

## FOREWORD

Perhaps more than any other scientific discipline, "educational psychology" has the dubious distinction that everyone involved with it has his/her own view of it.

The aim of this book is to temper this confusion and show that a diversity of focal points is distinguishable within the broad scope of educational psychology and, indeed, they are appropriate. However, the main aim is to show why an educational psychologist is not merely an **educationist** with a bit of psychological knowledge, or merely a psychologist who has acquainted him/herself with education.

An attempt to precisely define the field of educational psychology confronts one with more directions and views of it than there are parts of the world in which it is practiced. Still held by many is the view that psychological insights can merely be **applied** to education and provide answers to the question of how a child with problems can be helped effectively. Some are convinced that such answers can be supplied by education. Still others think educational psychology can provide the answers to questions of how a child learns, is motivated, and effectively taught.

The contemporary educational psychology literature shows a strong eclectic approach to explaining the origins of personal dysfunctions and intervening with such derailed children. Since many variables regarding personal deviancy in children are generally recognized, emphasis is placed on multidisciplinary and trans-professional teamwork to consider such general matters as his/her biological structure and functioning, heredity, cognitive, socioemotional status, family dynamics, social position, culture, etc. The importance of these and other aspects are endorsed. However, a closer analysis of how they figure in the explanatory models, also the models of those who claim that educational psychology is an autonomous science, reveals that such a claim is extremely optimistic, since there is no authentic comprehensive approach.

The primary aim of this book is to avoid haphazard intervention with a deviant child, and promote the conviction that anyone who is involved with child deviancy and assisting a child in distress must understand the **why** and the **how** of giving help, irrespective of the type of assistance given.

Because of the complexity of deviant child conduct, a sympathetic and scientifically founded explanation is necessary and attention is given to educational psychological **theory** and **practice**. Here it is indicated how **educational** and **psychological** moments contribute to a better understanding of providing help to a child in distress.

Part I presents a description of the terrain of educational psychology. In Chapter 1 an overview is given of the child in developmental distress. In Chapter 2 attention is given to diverse theories in educational psychology. Chapter 3 is concentrated on the development of a child, as such, and in Chapter 4, the focus is on the restrained child. Chapter 5 establishes an accountable educational psychological model for explaining child deviancy. In Chapter 6, guidelines are provided for designing and setting up an accountable educational psychological practice.

Part II treats the identification, evaluation, and diagnosis of a child with emotional and behavior problems. In Chapter 7, the different components of diagnosing are concentrated on, i.e., the state of affective development, the role of the parent/teacher in disharmonious educating, and the educator's and the child's possible role in this in terms of dysfunctional educative activities. There also is a focus on diagnostic media (tests). In Chapter 8, different forms of restraint or types of behavior deviations are discussed in terms of their characteristic qualities.

In Part III, attention is directed to pedotherapy and parental guidance, as educational psychological intervention regarding the behaviorally restrained child. Chapter 9 is devoted to a synoptic theoretical grounding where the emphasis is on the essential nature of helping a child pedagogically, and in which **pedotherapy** is differentiated from ordinary **psychotherapy** with children; in addition, the highly structured nature of pedotherapy is explained. Guidelines for establishing pedotherapeutic practice are indicated, especially for preparing helping strategies in general, but, particularly, also for individual sessions. In Chapter 10, there is reflection on some popular techniques for providing help from an educational psychology perspective.

In Part IV, learning problems are dealt with. In Chapter 11 the **orthodidactic** terrain of educational psychology is discussed, i.e., **disharmonious dynamics of teaching** and matters related to this.

Chapter 12 is a discussion of the origins of learning problems with special reference to the role of the deficient actualization of learning. In Chapter 13, there is reflection on symptomatology, and special attention is given to the disharmonious actualization of becoming, and to deficient learning outcomes. The practice of orthodidactic diagnosis is raised in Chapter 14, and this part of the book is closed with Chapter 15 in which the practice of orthodidactic assistance is discussed and illustrated.

In Part V (Chapter 16) some forms of child handicaps are examined.

In Part VI\* the vocational orientation task of educational psychology is discussed. In Chapter 17, the foundation of the practice of vocational orientation is discussed. Chapter 18 contains the design of group and individual personal exploration programs in vocational orientation, and Chapter 19 provides guidelines for establishing a program of vocational exploration. In Chapter 20 the matter of [pedo]therapy in vocational orientation is discussed and illustrated.

Part VII\* focuses on professional ethics. Chapter 21 offers an exposition of the fundamental principles of professional ethics. The conditions which an occupation must fulfill to qualify as a full-fledged profession are clarified. Statutory professional codes of behavior are related to the ethical principles which have crystallized since the origin of professions around the idea of service to humanity. Chapter 21 describes the organization and governance of the profession by the Psychological Association of South Africa and the Professional Council for Psychology. Disciplinary investigations and possible disciplinary steps regarding improper professional conduct are described. In Chapter 23 some important professional-ethical dilemmas such as confidentiality, considered consent and the educational psychologist's responsibility for child, parent and society are discussed.

**\*[As of August 2024, I have translated only the first five parts of this book, i.e., chapters 1-16 G. Y.]**