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# UNIT 1 CONCEPT AND MEANING OF EDUCATION

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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

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To understand an abstract concept like education, one is required to explicate its meaning or nature from the point of view of the functions such concepts perform or the contexts in which such concepts are appropriately used. But there is another sense also in which people (probably wrongly) see education as an instrument by application of which certain individual or social changes are brought about. Interpreted in the latter sense, the economist would see education as a commodity in which it is profitable for the community to invest. Sociologists would tell people that education is a socializing force and teachers are the socializing agency in the community. Similarly, a psychiatrist would say that the role of education, and hence of teachers, would be to maintain the mental health of children. But you will agree that education is different from being a

commodity, real estate, type of social work or psychiatry. Education is what it is and not the way it is differently interpreted. Education is there in all of the above and each one is linked to the process of education, yet it lies above all these.

We talk of educating children, teaching or instructing them; socializing or developing or converting them into good citizens or good human beings. In all these expressions definitely something that we call education is involved. But what exactly is that, a process or a product, is not very clear. If it is a process, how does it occur or what are its conditions? And if it is a product, what does it look like? How can one define that product? There are such and many more questions, which occur to us when we talk of understanding education. In this unit, an attempt has been made to seek answers to such questions in order to arrive at a deeper understanding of education.

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## 1.2 OBJECTIVES

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By going through this unit, you should be able to:

- derive the concept of education etymologically;
- analyse the various definitions of education from different perspectives;
- differentiate between descriptive and practical theories of education;
- explain the two approaches of theory of education—the mechanistic and the organismic approaches;
- discuss how education represents a deliberate attempt to develop a desirable state of mind;
- explain the reason why the process involved in education should be worthwhile;
- differentiate between the aims and purposes of education;
- discuss the relevance of matter and manner of education;
- elucidate the concept of an educated man;
- discuss with examples the cognitive perspective in education;
- explain the difference between educating the emotions and training of emotions;
- discuss the concept of “knowing how” and “knowing that”;
- discuss education as initiation;
- describe the significance of inter-subjectivity in education; and
- define the concept of a teacher.

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## 1.3 EDUCATION: ITS ETYMOLOGICAL DERIVATION

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Etymologically, the word “Education” is derived from the Latin words “educare” and “educere”. Educare refers to “to bring up” or “to nourish”, whereas the word “educere” means to “to bring forth” or “to draw out”. Some others believe that the word has been derived from another Latin word “educantum” which has two components. “E” implies a movement from inward to outward and “duco” refers to developing or progressing. An analysis of these words reveal that education aims at providing a learner or a child a nourishing environment to bring out and develop the latent potentiality hidden inside him.

In India, the concept of education is traced back to the “Gurukula Parampara” which developed in ancient times. Basically, a Guru-Shishya or Teacher-Pupil tradition emphasized the education of the latter in ancient times. Two prominent words in Sanskrit namely, “Shiksha” and “Vidya” also stand out as equivalents of the term “Education”. The former has been derived from the root word “Shas” meaning “to

discipline" or "to control". The latter word is derived from the root word "Vid" which means "to know". Therefore, ancient Indian education stressed emphasis on two major aspects in the education of an individual. These are discipline and knowledge. A learner must be disciplined and develop a curiosity to acquire new knowledge to lead a fruitful life.

## 1.4 EDUCATION: SEARCH FOR A DEFINITION

Education of a human being is, perhaps, the most cherished goal of any human civilization that ever existed or is yet to come in this world. Therefore, philosophers, educationists and great thinkers have tried their best to define education. But in most of these definitions, one would find the mark of their conceptions of the reality, values and belief systems. Although such definitions might reflect the contemporary societal systems, no single definition has been found so far that satisfies everyone. The search for a universal definition of education still continues. However, the definitions of education given by the great philosophers and educationists can broadly be categorized into three major trends. They are discussed in the following paragraphs.

### Education as a Spiritual Pursuit

The stress on education as a spiritual pursuit is basically an Indian concept. Right from the Vedic period, Indian spiritual thinkers have been propagating education as a means of achieving spiritual goals. According to the Upanishads, "Education is that whose end product is salvation" and Adi Shankaracharya said "Education is the realization of the self". The Rigveda says, "Education is something which makes a man self-reliant and selfless". Viveknand says, "Education is the manifestation of divine perfection already existing in man". All these definitions underline the presupposition that human beings are the creation of God. It is education whose role is to bring out the divinity already existing in man and help him to realize himself as well as lead him to achieve salvation.

### Education: Development of Innate Human Potentialities

According to some educators, the human being is the embodiment of rich inherent potentialities and it is the task of education to help him develop, enhance and realize these potentialities. These innate potentialities are to be tapped right from the birth of a child and nurtured through his growth and development of adulthood. Rousseau said, "Education is the child's development from within". Plato propagated that, "Education develops in the body and soul of the pupil all the beauty and all the perfection he is capable of", whereas Froebel said, "Education is unfoldment of what is already enfolded in the gene. It is the process through which the child makes the internal external". According to Mahatma Gandhi, "By education, I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in the child and man – body, mind and spirit". T.P. Nunn says, "Education is the complete development of the individuality of the child so that he can make an original contribution to human life according to the best of his capacity". A close analysis of these definitions reveal the following:

- Human personality has different facets – physical, mental, social and spiritual.
- It is the task of education to ensure harmonious and balanced development of these innate power of an individual by providing a nurturant and conducive environment for their growth and development.

### Education: Social Orientation of the Human Being

According to some thinkers, education is a means to achieve larger societal goals as it is a sub-system of the macro societal system. Hence, education of an individual should emphasise his orientation to achieve the social goals. In this context, social

dimension of education takes a priority place in comparison to individual dimension of education. For example, Kautilya says, "Education means training for the country and love for the nation". Similarly John Dewey has said that "All education proceeds by the participation of the individual in the social consciousness of the race". Edgar Faure, the Chairman of International Commission on Education, "Learning to Be: The World of Education Today and Tomorrow" (UNESCO, 1972), has said, "What is even clearer, however, at the level of social phenomena, is that until the present, education, as we have known it through all the forms of society which have lasted for any length of time has been the select instrument by means of which existing values and balances of power have been maintained and kept in effect, with all the implications of both a positive and negative character which this process has had for the destiny of nations and the cause of history.

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## 1.5 EDUCATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THEORIES OF EDUCATION

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Although different thinkers have given their own definitions of education, the concept of education can be analysed from the viewpoint of various theoretical stands on education. According to the positivistic thinker, T.W. Moore (1982) the philosophy of education is concerned with what is said about education by those who practise it (teachers) and by those who theorize about it (the educational theorists). Moore regards education as a group of activities going on at various logical levels, logical in the sense that each higher level arises out of, and is dependent on, the one below it. The lowest level is the level of educational practice at which activities like teaching, instructing, motivating pupils, etc. are carried on. Those involved at the lowest levels (i.e. teachers) talk about teaching, learning, knowledge, experience, etc. Arising out of these basic ground floor activities, is another higher order activity – educational theorizing, which results in some kind of educational theory or more accurately "educational theories". The educational theorist may be making a general point about education. He may say, for example, that education is the most effective way, or the only way, of socializing the young, of converting them from human animals into human beings, or of enabling them to realize their intellectual and moral potentialities. Whether education does realize what it purports to realize, is a matter of fact and the way to find out is to look at education in practice, and see what happens. Theories of this kind are called "**descriptive theories**" purporting to give a correct account of what education as a matter of fact, does. Such theories stand or fall according to the way the world happens to be.

The other kind of educational theory is one which, instead of describing the role or function of education, rather makes specific recommendations about what those engaged in educational practice ought to be doing. Moore calls such theories "practical" theories. They give reasoned prescriptions for action. Theories of this latter kind exhibit a wide variety in scope, content, and complexity. These theories can perhaps better be called theories of teaching or "pedagogical" theories. Such theories which postulate that "teachers should make sure that any new material introduced to pupils should be linked to what they already know"; or that "a child should not be told a fact before he has had a chance to find it out for himself", are examples of "**prescriptive theories**". Other theories of this kind are wider in scope and more complex, such as the theory that education ought to promote the development of innate potentialities, or prepare the pupil to be a good citizen, a good worker, a good human being and above all a good learner. Such theories may be called general theories of education in that they give comprehensive prescriptions recommending the production of a particular type of person and a specific type of society. Plato, for instance, in his "The Republic" recommends a certain type of man as worthy to be ruler of a particular type of society. Similarly Rousseau gives a general theory of education in "Emile", Froebel in the

'Education of Man', and Dewey in "Democracy and Education". In each case the theory involves a set of prescriptions addressed to those engaged in the practice of education. In most such cases, theory is meant to serve an external end. The theorists assume some end, which ought to be adopted and worked for. These recommendations presuppose a major value component, a notion of an educated man; hence such theories cannot be verified or validated in the way that scientific 'descriptive' theories may be. Whilst a scientific theory may be established or rejected simply by checking it against the facts of the empirical world, the validation of a prescriptive theory demands a more complex approach, involving both empirical evidence and justification in terms of substantial value judgement. A practical theory involves commitment to some end, thought to be worth accomplishing. Everything a teacher does in the classroom has a theory behind it. All practice is theory loaded and an educational theory is logically prior to educational practice.

The educational theorists making reasoned recommendations for practice inevitably make use of concepts like education, teaching, knowledge, curriculum, authority, equal opportunity, punishment, etc. Further, the theories of education may be limited in scope, like the theories of teaching or pedagogical theories or more complex like the general theories of education, purporting to define what education ought to do; recommending the production of a particular type of person—an educated man. Whereas the limited theory is concerned with a particular educational issue such as how this subject is to be taught, or how children of a particular age and ability should be dealt with, a general theory of education will contain within itself a large number of limited theories. Rousseau in 'Emile', for example, describes limited theories about sense training, physical training, negative education, training in self-reliance. Under the umbrella of the general theory of education, he emphasizes production of a natural man or education according to nature. Any practical theory, limited or general will involve a set of assumptions or pre suppositions which together form the basis of an argument.

### 1.5.1 Two Approaches to General Theory of Education

A general theory of education begins, logically, with an assumption about the notion of an educated man. To realize this end, it recommends certain pedagogical procedures to be put into practice. But between the aim and the procedures there must be certain assumptions about the raw material, the person to be educated. It has to be assumed that human nature is to some extent malleable, that what happens to the pupil by way of experience has some lasting effect on his subsequent behaviour.

In the history of educational thought, two major assumptions have been made about human nature which radically differ in their emphasis, and which when adopted give radically different directions to educational practice. These assumptions reflect the mechanistic and organic account of the phenomenon of education.

Thomas Hobbes compared man to a wonderfully contrived machine, composed of springs, wheels and levers. Of course, man is more than a machine, but it may be useful or convenient sometimes to view man in this way, to give a simplified model of what in reality is very complex. Hobbes adopted this kind of model because he wanted to depict human society itself as a contrivance made up of individuals who themselves could be regarded in this way.

Froebel by contrast takes the model of man as a living, growing, developing creature, a natural whole. Here the various elements which constitute it are not simply integrated into a system of checks and balances, cogs and levers, as in the case of machines. The human being is a whole, not simply a compendium of parts. The whole, as Moore rightly points out, is logically prior to the parts in the sense that the parts exist as parts of the whole. Thus a man, according to Froebel, is more than an assemblage of bones, muscles and nerves. And as Hegel and his followers would have it, a society is more than the totality of individuals who compose it. In the case of a machine, it is nothing

more than the organised sum of its parts, where as an organism is a whole which transcends its parts and is capable of growth and development.

There is, however, a sense in which man is like a machine, a system of inputs and outputs. But to regard man simply as a machine is to ignore what is essentially human in him. Nonetheless, it may sometimes be the case that man is best understood in mechanistic terms. But the alternative account offered by the organismic model forms a more plausible basis for an adequate view of man. In fact, both models have their uses and limitations and neither of these analogies should be pressed too far. Neither of these alone gives an adequate picture. Both may be useful as models, simplified versions of reality.

Translated into educational context, these two approaches would take different forms. Education conceived on mechanistic assumptions would be revealed by performance or man's external behaviour. A pupil would be seen as a device whose workings could be deliberately regulated from outside. He would not grow or develop according to some internal dynamic, rather his behaviour would be modified or shaped to approach some desirable end. Teaching would be a matter of organising desirable inputs—knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The educated man would be the one whose behavioural outputs meet the criteria of worthwhileness adopted by his society.

A general theory of education based on the organic view of man would tend to emphasize the internal principles of growth and development. The education, therefore, would be not a modification or shaping from outside, but an attempt to encourage individual development from within.

Historically, the mechanistic approach has been adopted by the French philosophers Helvetius, James Mill, and more recently by J.F. Skinner. Helvetius suggested that manipulation of a pupil's environment would enable the teacher to make virtually anything he wished out of the pupil. The organismic view is exemplified by Rousseau, Froebel and Dewey. However, it is suggested that none of these two approaches should be taken too literally. They are not wholly divorced from empirical evidence, but each tends to give a one-sided view of the whole. The better way of utilizing the analogies is to recognize that each offers a different perspective in education and that neither of them should be presumed to give a complete or comprehensive view.

**Check Your Progress**

**Notes:** a) Write your answers in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with the one given at the end of the unit.

1. Distinguish between descriptive theories and prescriptive theories.

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2. Give three examples of pedagogical theories of education of limited nature.

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3. "The aim of education is the production of a natural man". Does this statement point to a general or a limited theory of education? Justify.

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4. What assumptions underly the mechanical and the organismic model of man?

## 1.6 GENERAL FEATURES OF EDUCATION

Reflecting on the issues/questions raised above in the introduction of this unit can help us gain some understanding about education qua education. The basic question to address before we can seek to explicate the concept of education is whether there are or can be some essential features of education like the ones reflected in the economist's, sociologist's or the psychiatrist's, points of view referred to in the beginning of this unit. Peters (1982) holds it objectionable to suppose that certain characteristics could be regarded as essential, irrespective of context and of the questions under discussion.

In this regard, a number of general and limited theories of education have come up which seek to conceive education in one or the other perspective. Then there are a number of philosophers of education who have tried to analyse these theories with a view to arriving at a clear conception of education. A philosophic scrutiny of the different viewpoints may reveal characteristics of education which are intrinsic to education. We may start this scrutiny from the point of view of what economists, sociologist or psychiatrists say about education. There is no doubt that teachers qua teachers are engaged in activities which relate to one or more of the roles that can be assigned to teachers by economists, sociologists, etc. but such roles seriously misrepresent what is distinctive of them as teachers. In the context of planning of resources it may be unobjectionable to think of education as something in which community can invest. Similarly, in the context of social cohesion, education may well be described as a socializing process, but from the point of view of the teacher's task in the classroom these descriptions are too general and dangerous, for they encourage a conformist or instrumental way of looking at education. In the real sense of the term, education cannot and should not be considered as instrumental to some external end. To look at education as an instrument of development of human resources, for example, may amount to treating education as subservient to an external end. Considering educated men and women simply as resources is antagonistic to the concept of education per se.

There can be other reasons why such economic or sociological descriptions of education can be misleading, if taken out of context. They are made from the point of view of a spectator pointing to the functions or effects of education in a social or economic system. They are not descriptions of it from the point of view of someone engaged in the enterprise. What is essential to education must involve an aspect under which things are done and one which is both intentional and reasonably specific.

### 1.6.1 Education Represents a Deliberate Process to Develop a Desirable State of Mind

One of the most obvious features of education is that it relates to some sort of process in which a desirable state of mind develops. It would be a contradiction in terms to say that a person has been educated and yet the change was in no way desirable, as it would be to say that 'X' had been reformed and yet had made no change for the better. Education is not the same as reform; but it is similar in that it implies a change for the better. Furthermore, education is usually thought of as an intentional activity both from the point of view of those engaged in the enterprise and those being educated.

We put ourselves or others in the relevant situations, knowing what we are doing. We know that Rousseau claimed that education comes to us from nature, from men and from things. But the central uses of the term are located in situations where we deliberately put ourselves or others in the way that is thought to be conducive to development of a desirable state of mind.

But the question that immediately comes to us at this juncture is the understanding of what constitutes the 'desirable state of mind'. It is not so easy to state what is desirable, for the question of desirability can be asked from different angles or in different perspectives. If we put this question to those being educated, they are likely to say that they want to become capable of getting an appropriate job or a position of prestige in the community. But if we view this question from the point of view of the teacher, a second type of model crops up – that of useful arts where neutral materials are fashioned into something that is valuable. Just as clay is moulded into pots, so are minds moulded into some desirable end products.

### **1.6.2 The Processes Involved should Essentially Be Worthwhile**

Whether education is to be considered from the point of view of those being educated or from that of the teacher. This is a fundamental confusion which has been pointed out by R. S. Peters. In both these ways of thinking about education we are rarely considering that some end-product of education should be valuable, and are not caring for or focussing on the activities and processes involved in it. Obviously enough activities or processes which form a part of the content of education can be viewed as being either instrumentally or intrinsically valuable. It is possible for instance, to think of science or of carpentry as being both valuable in themselves and valuable as a means to increasing production or of provision of houses. Thus it is reasonable to ask what the aim of instructing or training someone in such activities might be. But it is as absurd to ask what the aim of education is as it is to ask what the aim of morality is. For to call something educational is to intimate that the processes and activities themselves contribute to or involve something that is valuable or worthwhile. As Gilbert Ryle (*The Concept of Mind*), would have it, education is both a "task" word as well as an "achievement" word.

### **1.6.3 Education Suggests Criteria to which Processes must Conform**

According to Peters, 'Education is not a concept that confirms or sets any particular types of processes, such as training or an activity such as lecturing. It rather suggests criteria to which all processes and activities involved, such as training, instruction, etc. must conform'.

What is of value should not be external to the activity, but intrinsic to it. One such criterion is that what is passed on and the way it is passed on must be of value. Thus, we may be educating someone while we are training him. But it, however, need not always be true, for we may be training him in the art of pickpocketing or in the art of torture. But the demand that something of value should be transmitted, cannot be thought of as meaning that education itself should lead on to or produce something of value. What is of value should not be something extrinsic to education, just as making a man better is not extrinsic to 'reform'; it is rather a criterion which anything must justify which is to be called reform. In the same way, a necessary feature of education is often extracted as an extrinsic end. People thus often think that education should produce something that is of value and extrinsic to it, whereas the truth is that being worthwhile is part of what is meant by 'education'. Both the instrumental and moulding model of education (mechanistic and organismic respectively) provide a caricature of this necessary feature of desirability by conceiving of what is worthwhile as an end brought about by the process or as a pattern imposed on the child's mind.



What is important about education are its aims and not its purposes. The above thesis that for an activity to be called educational, 'what is worthwhile', should not be external to the end of the activity, can be better understood by an explication of the term 'aim'. To further explain it, we can take examples like shooting and throwing. Aiming is concentration of attention on some object which must be hit or realized. In other words, concentration is something within the field of activity. It can be clearly distinguished from purpose or motive. It is for this reason that the term aim is frequently used in the context of education. To ask questions about the 'aim' of education, therefore, is a way of getting clear about and focus of attention on what is worth achieving. It is not to ask for the production of ends external to education. A person, on the other hand, may say that he wants to train people so that they may get good jobs. In such a situation, he is talking not about the aims but purposes of education, because getting well-paid jobs is not something intrinsic but extrinsic to the activity itself.

#### **1.6.4 Scrutiny of the Mechanistic and the Growth (Organismic) Models of Education and Emergence of Progressive Ideology**

Historically speaking, when the utilitarian and moulding models (mechanistic) of education were challenged, they were replaced by models which likened education to a natural process of development in which the individual grows like a plant towards something that is desirable. Gradually a positive child-centred ideology emerged which was welcomed and embraced by those who were against the traditional methods still present in schools. According to this progressive child-centred ideology, education consists in the development of the potentialities from within rather than moulding from without; and curriculum should arise from the needs and interests of the child, rather than from the demands of the teacher, that self-expression is more important than the discipline of the subject matter; that children should not be coerced or punished; that children should be allowed to learn from experience rather than be told things. Froebel, Tagore, J. Krishnamurti, Aurobindo stressed the importance of studying the child at its various stages and adopting what was provided to the child's interests and stage of development. Dewey, with whose name concepts such as growth and experience are closely associated, contributed a lot to progressive education. According to Froebel, however, education consisted in aiding the unfoldment of natural propensities. As a consequence of the progressive ideology of education, the teacher came to be regarded as one who had studied the laws of development and who had to provide appropriate conditions by arranging the environment so that the child can realize himself to the full or grow without being hindered. Growing or realizing oneself implies doing those things which are thought to be worth while rather than others. The standards by reference to which they are judged to be worthwhile are grasped by men and handed on from generation to generation. The moulding model of the educator at least brings out this inescapable fact that the teacher has to choose what is worth encouraging in children.

#### **1.6.5 Manner vs. Matter of Education**

Values are intrinsic to education and not its extrinsic ends. Yet, inspite of the lack of determinants about standards, about growth and self-realization, such models (growth models) of educational situation are morally important in another way. They suggest another dimension in which value judgments can enter into education, which relate to manner rather than matter of education. They stress the importance of procedural principles. That is, they stress the importance of letting children choose for themselves, learn by experience, and direct their own lives: All these principles stress the self-direction of the individual which was ignored by the traditional teachers. They represent value judgements not so much about the matter of what is taught, nor about some illusory "end" for which things are taught, but about manner in which children are to be treated. This is appreciated not simply from a general moral stand point, but because

it is clearly indicative of the way in which values need to be conceived of as being intrinsic to education rather than as extrinsic ends. The instrumental or moulding models of education erect the necessary moral feature of 'education' into an extrinsic end, whereas the growth model converts a necessary feature of educational processes into a procedural principle. The adherents of this model, therefore, stress the connection between education and 'educere' rather than 'educare' thereby moulding the concept towards 'leading out' rather than "stamping in". So according to the adherents of the growth model, nothing is to be conceived as education in which procedural principles to do with 'leading out' are ignored. Accordingly, anything that is imposed from without, however, good it may appear, is not educational in the true sense. What is more important is, therefore, the manner of education and not its matter.

**Check Your Progress**

**Notes:** a) Write your answer in the space given below.

b) Compare your answer with those a the end of the unit.

5. What do you mean by desirable state of mind?

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6. Can there be worthwhile criteria to be taken into account while educating the child? Discuss.

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7. What is progressive ideology in education and how did it evolve?

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**1.7 WHO IS AN EDUCATED PERSON?**

As stated earlier, education does not specify particular processes, It, however, does imply criteria which the processes involved must satisfy in addition to the demand that something valuable must be developed. In other words, first of all, the individual who is educated shall care about valuable things involved and he shall achieve relevant standards. We would not call a person educated who knows about science but cares nothing for truth, or who regards it merely as a means to get certain benefits that it can give to make life comfortable. Furthermore, an educated man is initiated into the content of the activity or forms of knowledge in a meaningful way, so that he knows what he is doing. Any form of conditioning or hypnotic suggestion cannot be termed as educational, because activities done as a result of such processes of conditioning or indoctrination, are not done on one's own. The doer may not even know what one is doing and why he is doing that. Some form of drill might also be ruled out on these grounds, if the individual is made to repeat mindlessly some stereotyped sets. For something to count as education a minimum of comprehension must be involved.

Thus, to be educated one must do things as a voluntary agent and as an autonomous being.

Those who believe in authoritarian methods of education assume that though children may not care about such activities in the early stages, once they get started on them, they will eventually come to care. They will thus emerge as educated persons. Growth theorists, on the other hand, hold that being educated implies interested in and caring for what is worthwhile. For this to happen (develop), worthwhile things must be presented in a way which attracts the child. On psychological grounds, they hold that coercion and commands are ineffective methods for getting children to care about what is worthwhile. The children should be treated according to some moral principles, that is, they should be allowed to learn by experience and choose for themselves.

In brief, we can say that being educated implies:

- a) caring about what is worthwhile and
- b) providing conditions and things to attain what is worthwhile.

### **1.7.1 Plato's View of Education – A Synthesis of Moulding Model and Growth Model**

While examining the moulding or instrumental model and the growth model of education we must consider what Plato thought of education much earlier than the advocates of these two models. Plato's view of education, at least in these respects, seems to be much more appropriate than any of the two models separately. He was convinced that there are truths to be grasped and standards to be achieved which are public objects of desire, but coercing people into seeing them, in trying to imprint them on wax like minds was both psychologically and morally unsound. Plato quite rightly emphasized what the growth theorists evaded, viz. the necessity for and objectivity of standards written into the content of education. And at the same time, he also laid emphasis on the procedural principles as stressed by the growth theorists.

The emphasis on "seeing" and "grasping" for oneself which is to be found both in Plato and in the growth theorists suggests a third conceptual point about education in addition to those already made about the value of what is passed on and the manner in which it is to be assimilated. This concerns the cognitive aspect of the content of education.

### **1.7.2 Education: The Cognitive Perspective**

We may say that a person is highly trained, but not educated. What does lie behind this condemnation? It is not that he has mastered a skill which we disapprove of. We can say this about a very skilled and efficient doctor or even a philosopher. We might very much approve their expertise. He may even be passionately committed to the profession and may display his skill with intelligence and determination. If he refuses to treat a patient who is in a critical condition unless the requisite fee is already paid, and which may be exorbitant, or he may like to treat only the patients who matter for him. Therefore, he is not educated though highly trained, in our sense of the terms.

If the doctor shows such an attitude he has a very limited conception of what he is doing. The slogan of the educationists such as 'Education of the whole man' bears witness not only to a protest against too much specialized training, but also to the conceptual connection between education and seeing what is being done in a perspective that is not too limited. We talk about a person as being trained as a philosopher, a scientist or a cook, when we wish to draw attention to his acquired competence in a specific discipline of thought or art which has its own intrinsic standards. To be truly educated, one need to have a vision of the profession he is engaged in. This is called the 'cognitive perspective', which need to be fully developed for person to be called educated.

### 1.7.3 Educating the Emotions vs. Training of Emotions

There are certain matters which cannot be said to be trained but educated only. For example, we may talk more naturally of educating the emotions rather than of training them. When we talk of training of emotion, the implications are different than when we talk of educating the emotions. Training is acquired by drill, a pattern of habits which will not be disrupted in emergencies; they will not be paralysed by fear or overcome by grief in a public place. Training suggests the acquisition of appropriate habits of response in a limited situation. It lacks a wider cognitive implication of 'education'. We may naturally talk of training of character when we wish to ensure reliability of response in accordance with a code. But when we speak of moral education, we immediately envisage addressing ourselves to the matter of what people believe, and to questions of justification and questions of fact connected with such beliefs. To make the point more clear, sex-education is given by doctors, school teachers and others who are capable of incorporating working information and value judgements about sexual matters into a complicated system of beliefs about the working of the body, personal relationships, and social institutions. Sex training has entirely a different connotation and cannot be given to pupils in the classroom.

### 1.7.4 Knowing How (Procedural Knowledge) and Knowing That (Propositional Knowledge)

The connection between education and cognitive content explains why it is that some activities seem rather more than others to be so obviously of educational importance. There are some skills, however, which do not have wide-ranging cognitive content. There is very little to know about riding bicycles, swimming or playing hockey. It is a matter of "knowing how" rather than of "knowing that", of knowledge rather than of understanding. On the other hand, in history, science, or literature there is much to know about. If that content is properly assimilated or understood, it throws much light on, widens or deepens one's view of countless other things. Games, on the other hand, require skills rather than understanding. They can be conceived of having educational importance only so far as they provide opportunities for acquiring knowledge, qualities of mind and character, and skills that have application in a wider area of life.

Seeing the connection between education and cognitive content one might say that education is nothing but instruction or teaching. But the main point here is surely not that education refers to any special sort of process which might be equated with instruction, training or drill. Rather, it encompasses three basic criteria which processes must satisfy. These are:

- (i) worthwhileness,
- (ii) relevant knowledge and skills which involve understanding and
- (iii) voluntariness.

There is a school of thought which is hostile to mere instruction. The adherents of this school conceive of education as change in behaviour, no doubt, in a desirable direction. This school is known as pragmatism or behaviorism which had its origin in America. But the fact is that an educated man is distinguished not so much by what he does as by what he 'sees' or grasps. If he does something very well, in which he has been trained, he is not necessarily an educated man unless he sees this in perspective as related to other things. It is difficult to conceive of a training in which even a small amount of instruction has no place but one that would nevertheless result in an educated man. For being educated involves "knowing that" as well as "knowing how". In education, allegiance should be given only to standards connected with truth, which are intrinsic to the mind's functioning and hence desirable or worthwhile.

Second, education should not be confined to specialist training. One should be trained in more than one form of knowledge, that is, in wider perspective. For example, a

scientist, or a doctor, to be truly educated, must be cognizant of other ways of looking at the world so that he can grasp the historical perspective, social significance and moral implications. So in education there is importance of both training and instruction.

### Check Your Progress

- Notes: a) Write your answer in the space given below.  
b) Compare your answer with the one at the end of the unit.

8. Whom would you call an educated man?

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9. Clarify the difference between training for emotion and educating the emotion.

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10. Differentiate with examples "knowing how" from "knowing that".

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## 1.8 EDUCATION AS INITIATION

Then there is still another account of education, which is more positive and consistent with the three criteria of education already explained. This is the model (if at all it can be called so) given by R.S. Peters. It more closely clings to the contours of the concept of education, which have been traced hitherto. The main thesis claimed in these contours is that education "marks no particular type of transaction between the teachers and the learners; it states criteria to which such transactions have to conform".

According to R.S. Peters, education involves processes that introduce people to what is valuable in an intelligible and voluntary manner and that create in the learner a desire to achieve it. To describe these processes, the use of terms like training and instruction, and even teaching will be too specific. Education can occur without these specific transactions and can take place in ways, which fail to satisfy all the criteria implied by education. Peters uses a very general term "*initiation*" which may cover different types of transactions like instruction, training etc. According to Peters *education is an initiation into what is worthwhile.*

Peters further explicates his thesis. According to him, the mind of the child at birth is only an undifferentiated awareness. It is only gradually that this awareness is developed into wants, beliefs and feelings. He comes to name objects, locate his experiences in spatio-temporal context, and searches causal and 'means to end' categories. Such an embryonic mind is the product of initiation into public traditions enshrined in a public language. With the mastery of basic skills the individual (doer) is opened to a vaster and variegated inheritance. And when the individual is more distinctly initiated into different forms of knowledge like science, history, mathematics, morals,

prudential and technical forms of thought, further differentiation results. And it is education that marks out the processes by means of which an individual is initiated into them.

However, there are many thinkers like Dewey who have attacked the notion that education comprises transmission of a body of knowledge. They lay stress on development of the ability to think critically, to experiment, and to solve problems. But the question is, can one develop such ability in a vacuum or can/should we teach poetry to teach critical thinking? Can we solve historical problems without knowing history? No doubt, the development of such cognitive skills is essential to what we call being educated but development of such skills cannot take place without some appropriate cognitive content or a body of knowledge. Similarly, when bodies of knowledge were handed on without making efforts to hand on the cognitive procedures by means of which they had been accumulated, criticized or revised it, would lead to incomplete education of a man.

It is, therefore, important that people should be initiated gradually into the procedures that define a discipline as well as its content. They should learn to think historically, not just know history. But the procedures of a discipline can be mastered only by an exploration of its established content. Without knowing the procedures, knowledge of the content will not serve any useful purpose. Whitehead also once remarked that a well informed man is the most useless bore on God's earth. But Peters adds that equally boring are those for whom being critical is a substitute for being well informed.

### 1.8.1 Inter-subjectivity – The Impersonal Standards

There is a further point that needs to be made. Critical procedures by means of which well-established content is assessed, revised, and adopted to new discoveries have public criteria that stand as impersonal standards to which both teacher and the learner must give their allegiance. Any method or content of education must satisfy the criterion of this essential inter-subjectivity of education. D.H. Lawrence refers to this criterion as 'the holy ground'. To liken education to therapy is to conceive of it as imposing a pattern on another person and hence it is doing injustice to the shared impersonality of both content and method. Similar is the case with the growth theorists who hold that we should fix the environment so that one can grow. The teacher is not a detached operator who is bringing about some kind of change in another person who is external to him. His task is to try to get others on the inside of a public form of life that he shares and considers to be worthwhile. In science, it is truth that matters, not what any individual believes to be true. In morality, it is justice and care. So, according to Peters, initiation is the apt description of this essential feature of education, which consists in experienced persons turning the eyes of others outwards to what is essentially independent of persons. It is also an apt description of another aspect of education stressed by growth theorists, viz. the requirement that those who are being educated want to do or master the worthwhile things, which are handed on to them. The pupils should neither be coaxed or persuaded to do such things, (as stressed by the progressive teacher) nor should there be any kind of coercion as done by the traditional teacher. The modern educational theorists are of the opinion that any kind of command or direction given to the child is against the very spirit of education. But this concept of education may not be very true especially in the case of less intelligent children.

This brings us to the final and perhaps the most fundamental point about education. According to Peters, education implies standards, not necessarily aims. It consists in initiating others into activities, modes of conduct and thought which have standards written into them by reference to which it is possible to think, act, and feel with varying degrees of skill, relevance and taste.

## 1.9 EDUCATION AS DISTINGUISHED FROM LEARNING, TEACHING, TRAINING, INSTRUCTION, SCHOOLING, AND INDOCTRINATION

Often, education is equated with certain terms like learning, teaching, training, instruction, schooling and indoctrination. Although the processes involved in all these activities form a part of the process of education, they are inadequate to explain the concept of education in its true sense. Although some explanation has already been given about these terms, let us examine all these terms in comparison to education.

### Education and Learning

Education has a close relationship with learning. But, can we say that whenever some learning takes place, a person seems to have received education? The answer to the question is 'yes' and 'no' as well. In order to substantiate the answer, let us understand learning as viewed by psychologists. Learning is a process which results in a more or less permanent modification of behavior as a result of practice or experience. But any change in the behavior of the human being resulting from physical or physiological maturation cannot be considered as learning. Learning can be positive as well as negative. Only positive or desirable learning contributes to the process of education while negative or undesirable learning is not considered a part of education. Education as compared to learning seeks to mould the entire personality of an individual. In other words, the focus of education is on the whole man. Education makes use of the process of learning to mould the holistic personality of an individual.

### Education and Teaching

Teaching is the act of transmitting learning experiences to the learner through generation of a conducive learning environment. The main purpose of teaching is to provide the learner desirable learning experiences and thereby help him achieve the goals of education. Teaching is always a two-way process between the teacher and the learner but when another element, namely, 'the social setting or 'socio-cultural influences' is added to this process, it becomes an educative process. Hence, education is also called a tri-polar process in which three elements namely: Teacher (Educator), Learner (Educand) and the Society are involved.

### Education and Instruction

Teaching-learning can take place in both a natural and contrived or controlled environment. In a natural environment, learning occurs when an individual interacts with the components of the environment in an informal and unorganized manner. But when the teaching-learning tasks are purposefully designed for the individual to achieve pre-defined learning goals in a controlled environment, it takes the form of instruction. Therefore, instruction involves the provision of a controlled environment with which the individual will interact, leading towards the achievement pre-determined learning objectives. But education is broad in comparison to instruction. It can take place anywhere and any time, in both controlled and uncontrolled environments, for the achievement of the development of the whole man.

### Education and Training

Training is a systematic process of developing desired skills in particular aspects of life or vocations through instruction and practice. The main objective is to develop specific skills in the individual so as to make him an expert in the concerned field. Training activities can be organized for any kind of vocation and profession, such teaching, nursing, driving, cooking, and many other technical jobs. But, education is concerned with the development of the whole individual.

## Education and Schooling

Education is essentially a lifelong process which starts from the birth of a person and continues up to his death. The entire life experience is, thus, educative. There is no fixed period in one's life which we can attribute to the period for education. On the contrary, schooling is an act of consciously imparting knowledge, values and skills according to the needs of the society and the individual in a formal situation. School provides deliberate and systematic knowledge in specialized areas which may not be gained though the life process while Education relates to a broad range of life experiences, schooling has a limited range of life experiences.

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### 1.10 WHO IS A TEACHER?

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Now the teacher having been initiated, he is on the inside of these activities and modes of thought and conduct. Being so initiated, he perhaps understands vividly that some created objects are beautiful and others not; he can recognize the elegance of a paragraph, cogency of an argument, the clarity of an exposition, the wit of a remark, and justice and wisdom of a decision. He has a love for truth, a passion for justice, and a hatred for what is tasteless. Like Socrates, he senses that to really understand what is good, ipso facto, is to be committed to its pursuit. To be educated is not to have arrived at a destination; it is to travel with a different view. What is required is not feverish preparation for something that lies ahead, but to work with precision, passion, and taste at worthwhile things that lie at hand. These worthwhile things cannot be forced on reluctant minds; they are acquired by contact.

At the culminating stage of education, both teachers and the taught participate in the shared experience of exploring a common world. Usually it is the group experience. The great teachers are those who can conduct such a shared exploration in accordance with certain general rules and principles. That is why humour is such a valuable aid to teachers: for if people can laugh together, they can step out of the shadows of self-reference cast by age, sex, and position.

Apart from impersonality of standards by reference to which we judge the quality of shared experiences both of the content as well as the method, we quite often talk of the dimension of personal relationship in teaching. Let us examine the legitimacy of this dimension, that is, of the good personal relationship between the teachers and the taught. If we reflect on our own experiences of teaching in the classroom situation, we find that the enjoyment of a good personal relationship with the students becomes a part of good teaching. What is in fact required of a teacher, in addition to the feeling of fraternity, is a *respect for person*, not intimate relationships with the pupils. We have to treat them as pupils, never as brothers, sons or daughters etc. We as teachers, should remember that we are dealing with others who are distinctive centres of consciousness. Each one is bound up with and takes pride in his own achievement and mirrors the world from a distinctive point of view. The teacher has to bear in mind all these kinds of individual differences that psychology has revealed to us. The appositeness of the educational slogan 'We teach children, not subjects' becomes clear in view of such a child-centered approach to education. In regard to such differences, it is not the age that is so important as the development of motivation and of cognitive structure, and of the degree of initiation into public and differentiated modes of thought. "Respect for persons, enlivened by fraternity provides the warmth in which the teacher can perform his cardinal function of initiating others into what is worthwhile. The modes of thought will be worthwhile if they are publicly intelligible, not merely personally gratifying.



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## 1.11 LET US SUM UP

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In the present unit titled "Concept and Meaning of Education" we began our discussion by providing etymological derivation of the term "Education". We also cited a few definitions on education to present to you how different thinkers have perceived education differently. We then explicated the concept of education by bringing out certain contexts in which education is appropriately used and those in which it is not. As a sequel to it, the descriptive theories of education were distinguished from the practical theories. The latter theories included the pedagogical and the general theories of education. When we make a general point about education saying, for example, that education is the most effective way of socializing the young or converting them from human animal to human being, we are only making reference to the descriptive theories of education. Theories of this kind purport to give a correct account of what education as a matter of fact does. They describe the role or functions of education. But when we tend to make a specific recommendation or prescriptions about what those engaged in the enterprise ought to be doing, we are making reference to the practical theories of education. The practical theories are further divided into 'pedagogical' and 'general' theories of education. The pedagogical theories are more limited in scope and deal with what teacher in the class ought to be doing in order to achieve the end, which is thought worth achieving. The general theory starts with assumptions about the end to be achieved—the notion of an educated man.

In the history of educational thought, two major assumptions have been made about the nature of human nature both of which radically differ in their emphasis and, hence, lead to radically different educational practices. According to the first assumption man is compared with a wonderfully contrived machine (Hobbes). By contrast Froebel likened the model of man as a living, growing, developing creature, a natural whole that is not just a compendium of parts. This whole is logically prior to its parts – the parts exist only as parts of the whole. Based on these two distinctly separate assumptions about man, two models of education emerged - the mechanistic and the organic models. According to the mechanistic model adopted by Helvetius, James Mill and J.F. Skinner, pupil would be seen as a device whose workings could be regulated from without. This model is also known as the instrumental or moulding model. According to the organic model, education is not seen as a modification or shaping from without but encouraging children develop from within. Rousseau, Froebel, Dewey, Tagore, Aurobindo and J. Krishnamurti exemplify this latter model.

But to understand education qua education we need to deal with it from the vantage point of those engaged in the enterprise i.e. the practice of education. It is not to see education from the spectator's point of view but rather from the point of view of the teacher's task in the classroom. Taken in that sense, education is not to be taken as instrumental to some external ends in the sense that economists, or sociologists or therapists would consider it. It has been stressed that education represents a deliberate attempt to help children develop a desirable state of mind. In this sense, it is not only the end product that should be worthwhile but even the processes involved should be so. Viewed in this sense, education is distinguished from training, instruction, indoctrination, or even teaching. Most of these processes are involved in 'educating' but any one of these may not necessarily be educational. We may for example, train a person for pick pocketing, and second, we can train both a human child as well as a dog or a cat or even pigeon, but we can educate only a human child. Regarding the nature of processes involved in education, it is to maintain that there can be no set processes, which are, of necessity, valuable, and hence may be adopted for educating the pupils. There are however, certain criteria to which processes involved in education should conform. It is on this ground that we can hold aims to be more important in education than its purposes or motives. 'Aiming', as we know, is concentration on

something within the field of activity whereas 'purpose' represents an external end, which may be served, by being educated e.g. human resource development,

Values in education are intrinsic ends, not extrinsic and hence both manner and matter of education should be worthwhile. The procedural principles used in education, as to how to deal with child, letting children choose for themselves, learn by their own experiences etc are very important. Nothing should be imposed from without, however good it may seem to be.

Having described such contours of education as a process or as a product we discussed the connotation and denotations of an educated person. It is argued that a person who is educated shall care about what is worthwhile as a process or as a product. He/she shall achieve relevant standards. He knows what is doing. And whatever he is doing is not because of being conditioned, indoctrinated but on his own and he also owns the responsibility of the consequences of his actions. He has developed a cognitive perspective, which represents more wider and humane contexts of his field of activities. In a way an educated person is initiated into worthwhile ness and has developed interpersonal standards of behaviour which can be subject to public scrutiny.

The kind of education delineated above can be received only through a teacher who himself is so initiated. Being initiated into worthwhile ness the teacher has a clarity of exposition and can recognise the cogency of an argument, justice and wisdom of a decision. He has a love for truth, passion for justice; what he understands as good and is committed to that pursuit. To be educated is not to reach a destination; it is to travel with a different view. He has precision, passion and taste for worthwhile things whether products or processes. He participates in shared experiences, has respect for his pupils as persons and has developed good interpersonal relationships and realizes the appropriateness of the slogan: "we teach children, not subjects" as also of another slogan: we cannot teach anybody anything, we only facilitate children so that they can learn better.

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## 1.12 UNIT-END ACTIVITIES

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1. Find out the definitions of Education other than those given in this unit and analyse them in the framework of discussion presented in this unit.
2. Interview people from different walks of life on the concept of education and judge whether their perceptions about education match the presentation in this unit.

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## 1.13 POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

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1. How do the economists, sociologist or the therapist view the function of education?
2. What is the function of educational philosophy?
3. Differentiate between a pedagogical and a general theory of education by citing examples.
4. Discuss the nature of human nature according to both behaviourists (instrumentalists) and growth theorists.
5. How is Plato's view of education is a synthesis of moulding model and growth model?
6. What is cognitive perspective in education? Clarify with the help of concrete examples.
7. Distinguish between "knowing that" and "knowing how".
8. Explain the phrase 'initiation into worthwhileness'.

9. "Education implies standards, not necessarily aims": Explain.
10. Who can be said to be educated? Distinguish it from the concept of a teacher.

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## 1.14 SUGGESTED READINGS

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## 1.15 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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1. Descriptive theories give a correct account of what education does. Prescriptive theories make recommendations with regard to educational practice.
2. Sense training, physical training, training in self-reliance.
3. General theory of education. Because production of natural man is the outcome of physical training, sense training, negative education, etc. which are limited theories.
4. The assumption behind mechanistic model of man is that man is a wonderfully contrived machine, composed of springs, wheels and levers. The assumption behind organismic model of man is that man is a living, growing, developing creature, a natural whole.
5. Desirable state of mind refers to moulding human minds into some desirable end products which vary from context to context.
6. Yes, worthwhile criteria can be taken into account because all processes and activities such as training, instruction must conform. One such criteria is that what a teacher passes on to his students must be of value.
7. Progressive ideology consists in the development of the potentialities from within rather than moulding from without. Curriculum should be generated from the

8. An educational man is initiated into the context of the activity or forms of knowledge in a meaningful way, so that he knows what he is doing. He cares about what is worthwhile and provides conditions and things to attain what is worthwhile.
9. Drilling student's emotions and making them as habits do training of emotions. Educating emotions is a natural process and broader than training of emotions. Emotions can be educated in a wider educational space.
10. Knowing How refers to procedural knowledge a child obtains without cognitive content, such as riding a bicycle. Knowing That pertains to propositional knowledge which a child receives from cognitive content like History, Science or Literature.
11. Education as initiation means that a child is introduced to what is worthwhile. A child at birth is having undifferentiated awareness. But gradually he is initiated to a whole lot of experiences through the process of education.