UNIT 2 : AIMS OF EDUCATION

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2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- describe the importance of aims in education
- classify the Individual and social aims of education
- synthesize the Individual and social aims of education
- identify the other specific aims of education,
- discuss the aims of education in a democracy

2.2 INTRODUCTION

In unit No.1, we have learnt the meaning as well as subject matter

Aim is, thus, a yardstick by which we can measure the success and failure of work done in school.

- Clear determination of educational aim can only ensure development of life in the right direction, towards reaching the goal. Behind any scientific plan and programme, there is a clear cut aim and purpose.
- Aims are necessary for efficient school management also. It helps in proper planning of the curriculum, library, method of teaching, selection of teachers, selection of teaching aids and apparatus, system of evaluation, standard of discipline etc. which dependens on the aims of education.
- From the point of view of teachers and guardians also, aims are necessary, because the society reviews and appreciates the work of the school in terms of its aims. In a democratic society, this assumes much greater importance.
- Finally, aims provide continuity and significance to education. We know that education is a continuous and dynamic process. It is a process of living through a continuous reconstruction of experiences, i.e., unfolding new dimension of knowledge, developing new capacities in the individual which is not possible without having aim of education.



ACTIVITY 2.1

Why is it necessary to have an aim of education? Give your own statement for supporting the comment.

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2.4 CLASSIFICATION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF AIMS OF EDUCATION.

By now, we have developed a fair understanding about the necessity of determining the aims in education. This necessity has led to the

possibilities, unhindered by environment and unhampered by the society. Individual aim also believes that social development basically depends upon individual development. A fully developed individual can only bring social change and development.



LET US KNOW

What do you understand from the above discussion about Individual aims of education? For more clarity we should know that:

- The philosophy of Naturalism has contributed to the growth of individual aim in education.
- Sir Percy Nunn is the main supporter of individual aim.
- Development of individuality is the main task of education, according to individualists
- Social development basically depends upon individual development.

Now, let us examine the view points of different schools of thought supporting the individual aim of education:

- From biological point of view, every child is a unique entity born with certain potentialities and natural endowments. The function of education is to develop them into a distinct personality.
- According to naturalists thinkers like Rousseau and Nunn, "the central aim of education is autonomous development of the individual". Therefore, education should be planned according to nature, which would make an individual what he ought to be.
- The psychologists are of the opinion that education is an individual process. No two children are identical in intellectual capacity and other dispositions. Therefore, a rigid curriculum for all students is not justified. The process of education should be individualized.
- The spiritualists hold that the main function of education should be to lead the individual to self realization and the realization of higher values of life.

2.4.2. Social Aim of Education

Now that we know what individual aim of education is, let us discuss the social aim of education.

Social aim believes that the state or society is the supreme and individuals exist only for the society. Individuals cannot develop in isolation from the society. Therefore, education must always work for the welfare and progress of the society. According to this aim, the interest of the society is supreme and the position of an individual is always subordinated to the society or state. The basic philosophy of social aim is that society is the ultimate reality and the individual cannot rise above the social entity.

John Dewey is the chief supporter of the social aim of education and he has elaborately discussed the social aim of education in his book "Democracy in education". He broadly outlined the aim of education as 'social efficiency', which implies "civic efficiency" or "education for citizenship". According to him, every state must design education for social welfare and efficiency. A socially efficient individual will be economically self sufficient and he will not be a parasite on society but will contribute positively towards the progress of the society. With the development of democratic ideals in the political world, Dewey's concept of social efficiency as an educational aim has gained wider support throughout the world.



LET US KNOW

Let us have a look at the main points of social aim of education:

- The state or society is above all individuals.
- Individual's development depends upon social development.
- The main task of education is the welfare and progress of the society.
- John Dewey is the chief supporter of the social aim of education.

Social aim of education is expressed through concepts as 'Education for Social Efficiency', 'Education for Citizenship' and 'Education for Civic Efficiency'.

Finally, it does not give any importance to individual development of a person and his inherent qualities.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4: Who was the main advocator of social aim of education?

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Q 5: Define the concept of social efficiency.

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Q 6: On what grounds, the social aim of education is criticized?

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2.4.3 Synthesis of Individual and Social Aims

Probably an impression has developed in our mind that individual and social aims are contradictory to each other. But practically, it is not so. These two types of aims may be opposed to each other if stressed in their extreme form. But if you cut off their sharp edges they become complimentary and related to each other. Therefore, the extreme form of either of the two should be avoided.

If we examine both the aims of education dispassionately, we shall find that neither the individual nor the society can exist without each other. The individual is a product of society, while society finds its advancement in the development of each individual member. In the words of Sir John Adams, “Individuality requires a social medium to grow; without social contacts we are not human”.

In conclusion, we may say that there is in fact no ***antithesis*** between the two aims. The society and the individual are not separate ***entities*** but complimentary aspects of the same differentiated whole. Society is unthinkable without the individual and the individual without the society. Thus, the aim of education should be the development of the individual as a member of the society.



ACTIVITY 2.2

"Education has both individual and social aims. There is no antithesis between these two aims." What do you understand by this comment?

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2.4.4 Liberal Aim of Education

Now, we have a clear concept about Individual and Social aim of education. Besides these two aims, there are some other specific aims also. One such aim is liberal or knowledge aim of education. Let us discuss what liberal aim is.

The concept of liberal aim of education is very old. Education in the ancient times, whether in India or elsewhere mostly, emphasized mostly the development of intellectual powers or knowledge. All learning was for the sake of learning and scholarship. The function of the Gurukula in India and the school in the west was to enable the child to develop physically and mentally and to obtain all experiences necessary for being a cultured individual in the society. As the aim of education was to liberate the mind, provisions were made for subjects like philosophy, logic, geometry, fine arts etc. in their curriculum.

The supporters of the liberal aim believe that man is considered to be far superior to animals because of his certain cognitive abilities,

2.4.5. Vocational Aim of Education

Now we have understood the liberal aim of education. While criticizing the liberal aim, we have opined that liberal education should be provided with practical knowledge, for true development of the individual. Vocational aim of education has laid stress on practical aspects of education. To be more specific, it has given importance on training in some vocation or craft, so that a person can earn his own living in future life. This aim of education is gaining more and more popularity with the advancement of science and technology and changing socio-economic structure of the world. Vocationalisation is an important slogan of modern democratic education and it is believed that without a proper emphasis on vocational aspect of education, those who merely go to school suffer all their lives.

We must understand the points, why vocational aim of education is getting importance in the present times.

- Vocational education makes one economically self sufficient. Self sufficiency is a great source of satisfaction and strength. Economic self sufficiency is the first characteristic of social efficiency.
- Vocational education strikes a balance between economic and individual progress. It prepares students for a useful life and useful occupation. In the words of Gandhiji,"True education ought to be a kind of insurance against unemployment".
- Vocational aim of education reduces the impact of verbalism and mere intellectual domination. Modern educationists have supported the idea of vocational education. Rousseau and Gandhiji were great supporters of this aim of education. Gandhiji introduced craft centred education as a part of his basic education scheme.
- Vocational aim gives purpose to educational activity. It is based on the simple principle of psychology that a child learns more efficiently when he is engaged in purposeful activity which appeals to his instincts and interests, stimulates his observations and



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 8: State the reasons briefly why vocational aim of education is getting importance in the present day situation?

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Q 9: What do you mean by 'bread and butter' aim?

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2.4.6 Harmonious Development Aim

Now we will discuss Harmonious development as an aim of education. We have to understand the concept and the basic features of this aim of education. First, we must have to know what harmonious development in education means.

Harmonious development means developing the psycho-physical and moral qualities of an individual in a balanced and harmonious way. We know that a child inherits the faculties of body, mind, and soul. Education should establish a harmony between these aspects of development for emergence of an ideal personality. Mahatma Gandhi also lays emphasis on harmonious development when he says 'by education, I mean all-round drawing out of the best in child and man -body, mind and spirit'.

Pestalozzi was also a great supporter of the harmonious development aim. He says "The sole aim of education is the harmonious development of the faculties and disposition which make up personality".

Thus, this aim of education believes in the development of all innate powers and capabilities of the child in a harmonious way in order to produce a well balanced personality.

"the right ruling of conduct in all directions under all circumstances." According to him, education must tell us the ways to treat our body as well as mind, ways to manage our affairs- such as, to bring up our family, to behave as a citizen, utilize the happiness which nature supplies to the greatest advantage of ourselves and others. He has suggested a number of activities and certain subjects of study for children. Training in the activities of self preservation, rearing of offspring, social preservation and leisure can be imparted through the hygiene teaching of physics, language, mathematics, geography, history, psychology, home science, music etc.

We can realize the limitation of this aim by considering the following questions. What determines completeness of life? Is the aim of completeness of life an unchanging thing? The answers of these questions are vague and not clear. Again, one point must be noted that no mention has been made of art, literature and religion in the lists of subjects mentioned by Herbert Spencer.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 11: Who has formulated and expounded the Complete Living aim?

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Q 12: List the subjects essential to realize the Complete Living aim?

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2.5 AIMS OF EDUCATION IN A DEMOCRACY

We all know that democracy is the most accepted from of government in the modern world. From political point of view, democratic government is based on the will of the people. The famous words of Abraham Lincoln, "Democracy is the government of the people, by the people and for the

of living acommunity life. We must be able to realise that progress of the society is possible only by mutual co-operation of people. For the sake of our own welfare, we should not behave in a selfish way and try to get support of others. Development of virtues like tolerance is necessary for mutual good will. These virtues should be developed through education.

- **Development of a Sense of True Patriotism:**

  True patriotism is another important aim where education has to play a very prominent and vital role by organizing some workshops on the issues of State and National topics and also celebrating anniversaries in memory of the great men of the nation. According to the Secondary Education Commission, narrow nationalism is very dangerous. Therefore, the social customs and traditions of the nation are to be analysed objectively. The students ought to be taught that they are not only the citizens of their country but also of one world. So, they should be prepared to discharge responsibilities to the world also. In the words of the commission, "In a very real sense, therefore, 'Patriotism is not enough' and it must be supplemented by a living realization of the fact that we are all members of the One World, and must be prepared, mentally and emotionally, to discharge the responsibilities which such membership implies.

- **Development of Vocational Efficiency:**

  Success of democracy depends upon its efficient citizens. Vocational training is necessary in order to make everybody efficient in his own field of work. Development of the country is possible only through promoting technical skill and efficiency. There should be diversification of courses at the secondary stage so that more and more students may take up agricultural, technical, commercial and practical courses according to their own interests and aptitudes.

- **Development of Personality:**

  We have mentioned earlier that in a democracy the personality of every individual has got its own importance. There are several factors for moulding and developing the personality and education is the most important factor for the all-round development of a person. There was a

- Work experience should be introduced as an integral part of all general and vocational education.
- Vocationalisation of education should be utilized in the development of productivity.
- Application of science should be utilized in the development of productivity.

Social and National Integration:

Can we ever think that a vast country like India can survive without social and national integration?

To strengthen the National Integration, the commission suggested:

- A common school system for all irrespective of caste, creed, community, religion, economic conditions and social status.
- Compulsory Social and National Service for students at all stages of education.
- Formation of proper language policy by giving due importance to Modern Indian languages.
- Promoting national consciousness by developing values like scientific temper of mind, tolerance, respect for culture of other national groups etc.

Education for Modernization:

We all know that without giving importance on science and technology, no country can modernize itself. To accelerate the process of modernization, the commission has given importance to:

- Keeping pace with expanding knowledge.
- Curiosity towards significant social changes by developing interests, attitudes, values and capacity to think and judge for oneself.
- Creation of new social order through education to meet social, economic, cultural and political problems of new social order.

Social, Moral and Spiritual Values

According to the Commission, education must cultivate social moral and spiritual values among the students. For this purpose,

- The two major aims of education, i.e., individual and social aim and the different features of these two aims along with the criticism have been discussed.
- From such discussion of the Individual aim of education, we have come to know that the success of education depends on the development of highest potentialities of the individual. Therefore, maximum opportunities should be made available to each individual for physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual development of their abilities.
- Social aim of education, on the other hand, believes that an individual cannot develop with out the society and education must work for the welfare and progress of the society.
- Both these views have contributed to the practice of educational aims. We know that both individual and society are closely tied up and one cannot survive without the other. As such, both the aims are actually complementary to each other.
- We have also discussed other specific aims of education, such as- Liberal, Vocational, Harmonious development and Complete Living aim of education. We have learnt that liberal aim of education considers man as a cognitive being possessing abilities like thinking, reasoning, problem-solving etc. Therefore, liberal aim believes that imparting knowledge should be the sole aim of education. The Practical side of life has received importance on vocational aim of education. We know that vocationalisation is an important slogan of modern education.
- The last part of this unit deals with the aims of education in a democratic country. As democracy has become the most accepted form of government in the modern world, development of democratic ideals and values are becoming an indispensable part of educational aims. We have learnt about the different aims of education in democracy, such as development of democratic citizenship, development of patriotism, development of personality, and education for leadership etc. alongwith the objectives of education according to Kothari Commission (1964-66.)

Ans to Q No 6: The Social aim of education has the following limitations. Firstly, social aim in its extreme form can never be accepted as it reduces the individual to a mere non-entity. Secondly, it may develop the sense of dictatorship or authoritarianism of the state towards education. Thirdly, it does not give importance to individual development.

Ans to Q No 7: Knowledge aim of education has endowed cognitive powers of education that requires developing the intellectual abilities and capacities of a person.. The term 'knowledge education' aims at developing the urge of knowledge in an individual.

Ans to Q No 8: Vocational aim of education is getting importance, because:

- Vocational education makes the individual economically self sufficient.
- It strikes a balance between economic and industrial progress.
- It reduces unemployment.

Ans to Q No 9 : Vocational aim is also known as "bread and butter" aim because it teaches an individual how to earn his own livelihood.

Ans to Q No 10 : Harmonious development means developing all psycho-physical and moral qualities of an individual in a balanced and harmonious way. As an aim of education, it believes the development of all innate powers and capabilities of the children in a harmonious way in order to bring or produce a well balanced personality.

Ans to Q No 11 : Herbert Spencer formulated and expounded the Complete Living aim of education.

Ans to Q No 12 : The subjects considered essential to realize the Complete Living aim are: Hygiene, Physics, language, mathematics geography, history, child psychology, music etc.

Ans to Q No 13 : Democracy is a rule of government of the people, by the people and for the people.

Specific aims in a democracy should be :

- Development of vocational efficiency
- Development of leadership