriculum

- ✓ The humanities are given emphasis to provide students with vicarious experiences that will help unleash their own creativity and self-expression.

The Existentialist Curriculum

- ✓ Composed of fine arts, drama, creative expression, literature, and philosophy.
- ✓ Vocational education is seen more as a means of teaching students about themselves and their potentials than that of earning a livelihood.

Methods of Teaching

- ✓ Focus is on the individual.
- ✓ In teaching history, existentialists focus on the **actions** of historical individuals, who provide possible **models** for the students' own behavior, rather than emphasizing historical events.

Methods of Teaching

- ✓ In **arts**, existentialism encourages **individual creativity and imagination** more than copying and imitating established models. Creativity is an expression of oneself.
- ✓ In teaching **values**, teachers employ **values clarification strategy** to help students know themselves and their place in society. Here, teachers remain non-judgmental and take care not to impose their values on their students since values are personal.

Methods of Teaching

- ✓ According to Del Castillo (2013), through values clarification strategy, the learners will be able to practice sound moral reasoning skills, choose the appropriate response for a value conflict and commit themselves to personal, moral, and societal values.
- ✓ Values education is a matter of choice that goes throughout existence.

Methods of Teaching

- ✓ There should be private and open spaces in the classroom to facilitate **dialogues**, **small group discussions**, and **individualization** to lessen the tension, formality, and constraint experienced by the learners.
- ✓ Criticism to any individual work is less important.

Role of Teachers

- ✓ To help students define their own essence by exposing them to various paths they take in life.
- ✓ To create an environment in which they freely choose their own preferred way.
- ✓ To relates with each student openly and honestly.

Role of Teachers

- ✓ To assist and guide the learner in the process of becoming intelligent, sensitive, choosing, and acting individual who knows the obligation and responsibility of freedom.
- ✓ To help the individual identify and know himself better.

Role of Teachers

- ✓ Questioner
- ✓ Poser of alternatives
- ✓ Identifier of choices who challenges the learner to become fully existent.

Role of Learners

- ✓ To freely choose what subject/s they want to study as long as they are interested in it.
- ✓ To define their own essence or meaning of life.

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THANK YOU VERY MUCH
FOR LISTENING.

