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EXISTENTIALISM AND ITS IMPLICATION IN EDUCATION

Abstract

Existentialism is a philosophical movement that explores themes of human freedom, individual responsibility, and the search for meaning in a seemingly indifferent or meaningless universe. In existentialist literature, characters often grapple with existential angst, questioning the meaning of life and confronting the absurdity of existence. Jean-Paul Sartre's "Nausea" and Albert Camus's "The Stranger" are seminal works of existentialist literature, depicting characters who struggle with inner turmoil and the need for authenticity. Fyodor Dostoevsky's "Crime and Punishment" and Franz Kafka's "The Metamorphosis" are precursors to existentialist themes, focusing on alienation, guilt, and the search for redemption. Existentialist thought also influences education, where it emphasizes individuality, personal growth, and the importance of self-discovery in learning. In existentialist education, teachers play a guiding role, encouraging critical thinking and allowing students to shape their own educational journey based on personal interests and experiences. Society, leading them to question conventional beliefs and societal norms. Samuel Beckett's play "Waiting for Godot" highlights the absurdity of human endeavours, portraying existentialist themes of uncertainty and futility as the characters wait for someone who never arrives. Existentialist education helps students develop unique qualities, make better choices, develop values and lead authentic lives. Existentialism continues to inspire thinkers, writers, and educators by exploring the human condition, challenging traditional narratives, and encouraging a deeper understanding of individual freedom and responsibility.

Keywords: *existentialism, philosophy, absurdist literature, postmodernism, freedom individuality, meaning of existence*

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Ekzistensializm və onun təhsildə təsiri

Xülasə

Ekzistensializm insan azadlığı, fərdi məsuliyyət və zahirən laqeyd və ya mənasız bir kainatda məna axtarışı mövzularını araşdıran fəlsəfi hərəkətdir. Ekzistensialist ədəbiyyatda personajlar tez-tez ekzistensial narahatlıqla boğuşur, həyatın mənasını şübhə altına alır və varlığın absurdluğu ilə üzləşirlər. Jan-Pol Sartrın "Ürəkbulanma" və Alber Kamyunun "Qərib" əsərləri ekzistensialist ədəbiyyatın əsas əsərləridir, daxili qarışıqlıq və həqiqilik ehtiyacı ilə mübarizə aparan personajları təsvir edir. Fyodor Dostoyevskinin "Cinayət və cəza" və Frans Kafkanın "Metamorfoz" əsərləri özgəninkiləşdirmə, təqsir və xilas axtarışına yönəlmiş ekzistensializm mövzularının sələfidir. Ekzistensialist düşüncə təhsildə də təsir edir, burada fərdiliyi, şəxsi inkişafı və öyrənmədə özünü kəşf etməyin vacibliyini vurğulayır. Ekzistensialist təhsildə müəllimlər istiqamətləndirici rol oynayır, tənqidi düşüncəni təşviq edir və tələbələrə şəxsi maraq və təcrübələrə əsaslanaraq öz təhsil səyahətlərini formalaşdırmağa imkan verir. Cəmiyyət onların ənənəvi inancları və ictimai normalarını şübhə altına alır. Samuel Bekketin "Qodonu gözləyirik" pyesi insan səylərinin absurdluğunu vurğulayaraq, personajların heç vaxt gəlməyən birini gözlədiyi qeyri-müəyyənlik və faydasızlığın ekzistensialist mövzularını təsvir edir. Ekzistensialist təhsil şagirdlərdə unikal keyfiyyətləri inkişaf etdirməyə, onlara daha yaxşı seçimlər etməyə, dəyərləri inkişaf etdirməyə və orijinal həyat sürməyə

kömək edir. Ekzistensializm mütəfəkkirləri, yazıçıları və pedaqoqları insan vəziyyətini tədqiq etməklə, ənənəvi povestlərə meydan oxumaqla, fərdi azadlıq və məsuliyyəti daha dərinləndirən dərk etməyə təşviq etməklə ruhlandırmaqda davam edir.

Açar sözlər: ekzistensializm, fəlsəfə, absurd ədəbiyyatı, postmodernizm, azadlıq, fərdilik, varlıq

Introduction

Existentialism is a term applied to the work of a number of philosophers since the 19th century who, despite large differences in their positions, generally focused on the condition of human existence, and an individual's emotions, actions, responsibilities, and thoughts, or the meaning or purpose of life. Existential philosophers often focused more on what is subjective, such as beliefs and religion, or human states, feelings, and emotions, such as freedom, pain, guilt, and regret (Bhwana, 2014).

Existentialist perspectives are also found in literature to varying degrees. Jean-Paul Sartre's 1938 novel *Nausea* was "steeped in Existential ideas", and is considered an accessible way of grasping his philosophical stance. Since 1970, much cultural activity in art, cinema, and literature contains postmodernist and existentialist elements. Books such as *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968) by Philip K. Dick and *Fight Club* by Chuck Palahniuk all distort the line between reality and appearance while simultaneously espousing strong existentialist themes. Ideas from such thinkers as Dostoevsky, Foucault, Kafka, Nietzsche, Herbert Marcuse, Gilles Deleuze, and Eduard von Hartmann permeate the works of artists such as Chuck Palahniuk, David Lynch, Crispin Glover, and Charles Bukowski, and their works are marked by a delicate balance between distastefulness and beauty (2).

Existentialism has influenced various intellectual and cultural movements since its emergence in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Some of the movements that have been influenced by existentialist thought include:

1. Existentialist Philosophy: This is the direct continuation of existentialist thought as articulated by philosophers such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Martin Heidegger, and Friedrich Nietzsche. Existentialist philosophy explores themes such as freedom, choice, individuality, and the meaning of existence.

2. Absurdist Literature: Absurdist literature, popularized by writers like Albert Camus, presents the human condition as inherently meaningless and absurd. Authors in this tradition often explore themes of existential crisis and the search for meaning in an indifferent universe.

3. Postmodernism: Postmodernism shares some similarities with existentialism, particularly in its skepticism toward grand narratives and its emphasis on the individual's subjective experience. Postmodern thinkers like Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida have been influenced by existentialist ideas, although they also critique and extend them in various ways.

4. Existential Psychology: Existentialist ideas have also had a significant impact on psychology, particularly in the development of existential psychology. Figures such as Viktor Frankl and Rollo May applied existentialist principles to therapy, emphasizing the importance of meaning, choice, and responsibility in psychological well-being.

5. Existentialist Literature: Existentialist themes can be found in literature across various genres, including novels, plays, and poetry. Writers like Franz Kafka, Samuel Beckett, and Fyodor Dostoevsky have explored existentialist themes such as alienation, absurdity, and the search for identity in their works.

6. Existentialist Film: Existentialist themes have also been explored in cinema, with filmmakers like Ingmar Bergman, Federico Fellini, and Jean-Luc Godard incorporating existentialist ideas into their films. Existentialist films often delve into questions of existence, morality, and the human condition.

These movements, among others, have drawn upon existentialist thought to explore questions about the nature of existence, the individual's place in the world, and the search for meaning in life (Warnock, 2003).

The roots of existentialism can be traced as far back as the Sophists, the paid teachers of ancient Greece specified in teaching morals. Although differences are found between existentialism and phenomenology, the two have much in common. Phenomenology deals with the phenomena of consciousness from the first-person point of view and studies the experience of things as they present themselves to the observer. Existentialism, on the other hand, examines the existence and the role the individual plays in terms of his or her feelings, thoughts, and responsibilities. Although have in common and are compatible in principle, hence many philosophers refer to themselves as existentialist-phenomenologist. Sartre was identified as a prominent person of existentialism. As these philosophies have been used in the philosophy of education, they have been so closely allied that some advocates refer to their work as existentialist-phenomenology of education (4).

Because existentialism is a protest type of philosophy, many of its adherents have not been overly concerned with the methodology and systematic exposition. However, some philosophers have seen existentialism as providing a rigorous methodology for describing lived experience, as well as an interpretative approach to individual experience.

Jean-Paul Sartre was a prolific writer and produced major works in many different genres, including a novel, plays, and formal philosophical treatises. He offers a defence of some of his ideas and, in the course of his defence, presents some central themes of his philosophical views. He claims that existentialism is humanistic and provides insight into human freedom and human responsibility (5). Although Sartre did not write directly about education, his views have been applied to learning, curriculum, and the ethical aspects of education. Existentialism offers an array of interpretations because it is spread across so many different cultures. Its seemingly tortured and mixed varieties could be a result of nature.

In the education perspective, existentialist believes that most philosophies of the past have asked out people to think deeply about thoughts and abstractions that had little or no relationship to everyday life. Scholastic philosophy, in which thinkers debated such questions as how many angels could sit on ahead of a pin (Ginny, 2012). The answers to such metaphysical question provided nothing except perhaps some psychological satisfaction at winning a debate through argumentation. Existentialists believe that in their philosophy, the individual is drawn in as a participant, ready to be filled with knowledge based on his ideas. Sartre believes that “existence precedes essence” he added that if people have created ideas and practices that are harmful, then they could also create ideas and practices that are beneficial. Existentialist pose that an individual is always in transition, so that the moment people believe they know themselves is probably the moment to begin the examination all over again. They also believe that a good education emphasize individuality. It attempts to assist each of us is seeing ourselves with our fears, frustrations, and hope.

For educators, existentialist want change in attitude about education. Instead of seeing it as something a learner is filled with, measures against, or fitted into, they suggest that learners first be looked like individuals and that they be allowed to take a positive role in the shaping of their education and life. For the existentialist, no two children are alike. They differ in background, personality traits, interests, and desires they have acquired. Also, they wanted to see an end to the manipulation of the learners with teachers controlling learners along predetermined behavioral path.

Existential theories are widely used in education. According to existentialists, a good education emphasizes individuality. The first step in any education then is to understand ourselves (Magrini, 2012). Making existential methods in the classroom requires a balance in which both teachers and learners as human beings preserve its identity. As Sarte believed that “Existence precedes essence” because the individual human is important as the creator of ideas. Hence, here are some aims of education in this philosophy, to wit:

a) **Fostering Unique Qualities and Cultivating Individualities.** Existentialists believe that every individual is unique, and education must cater to the individual differences. Therefore, the objective of education is to enable every individual to develop his unique qualities, to harness his potentialities and cultivate his individualities.

b) Development of Complete Man. Existentialists want that education helps a man to be a complete man in his natural environment. For the development of complete man, freedom is the essential requirement. Freedom is given to a man with a view to realizing his self and understanding his “being”.

c) Becoming of a Human Person. According to existentialists, one of the most important aims of education is the becoming of a human person as one who lives and make decisions about what the learners will do and be. ‘Knowing’ in the sense of knowing oneself, social relationships and biological relationships development are all parts of this becoming. iv. Making Better Choices. As choice determines perfectibility and happiness, education should train man to make better choices. As such, aim of education is to enable man to hammer out better choices in one’s life.

d) Leading a Good life. Good life, according to existentialists, is authentic life which is possible when an individual starts realizing his individuality and makes his/her own independent choices. Therefore, education aims at teaching him to lead a good life with its noble obligations an summit.

e) Fostering of Values. According to existentialist, the aim of education should be developing a scale of supreme values consistent with his freedom. The learners must develop a commitment to these values and act for them.

In this philosophy, the role of a teacher is to initiates the act of education and influences the lives of his learners throughout his own life. The teacher is very active and welcomes challenges to his ideas from the learners. As Kneller quoted “If there is anything that the existentialist teacher can do for his learners, it is to bring them to a more critical analysis and understanding of the meaning and purpose of existence, so that with time men may become more than a mere repetitive creature perpetuating the bestial habits of his similar ancestors”

2. Literary Precursors: Dostoyevsky, Kafka, and Others Existentialist thought is usually taken to be foreshadowed in the work of Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) and Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900). Indeed, it is in Kierkegaard that we first find the development of a mode of thinking that takes the individual in its concrete existence as the primary philosophical focus. Moreover, as already noted briefly above, both Kierkegaard and Nietzsche also present their ideas in ways that eschew the usual stylistic conventions of philosophical writing, adopting fictional and other devices to advance their thought. Much of Nietzsche’s work appears in aphoristic form, sometimes relying, most notably in the case of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (Also sprach Zarathustra, 1891), on narrative and even song, while Kierkegaard’s 8 method of ‘indirect communication’, which also makes use of stories and jokes, and was developed in explicit opposition to the academic prose of Hegelian thought, involves writing from multiple perspective under a variety of pseudonyms, forcing the reader to a personal engagement with the material at hand. Yet in spite of their unorthodox styles and techniques, the work of Kierkegaard as well as Nietzsche still remains much more firmly placed within the realm of philosophy rather than of literature. From a purely literary perspective, the key figure in the development of existentialism is not so much Kierkegaard or Nietzsche, but rather Feodor Dostoyevsky (Anderson, Thomas, 1979). It would, of course, be a mistake to treat Dostoyevsky as an ‘existentialist’ writer, and not merely for reasons of historical anachronism. Dostoyevsky’s work is clearly much broader in scope and impact than such a label would suggest – he is, indeed, one of the great figures within nineteenth century literature in a way that goes beyond any particular intellectual, literary or philosophical style or movement. Nevertheless, Dostoyevsky’s writing takes up many themes and exhibits many of the characteristics that are also central to later existentialist literature, while Dostoyevsky is himself taken up, and is a significant influence on, philosophers and writers from Nietzsche to Sartre. Dostoyevsky is especially important for Camus, who adapted Dostoyevsky’s *The Devils* (Besy, 1872) for the stage under the title *The Possessed* (Les Possédés, 1959). 9 Dostoyevsky can be seen to set out, in the most vivid and powerful fashion, the problematic situation that underpins much existentialist thought – the situation of the solitary individual, the ‘outsider’, who can no longer find any sure refuge in God or religion, for whom the usual standards of morality and conduct, even the standards of reason itself, no longer seem to hold, and whose very existence is rendered uncertain and ambiguous. It is this individual, often presented

as torn within himself, as his own 'double', who appears, in various guises, as the central figure in many of Dostoyevsky's works from *Notes From Underground* (*Zapiski iz podpolya*, 1864) – a work famously described by Walter Kaufmann as “one of the most revolutionary and original works of world literature” and “the best overture to existentialism ever written”¹³ – to *The Brothers Karamazov* (*Brat'ya Karamazovy*, 1880). Often he appears as a multiple figure – Golyadkin and his double in *The Double* (*Dvoynik*, 1864); Dmitri, Ivan, Alexei (Alyosha), and the illegitimate Smerdyakov, who are the four Karamazov brothers themselves (the double doubled). In *Crime and Punishment* (*Prestuplenie i nakazanie*, 1866), he is the student Raskolnikov, for whom murder becomes a form of philosophical experiment, while in other works, notably *The Idiot* (*Idiot*, 1869) and *The Devils*, this uncertain and ambiguous situation, and the antagonistic forces that obtain within it, is given form through the tragic and often violent interactions within a group of characters, and the larger social and political forces that they represent. 10 Dostoyevsky's explicit concern with ethical and psychological themes, his preoccupation with the disunity and fragmentation of the self, the often introverted and complex nature of his characters, and the ambiguous and uncertain outcomes to his stories, all anticipate elements of later existentialist writing. Yet it is notable that Dostoyevsky's own response to the existential situation that he so acutely describes is one that is much more akin to a Christian humanist ethic of love than to anything to be found in the work of existentialists such as Sartre. Thus, while the parable that forms a central element in *The Brothers Karamazov*, the tale of 'The Grand Inquisitor' (perhaps the passage from Dostoyevsky most often read by students of existentialist literature), 14 provides no clear resolution within the confines of the section in which it appears, emphasising instead the difficulty and ambiguity of the questions of freedom and responsibility it poses (the entire section is titled “Pro and Contra”), other sections of the work advance a rather more positive message, even if not made fully determinate, centred on the essentially ethical path adopted by Alyosha. Indeed, one of the most powerful images in *The Brothers Karamazov* is the scene in which Ivan asks of Alyosha whether he would consent to the torture of a single innocent child in return for the unalloyed happiness of the entire world. 15 Alyosha's answer is that he would not. It is an answer that will later be echoed, in real and urgent circumstances, by Camus. 16 If in Dostoyevsky one finds an account of the uncertainty and pain of the human condition that nevertheless demands of us a human and ethical 11 response, no matter how difficult that may be, that same condition reappears in the work of Franz Kafka in a way that emphasises its absurdity and apparent meaninglessness, but without any sense of the same ethical response – it is as if, in Kafka's universe, no such response is even conceivable. Written during the first two decades of the twentieth-century, but mostly appearing for the first time in published form in the 1920s and 1930s (largely posthumously), Kafka's work paints a world all the more nightmarish for its juxtaposition of the abnormal and the irrational with the banal and apparently everyday. 17 In Kafka a man can be transformed into a gigantic beetle overnight (*The Metamorphosis* – *Die Verwandlung*, 1915) and yet attempt to continue a 'normal' life as if he were merely afflicted by some temporary social embarrassment; a trial can be conducted without any indication of the crime at issue, the possible punishment, or the length and nature of the process (*The Trial* – *Der Prozess*, 1925). If it is the work of Dostoyevsky that provides the literary precursor to the psychological and ethical preoccupations of existentialism, it is in Kafka that we find prefigured something of the nausea of Sartre and the absurdity of Camus. In some respects, the situation that Kafka describes is the same situation of loss of meaning that also concerns Dostoyevsky, but whereas Dostoyevsky presents that loss in terms of an antagonism that exists within and between persons, and as instantiated in the form of real human suffering, Kafka presents it in the bizarre irrationality of ordinary, everyday life – like the surrealists, with 12 whom he has some obvious affinities, Kafka makes even the familiar appear suddenly strange and threatening. Dostoyevsky and Kafka are the two literary figures most frequently cited as forerunners of the existentialist writers of the 1940s and 1950s. Yet they are not the only writers of the nineteenth and early twentieth century who have been adopted by or assimilated to the existentialist tradition (Cohen-Solal, Annie, 2007). Although in their case it is

specific writings that are usually deemed of significance rather than their work taken as a whole, three other writers who are often read in this way are Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910), the Norwegian Nobelprize winner Knud Hamsun (1859-1952) and the German poet Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926). Tolstoy's, *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* (*Smert' Ivana Il'icha*, 1886) tells the story of a successful man, a judge, conscious of his social status and success, who discovers he is dying, and in the process also discovers the hollowness and artificiality of the life he has lived. Ivan Ilyich is only redeemed, and his suffering brought to an end, in the last moments before death, through a recognition of the importance of those around him, and a sense of love and compassion. While Tolstoy's novel contains strongly Christian elements, it is also a powerful examination of the fragmentation of a life, as well as of the retrieval of its significance, in the face of the imminence of death – a death that is also unalterably and finally one's own. Hamsun's *Hunger* (*Sult*, 1890), often seen as one of the founding works of modernist literature, recounts the psychological disintegration of a young 13 writer as he struggles for basic survival outside of the usual framework of society in the Norwegian city of Kristiania. Hamsun's work is strongly influenced by Dostoyevsky, and combines Dostoyevsky's own psychological narration with a bleak portrayal of the corrosive and debilitating effects of modern city life. In this latter respect, Hamsun also represents a romantic reaction to modernity that is evident in other German writers, but is also seen as associated with Hamsun's own conservative political tendencies (given clearest expression in his Nazi sympathies during the Second World War). Recognized as one of the greatest German poets of the last two centuries, Rilke's one novel *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge* (*Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge*, 1910) was cited by Sartre as a direct influence on his own writing. As its title suggests, the novel takes the form of a journal or set of notes – a loosely connected series of reminiscences, reflections, descriptions, and stories – as set down by a young writer living away from his native Denmark in Paris. Malte Laurens Brigge is both a writer and a foreigner in the city in which he lives. Yet preoccupied with the inevitability of death, and the character of time as moving us ever closer to it, Brigge also finds himself alienated in a more profound way than his circumstances might suggest, experiencing the world as empty and without meaning. An outsider existentially as well as socially, Brigge thus exemplifies the same figure we have already encountered in Dostoyevsky, as well as in Kafka, Hamsun, and even Tolstoy (Ivan Ilyich is rendered an outsider by his approaching death) – a figure who will reappear in much later existentialist 14 literature, including that of Sartre and Camus, as well as in other writers such as Hemingway and Hesse (5). One might argue, as I think Cooper is inclined to do, that existentialism and existential phenomenology are co-extensive terms, but there seems to be good reason to distinguish between the two – certainly to assume a straightforward identity here is already to prejudice the case against the possibility that existentialism might also constitute itself as literature (unless, as Murdoch suggests in the quotation below, one takes literature as itself a form of phenomenology), while one might also argue for the possibility of a mode of phenomenology that does indeed thematize the existential and yet is not existentialist. 4Milan Kundera, *The Art of the Novel*, trans. Linda Asher (London: Faber and Faber, 1988), p.44. 5Iris Murdoch writes that “The novelist proper is, in his way, a sort of phenomenologist”, Sartre: *Romantic Rationalist* (London: Fontana, 1967), p.9. While there have been attempts to enlist a range of thinkers from Augustine to Pascal within existentialist ranks, more serious argument over the philosophical scope of existentialism has generally focused on the extent to which the term applies beyond the small group clustered around Sartre and de Beauvoir (or even whether it applies to anyone other than Sartre himself), and the extent to which it 39 properly includes Kierkegaard (the figure most regularly seen as the founder of existentialism as it refers to a philosophical position that encompasses more than the Sartrean), and Nietzsche, Jaspers and Heidegger.

Existentialism is a philosophical movement that explores themes of individual freedom, choice, absurdity, and the search for meaning in a seemingly indifferent or meaningless universe. In literature, existentialism is often characterized by characters who confront existential dilemmas,

wrestle with their identity, or face the absurdity of existence. Here are some prominent examples of existentialism in literature:

"Nausea" by Jean-Paul Sartre: This novel tells the story of Antoine Roquentin, a historian who experiences an overwhelming sense of nausea when he contemplates the meaningless and absurd nature of existence. Sartre, one of the leading existentialist philosophers, explores themes of freedom, authenticity, and existential angst in this book (Sartre, Jean-Paul, 2007; Baldwin, Thomas, 2005; Elkaïm-Sartre, Arlette, 2007).

"The Stranger" by Albert Camus: This novel focuses on Meursault, a detached and indifferent man who commits a senseless murder. Through Meursault's journey, Camus explores existential themes, such as the absurdity of life, the indifference of the universe, and the human struggle for meaning.

"Waiting for Godot" by Samuel Beckett: This play features two characters, Vladimir and Estragon, who wait for someone named Godot, who never arrives. Beckett's work delves into existential themes like the absurdity of existence, the uncertainty of meaning, and the futility of human endeavors.

"Crime and Punishment" by Fyodor Dostoevsky: Although Dostoevsky's works predate the formal existentialist movement, his novels, especially "Crime and Punishment," contain existential themes. The protagonist, Raskolnikov, grapples with guilt, morality, and the search for redemption after committing a murder. Dostoevsky's exploration of inner turmoil and existential questions has influenced later existentialist writers (Kaufmann, 1975).

"The Metamorphosis" by Franz Kafka: This novella tells the story of Gregor Samsa, a man who wakes up one day to find himself transformed into a giant insect. Kafka's work explores existential themes, such as alienation, the absurdity of existence, and the dehumanizing effects of society.

These works reflect the core themes of existentialism, focusing on the individual's experience in a world that can seem indifferent or hostile, as well as the search for personal meaning and authenticity in the face of existential challenges, questions of human existence, the search for meaning, and the internal struggles faced by individuals in an indifferent or hostile world. Existentialist literature often depicts characters who face isolation, anxiety, and the need to define their own purpose in life (Murdoch, 1997).

Other Notable Works with Existential Themes

"Steppenwolf" by Hermann Hesse: This novel delves into the duality of human nature and the conflict between individualism and societal expectations. The protagonist, Harry Haller, struggles with feelings of isolation and detachment, leading him on a journey of self-discovery.

"The Trial" by Franz Kafka: This story follows Josef K., who is suddenly arrested and prosecuted without knowing his crime. The sense of absurdity and the opaque, bureaucratic world he navigates are emblematic of existentialist themes.

"Demian" by Hermann Hesse: This novel explores the coming-of-age journey of Emil Sinclair, who seeks his own path to understanding and self-awareness in a world fraught with societal pressures and expectations.

Existentialism's Influence on Modern Literature and Culture Existentialism's impact extends beyond traditional literature into modern culture, including film, theater, and other forms of artistic expression. The themes of existentialism are reflected in contemporary works that explore human psychology, the sense of alienation, and the quest for meaning in a rapidly changing world (Greene, Marjorie, 1959).

Education and Existentialism Existentialist philosophy has also influenced educational theories. In education, existentialist approaches focus on the individual learner, emphasizing personal growth, self-discovery, and the ability to make meaningful choices. The role of teachers in existentialist education is to guide students in finding their unique paths, encouraging critical thinking and fostering a sense of responsibility for one's own learning journey. Heidegger, Martin (2008). "Letter on Humanism".

Conclusion

Existentialism in literature offers a profound exploration of the human condition, posing questions that challenge traditional narratives and encourage introspection. Through its focus on individual freedom, choice, and the absurdity of life, existentialism continues to inspire writers, artists, and thinkers to explore the depths of human experience and question the very essence of existence (2).

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