
UNIT 3 EDUCATIONAL THINKERS ON KNOWLEDGE

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3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous units of this block, we have already discussed the concept of knowledge and its various types. We have also discussed about the process of knowing, it was also highlighted in the unit that the process of knowing is a personalized, individual task that is influenced by experience and unintentional contextual cues. The three aspects of knowledge – the knower (the consciousness of the participant), the known (the field of study), and the process of knowing (which connects the knower to the known) were also explained. In this unit, we will discuss the views of various educational thinkers on knowledge and education. Education as viewed by Indian educational thinkers – Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi; and also by western educational thinkers – John Dewey and Paulo Freire will be discussed. Later, conceptual-logical and social perspectives of education will be dealt.

3.2 OBJECTIVES

After going through the unit, you should be able to:

- describe the views of Indian educational thinkers – Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi on education;
- elucidate education as viewed by the westerns educational thinkers – John Dewey and Paulo Freire;
- discuss the conceptual-logical perspectives of education; and
- explain social perspectives of education.

3.3 VIEWS OF INDIAN THINKERS ON EDUCATION

You may be aware of the fact that the socio-political environment of pre-independence India contributed a lot in shaping-up various aspects of philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi, including their views on education. In the following sections, we will discuss their thoughts on education, in general, and on various aspects of education, in particular.

3.3.1 Rabindranath Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore is the world famous poet- Vishwakavi and is popularly known as “Gurudev”, the respected teacher. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for his book “Geetanjali”. Shantiniketan and Viswabharti are the renowned contributions of Tagore to the field of education.

According to Tagore, the supreme truth of life is not merely to live, but also to know our existence and realize the self through love and sympathy with others. Hence, it is essential that the growth of a balanced and well-integrated personality of the child is to be promoted and move should be made towards the achievement of the ultimate goal of life i.e. achieving ‘Sachidananda’(sat+ chit + anand). He believed that freedom should be the guiding principle of education. By freedom, Tagore meant the liberation of all the aspects and powers of the personality, namely the senses, the vital energies, the various mental capacities including intelligence and imagination; also the functions of the heart-feelings, emotions, sympathy and love. Here, it can be noticed that the idea of Tagore is similar to the ideas of Rousseau, Froebel and Dewey, who have emphasized freedom, which lies in the perfect harmony of relationships, which we realize in the world.

He also emphasized that self-expression is very important and provision should be made for its development among students. Self-expression is creative in nature and should be organized through various forms of arts, music, dramatics, handiwork, etc. He believed in activity in education. Hence, he encouraged play and work as the instruments of teaching children and adults respectively.

He advocated fullness of experience; and viewed education as a process of harmonization of various elements – intellectual, physical, social, moral, economic and spiritual. For facilitating the creative self-expression of the child, he accentuated the importance of integrating painting, sculpture, music, dance, poetry, etc. with education. He realized the need of education for universal brotherhood and internationalism; and advocated the integration of western and eastern culture so that children learn to appreciate cultures of other countries.

Tagore introduced the elements of sympathy and joy to education. He believed that joy should be pivotal in all educational activities. He also emphasized the principle of curiosity and interest and the spirit of play. According to him, child should be brought in contact with nature to promote self-learning, which will be having freedom, fullness and vastness of experiences. According to him education should facilitate rational thinking and imagination in child so that he is able to assimilate new ideas and knowledge. Tagore wanted education not just to develop individual personality but also social characteristics. To him, education should not only prepare a child to earn his livelihood but also it should sensitize him towards social service; and also make him to contribute for development of the country. Tagore has emphasized mother tongue as the medium

of instruction for the child's education since child can freely express his thoughts in his mother-tongue.

Tagore's views on education are a clear reflection of his humanism, naturalism, individualism, universalism and spirituality, and his contribution made him one of the brightest stars of galaxy of educational thinkers such as Rousseau, Froebel, Montessori, Dewey, etc.

Further, he envisaged that education given to our children should aim at the following:

- encourage and foster freedom of thought, independent spirit and free will,
- promote moral and spiritual development of an individual, and liberate him from different kinds of bondages
- develop the ability of assimilation and application of new ideas and knowledge, and the ability of thinking and imagination
- make the younger generation aware of their national cultural heritage and grasp its significance for them; enable them to appreciate the cultures of other countries too and also to learn from them.
- make Indian men and women more rational and less subject to meaningless social and individual rituals.
- help students to acquire 'scientific temper'. In other words, to stimulate constructive doubt, the love of mental adventure, the coverage and longing to conquer the world by enterprise and boldness in thought and in action.
- develop the individual personality as well as the social characteristics,
- develop fellow feeling among students and enable them to render social service and service to the country.

3.3.2 Mahatma Gandhi

Very much like Tagore, social-cultural context in which Gandhiji lived, contributed a lot towards shaping-up his ideas about education. He believed that educational reconstruction was necessary for social and national reconstruction; and introduced a national scheme of education which was known as 'Basic Education'. Gandhiji's basic education emphasized craft-centred education, which was a kind of revolt against the impractical colonial British education system, which aimed at political enslavement and economic dependency.

Gandhiji believed that education is not a "pouring in process" but a "drawing out process". The locus of knowledge does not lie 'out side' but 'within' the child. He says, "By education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man – body, mind and spirit". Gandhiji believed in holistic development of human personality. According to him, education is not merely literacy, it is a quest for truth and non-violence, training of body and mind, and awakening of soul. Thus, it should develop high morals, self control and right thinking in child, leading to self-realization. He believed that learning included the acquisition of information and training that is useful for the service of mankind, which will pave way for liberation of the individual and the nation at large from this 'dependency syndrome'. He believed that individual cannot realize his full

potential in absence of society, and society cannot prosper without the well being of individuals. Therefore, he emphasized the importance of social transformation through social service.

Gandhiji propounded basic education, which is a craft-centred education, provides purposeful, creative and socially useful education, which inculcates a spirit of cooperation, unity, and group responsibility in children. Basic education attempts to establish interrelationship between various subjects and subject knowledge with real life. Since craft is both a means and an end, it is central to teaching of all the subjects. This interweaving craft with other subjects was an attempt to provide the child constant interface with the community. He conceived school as a miniature society where children as social participants had rights and responsibilities. Thus, he finely blended sociological aspects with pedagogy of education.

According to Gandhiji education must stimulate spiritual, intellectual and physical faculties of the child, accordingly, he emphasized coordination of these faculties for training of three Hs – Head, Heart and Hand. He believed that “Persistent questioning and healthy inquisitiveness are the first for acquiring learning of any kind.” He firmly believed that primary schooling should be compulsory for all the children between the age of seven and fourteen and it should be imparted in child’s own language. Gandhiji wanted teachers to be free from interference from government and state bureaucracy. For his contribution in education, Gandhiji is known as holistic educational reformer – naturalist in his educational setting, idealistic in his educational aims, and pragmatic in methods of teaching. Mahatma Gandhi saw education as a means of awakening the nation’s conscience to injustice, violence and inequality entrenched in the social order (NCF 2005).

To conclude, Gandhiji’s educational philosophy is sound and scientific, psychologically as well as sociologically. By introducing craft, he tried to remove the gap between manual and intellectual labour, the educated and uneducated mass and promote dignity of labour, social solidarity and national integration. He also desired that ideals of democratic citizenship be inculcated in the children and regarded the school as a democratic society where they would learn citizenship, knowledge, skills and values like co-operation, love, sympathy, fellow-feeling, equality. Gandhiji’s vision of the democratic society is “Sarvodaya Samaj” characteristics of which are social justice, peace, non-violence and modern humanism.

Check Your Progress

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

1) “As far as educational philosophy is concerned, Tagore’s was a naturalist, whereas Gandhiji was a Pragmatic.” Explain with examples.

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2) What are the aims of education according to Tagore?

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3.4 VIEWS WESTERN THINKERS ON EDUCATION

While in India new educational ideas were taking shape, in west the existing school practices were being challenged. Dissatisfied with the prevailing educational practices, among other, John Dewey and Paulo Friere are the two main thinkers who thought ‘out of the box’, and introduced innovative ideas for reforming the prevailing education system. Their views have lasting impact on contemporary educational thinking and practice.

3.4.1 John Dewey

John Dewey’s has been one of the most influential educational thinkers of modern times. His educational philosophy has been referred to as Pragmatism, Experimentalism, Functionalism, Instrumentalism, Operationalism, Practicalism, and Progressivism.

To begin with, Dewey was idealistic, but later moved towards the pragmatism and naturalism of his mature philosophy. The central focus of his philosophy is epistemology or the theory of knowledge that contested the dualisms of mind and world, thought and action, which had marked western philosophy since the 17th century. This theory of knowledge emphasized the “necessity of testing thought by action if thought was to pass over into knowledge”. His work in education was intended in part, to explore the implications of his functional pedagogy and to test it by experiment. Dewey’s educational philosophy helped forward the progressive education movement and spawned the development of ‘experiential education’ programs and experiments.

He referred to education as a “social need and function”, as a “process of living and growth” which includes both social and individual aspects that are mutually dependent on each other. From the social viewpoint, education is essential to the continuous existence and transformation of the organization of social life in all its shades and grades. From the individual perspective, it is a method to enable individuals to play an effective role as members of a human community or society.

According to him,” Education is the process of reconstruction of experience, giving it a more socialized value through the medium of increased individual efficiency”. He wanted each philosopher and personality to be developed not according to any absolute standard, but according to a pupil’s own capacities and opportunities and specifically in a social setting as the child is considered to be a unit of society. Further, he advocated education for democracy and this he considered one of the goals of education, to help people become more effective members of a democratic society.

The main aims of education, according to Dewey are natural development, Social efficiency, cultivation of mind of individual with respect to appreciation of ideas, art and broad human interests. Dewey believed that the purpose of education

should not revolve around the acquisition of a pre-determined set of skills, rather the realization of one's full potential and the ability to use those skills for the greater good of society. Thus, education and learning are social and interactive processes, and the school itself is a social institution through which social reform can and should take place. For Dewey, education is a social function. Until we know what sort of society is best, we do not know what sort of education is best.

According to Dewey's philosophy, the goal of education is to release the human potential for growth. Growth through freedom, creativity, and dialogue is, for him, the all-inclusive ideal, the greatest good. For Dewey, the capacity to cultivate growth is the criterion for evaluating the quality of all social institutions. Dewey believes that democracy is the social structure that contributes most to freeing intelligence to grow, and, therefore, education should be democratic. Dewey did not subscribe to the notion of freedom as complete absence of any discipline.

Dewey had specific idea regarding how education should take place within the classroom. He criticized the undue importance given to the curriculum, which leads to the inactivity of the student in the entire process of learning. He believed that students thrive in an environment where they are allowed to experience and interact with the curriculum, and all students should have the opportunity to take part in their own learning. He emphasized that content must be presented in a way that allows the student to relate the information to prior experiences, thus deepening the connection with this new knowledge. He advocated for an educational structure that strikes a balance between delivering knowledge while also taking into account the interests and experiences of the student. It is a continuous process of adjustment, having as its aim at every stage an added capacity of growth.' He advocated the importance of education not only as a place to gain content knowledge, but also as a place to learn how to live. Experience of the child occupies the central place in method of learning; 'all learning must come as a by-product of actions...' child learns through participation in various activities. He firmly believed in 'learning by doing' and 'learning by living', and always criticized rote memorization of facts and formulae.

Dewey argued that thinking does not occur in isolation from social situation, without 'experience or action'. Thinking arises when the individual confronts a 'problem'. According to Dewey, 'thinking is a method.' It is the method of 'intelligent experiencing'. It is connected with increase of efficiency in action, and with learning more about ourselves and the world in which we live. 'An ounce of experience is better than a ton of theory simply because it is only in experience that any theory has vital and verifiable significance'.

Dewey regarded the child as the core of the whole educational process; 'education must begin with a psychological insight into the child's capacities, interests, and habits...' But he looks at these capacities and interests in the social context and not in abstraction, for it is in the social context alone that they can be developed.

According to Dewey 'education is life itself and not a preparation for life'. Dewey regards school as an institution essential to social life. To him school is an absolute social necessity. The school is not a place where some knowledge is imparted and an attempt is made to develop certain habits among children; it is a place where the child learns by its own experiences. It is 'lengthened arm of the family'. There should be no sudden break in the activities of the child in the home and in the school. In the beginning, the school should try to preserve, continue

and rebuild those experiences and activities with which the child has been familiar in the home. Thus the school should provide to the child the atmosphere of the home.

Dewey believed that method is not separable from subject matter. For him, method, or structure, is structure for a purpose: “Method means that arrangement of subject matter which makes it most effective in use. Never is method something outside of the material”. According to him “the teacher should be occupied not with subject matter in itself but in its interaction with the pupils present needs and capacities. Just teaching the subject matter does not mean one is teaching well. To teach well, the teacher must connect the subject matter to the needs, desires, interests, stage of cognitive development, etc. of the student, within the physical, social, and political context that the students and teachers find themselves. Good teaching requires moral as well as cognitive perception of the needs and abilities of the student. It also requires a complete and confident command of the subject matter to reconfigure it to meet the needs of every individual student.

Dewey’s qualifications for teaching – a natural love for working with young children, a natural propensity to inquire about the subjects, methods and other social issues related to the profession, and a desire to share this acquired knowledge with others – are not a set of outwardly displayed mechanical skills. Rather, they may be viewed as internalized principles or habits which “work automatically, unconsciously”

Teachers are responsible for disciplining the individual to understand and appreciate the existing norms and practices of a culture. However, they should do so in such a way as to realize unique individual potential. This implies educating the individuals creative and artistic ability as well as their ability to engage in critical inquiry and, if necessary, carry out the reconstruction of the existing social order to evolve a better society in the future.

Views of John Dewey are clearly reflected in NCF, 2005, when it talked about construction of knowledge. “The teachers’ own role in children’s cognition could be enhanced if they assume a more active role in relation to process of knowledge construction in which children are engaged. A child constructs her/his knowledge while engaged in the process of learning. Allowing children to ask questions, that require them to relate what they are learning in school to things happening outside, encouraging children to answer in their own words and from their own experiences, rather than simply memorizing and getting answers right in just one way – all these are small but important steps in helping children develop their understanding.”

3.4.2 Paulo Freire

Paulo Freire’s pedagogy developed in the particular historical and political circumstances of neo-colonialism and imperialism. Freire’s perception of society and social relations is based on class relations. He sees social dynamics through the oppressor-oppressed dialectic.

Freire discusses two types of knowledge, unconscious, sometimes practical knowledge and critical, reflective or theory knowledge. Beliefs are shaped into knowledge by discussion and critical reflection. Knowledge should not be limited to logic and content, or emotions and superstitions, but should seek the connections between understandings and feelings.

His pedagogical critique of 'banking education' and his 'problem posing' pedagogical propositions are rooted in his concept of man. Paulo Freire was highly critical of prevailing educational practices. He called education as it was practiced as 'banking' concept of education. In the banking concept, education is treated and practiced as a depositing activity. In this depositing act, students become depositories and teacher the depositor. The scope of action allowed to the students, 'extends only as far as receiving, filling, and storing the deposits.' By acting as a depositor, the teacher 'domesticates' the child into oppressor consciousness. The banking concept of education, says Freire, has done immense damage to teacher-taught relationship and process of education. Freire's description of banking education and his prescription of problem-posing education are based on his understanding about man, his consciousness and relation to the world. According to Freire, banking education begins with a false understanding of men as objects. 'Implicit in banking concept is the assumption of a dichotomy between man and the world; man is merely in the world, not with the world or with others; man is spectator, not re-creator. In this view, man is not a conscious being; he is rather a possessor of consciousness; an empty 'mind' passively open to the reception of deposits of reality from the world outside.' The programme content of problem posing education is generated from the investigation into this 'thematic universe'. Banking education, through its pedagogy works for the continuation of 'domination', whereas problem-posing education through its pedagogy thrives for liberation. Freire's proposes a pedagogy to conscientize human beings based on praxis and dialogue. Conscientization constitutes both growing critical awareness of the learner by himself and a willingness to act on the reality to change it. Praxis is interwoven methodological state of human action and reflection. Dialogue is not only a method of education, but an existential necessity for humanization.

Hence, learning is a process where knowledge is presented to us, then shaped through understanding, discussion and reflection. Education should raise the awareness of the students so that they become subjects, rather than objects, of the world. This is done by teaching students to think democratically and to continually question and make meaning from everything they learn.

Freire firmly believed that knowing is a social process, whose individual dimension, however, cannot be forgotten or even devalued. The process of knowing, which involves the whole conscious self, feelings, emotions, memory, affects, an epistemologically curious mind, focused on the object, equally involves other thinking subjects, that is, others also capable of knowing and curious. This simply means that the relationship called "thinking" is not enclosed in a relationship "thinking subject – knowable object" because it extends to other thinking subjects.

Freire believed that teaching is a political process. It must be a democratic process to avoid teaching authority dependence. The teacher must learn about (and from) the student so that knowledge can be constructed in ways that are meaningful to the student. The teachers must become learners and the learners must become teachers. Only insofar as learners become thinking subjects, and recognize that they are as much thinking subjects as are the teachers, is it possible for the learners to become productive subjects of the meaning or knowledge of the object. It is in this dialectic movement that teaching and learning become knowing and re-knowing. The learners gradually know what they did not yet know, and the educators re-know what they knew before.

Freire’s critical pedagogy talked about making teachers and students aware of the “politics” that surround education. The way students are taught and what they are taught serves a political agenda. Teachers, themselves, have political notions they bring into the classroom. Freire believed that “education makes sense because women and men learn that through learning they can make and remake themselves, because women and men are able to take responsibility for themselves as beings capable of knowing – of knowing that they know and knowing that they don’t”.

The purpose of Freire’s education is liberation; it is achieved through authentic dialogue in which every one speaks one’s own word with the mediation of the world to name the world. This, in a nutshell, is the ‘Pedagogy of the Oppressed’.

By analyzing Freire’s pedagogy, we are able to identify his significant contribution to education:

- Emphasis on dialogue - he upheld that education is a dialogical (conversational) rather a curricular form and this dialogue should not involve one person acting on another, but rather people working with each other. A dialogue, not only requires critical thinking, but also generates critical thinking in the participants.
- Concern with praxis - action that is informed and linked to certain values. He upheld that dialogue should result not only in deepening understanding, but also in taking informal actions and making a difference in the world.
- Concern with conscientization - developing consciousness that is understood to have the power to transform reality.
- Insistence on lived experience of participants - provide educational activity to suit the living situation/experience of the people.

Influence of Freire’s view may be observed on NCF 2005, wherein it is mentioned that teaching is no more an activity of planning a lesson or presenting ready-made knowledge for achieving outcomes that can be measured objectively. Now it has been seen as a process of making children “think and try out what they are learning”. A teacher has to shift away from his/her traditional stance of “informing” to that of “eliciting” and “guiding”. A teacher’s role is one of facilitating construction of knowledge and engaging children by raising the right kind of questions and organizing well chosen activities and tasks. “Active engagement involves enquiry, exploration, questioning, debates, application and reflection leading to theory building and creation of ideas/positions. Schools must provide opportunities to question, enquire debate, reflect, and arrive at concepts or create new ideas.” (NCF, 2005).

Check Your Progress

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

3) Education is social need and function. Explain

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4) Explain 'banking concept'.
5) What are the core components of Dewey's philosophy?

3.5 COMMONALITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN AIMS OF EDUCATION

So far, we have studied the aims of education as enunciated by different modern thinkers (both Indian and Western). Now, we shall try to look into the commonalities, and differences in these aims of education.

It is interesting to note that there are more common points among the Indian thinkers whom we have discussed. All of them thought of education in terms of the development of the total personality of an individual (child or adult) or in other words, the all round development of an individual. All of them have emphasized the spiritual **aspect** of life highlighting the relation between matter/mind and spirit, and advocated education for spiritual development.

To put it other way, they believed in a universal community of human beings though no distinction is made among them on any criteria, but all are loved, respected and considered equal. They appealed for a sense of unity in this world to see a society without crisis. Further, they upheld the view that an individual has no value without society and society cannot think of its development without an individual's upliftment. They considered the individual and social aims as complementary to each other.

One more point of commonality among Indian thinkers is provision for freedom to learners. They advocated the right kind of freedom for learners as nothing could be achieved by compulsion.

Tagore and Gandhi stood together regarding the consideration for cultural aspect of education. According to them, education should aim at making people aware and proud of the cultural heritage of our country and appreciate other cultures too. As regards differences among the Indian thinkers regarding education: Tagore has emphasized the relationship of man with Nature and advocated education for harmony and self-expression. He deserves credit for having revived the ancient Indian ideals in the modern times. On the other hand, Gandhiji emphasized craft centered education and advocated education for self-sufficiency and self-reliance leading to *Sarvodaya Sumaj*.

To conclude, it is quite clear that there are more similarities than differences in the aims of education enunciated by different Indian thinkers. Each thinker has explained the same view in a different way using different language/terminologies. Ultimately, all of them have upheld the point that education should enable the person to understand himself, to know his potentialities and move towards the achievement of ultimate goal of life.

All the modern thinkers under reference commonly professed that education should lead to personal and social liberation both in thought and deed. They also considered the total development of personality as the main goal of education and both individual and social aims of education as being equally important. Individuals should get equipped well to perform their role in the modern society. Like Indian thinkers, the Western thinkers also recognised the significance of individual freedom for learners. But they differed in the way they expressed their ideas emphasizing the different aspects of education.

John Dewey described school as a unique social institution where the child's basic native impulses- to communicate, construct, inquire and express - are to be activated to promote its active growth. He recommended learning by doing/ experience in place of dogmatic instruction.

Paulo Freire, like Dewey, professed integration of theory and practice. Believing that education could improve human condition and contribute to humanization, he developed the 'pedagogy of oppressed'. This pedagogy insisted on dialogical and action oriented approach, as well as conscientization. Hence, the ultimate goal of education, according to Freire, is the development of 'critical consciousness' among people.

The main difference noticed between Indian and Western thinkers is regarding the spiritual aspect of education. While all the Indian thinkers upheld the significance of spirituality in education and considered spiritual development as one of the aims of education, the western thinkers are concerned themselves, more with man in relation to their social environment.

3.6 CONCEPTUAL LOGICAL PERSPECTIVE OF EDUCATION

Education as a concept has been compared to 'reform' and 'curing' by eminent educationists R. S. Peters in his analysis of education. According to him, "education refers to no particular process; rather it encapsulates criteria to which any one of a family of processes must conform." In this way it is rather like 'reform'. According to him education as initiation, is to regard processes of education as task relative to achievement. Initiation is meant as initiating the child into a kind of life, a culture that is considered worthwhile. Education involves essentially processes which intentionally transmit what is valuable in an intelligible and voluntary manner, and which create in the learner a desire to achieve it. It implies that a man who is educated is a man who has succeeded in relation to certain tasks on which he and his teacher have been engaged for considerable period of time. Thus, achievement is relative to a family tasks which we call processes of education. The set of these processes are termed as 'Curing', which contribute to making the man morally better. On the same lines, educating people suggests a set of processes whose principle of unity is the teachers who enter the profession would be striving to initiate others into a form of life, which they regard as desirable, in which knowledge and understanding play an important part. The learnt content must be worthwhile and morally unobjectionable. The aim of education is to reform; and to reform means to make men better by encouraging the sense of responsibility. According to Peters (1967) the three main criteria of education are:

- i) An educated man is one whose form of life is thought to be desirable;

- ii) Whatever he is trained to do he must have knowledge, not just knack, and an understanding of principles.
- iii) His knowledge and understanding must not be inert.

We do not call a person ‘educated’ who has simply mastered a skill. For a person to be educated, he must also have some body of knowledge and some kind of conceptual scheme to raise this above the level of collection of disjointed facts. This implies some understanding of principles for the organization of facts. One must also have an understanding of the ‘reason why’ of things. Education implies that a person’s outlook is transformed by what he knows. The knowledge must not be static in the sense that it must involve the kind of commitment that comes from being on the inside of a form of thought and awareness. A person cannot really understand what it is to think scientifically unless he not only knows that evidence must be found for assumptions, but also knows what counts as evidence and cares that it should be found. All forms of thought and commitment to understand and care for those things. ‘Education is of the whole man’ is not simply a protest against too much of specialized training. It is the conceptual connection between education and seeing what is being done in a perspective that is not too limited.

Check Your Progress

- Notes :** a) Write your answers in the space given below.
b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.
6) Explain education as a process of initiation.

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3.7 SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATION

Education can be studied from different perspectives. These perspectives merge at some point as they all deal with education as an important activity in any society. In this section, we will discuss relationship between education and society with particular reference to school as an agency of socialization, and education as an agency of social change and social control – how culture of a society impacts the kind of education children receive; and how the content and methodology of education is conditioned by social and cultural context.

A significant feature of modern child study is that the object of study is that the object of study is the individual in relation with others. The individual grows in the community with others and has obligations to the community as the community has to the individual. As said, one of the main aims of education is to create social link between individuals on the basis of shared references, which leads to fulfillment of individual as a social being. Education facilitates socialization with the interplay of culture and values. In any society, some states of mind, modes of conduct structured by the forms of thoughts and awareness and culture are regarded as intrinsically valuable. Education is a term which we use for a family of procedures by the means of which individuals are initiated into such forms of thought and awareness and into activities and modes of the

conduct informed by them. The social aims of education are to give all pupils an insight into their social inheritance, ideals, conditions, customs and institutions of society, which leads to the development of sympathy for all branches of society. It is done through social communication and social service, which develop social efficacy of an individual. Education is basically being considered as a preparing the individual for adaptation and making adjustment to his social environment. Education must help individual to acquire universally accepted and attitudes of his social group. And also to keep himself away from the social ills viz. crime, drug abuse, etc.

All social institutions define the pattern of relationships and behaviour expected of the persons who belong to them. The principal social institutions are concerned with regulation of economic, political, familial, educational, and religious aspects of human life. It helps the child to train for the future roles of adult life. In other words, the child learns the rules of social behaviour through the process of education. Therefore, the child prepares himself or herself to take multiple roles through the process of socialization, in general, and education, in particular. Social perspective of education contributes essentially to the maintenance of social order by transmitting the values and norms of the society, which may also be called social control. It focuses on the social relationships, which prepares people to fit into the complex social structure through the process of socialization. In this context, education will also be informal – received from the family and peer groups; in addition to formal education, which is received in the schools.

Every society believes in education as an important instrument of social change and for this reason, great importance is attached to schools. Schools play important role in changing the society by changing the individuals who make up the society. An individual comes to a full realization of his own social dimensions through an apprenticeship of active participation in the functioning of social structure, where necessary, through a personal commitment in the struggle to reform them.

Education, being an instrument of social control and social change, develops social feelings, socially efficient individual, improvement of vocational efficiency, use of leisure time, and development of healthy recreational pursuits, transmission of social heritage, leading to development of constructive and creative outlook of the individual. Education, hence, plays an important role in inculcating the feeling of for social service, social efficiency, emotional integration, national unity and patriotism in a child.

Check Your Progress

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

7) Education is an instrument of social change. Explain with the help of examples.

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8) Differentiate between logical and social perspectives of education.

3.8 LET US SUM UP

In the present unit the educational ideas of four influential educational thinkers of modern times – Tagore, Gandhi, John Dewey and Paulo Freire were highlighted. If we scan through their ideas on education, it will be found that, in all four cases, it begun with criticizing the prevailing education system and practices. As far as aims of education is concerned, all four thinkers go beyond the material self and uphold the primacy of development of psychological, moral and spiritual self. They emphasized the freedom of child for self realization. They also believed that individual transformation is a basis of social transformation, thus they suggested synthesis of individual and social aims for the holistic development. Though, the method and practices suggested by them are quite different from each other. Tagore talks about active communion with nature, whereas Gandhiji propounded craft-centered education.

Further, Dewey’s educational ideas are based on his pragmatist and experimentalist philosophy, which promulgates learning by doing. Education, for him, is a process of experiencing, constructing and reconstructing. It is not a preparation for life but life itself. While Paulo Freire criticizes banking education, which treats human mind as an empty vessel. He advocated problem-posing education which treats man as a conscious being in constant dialogue with the world. We have also explained conceptual-logical perspective of education, according to which, education is a process of initiation for ‘curing’ and ‘reform’. Towards end of the Unit, social perspective of education was discussed, wherein, education is seen as a process of socialization vis-à-vis an instrument for maintain social control as well as a key for bringing about social change in the society.

3.9 UNIT-END EXERCISES

1. Explain the implications of John Dewey on the educational system of India.
2. “Education is a process of socialization.” Discuss

3.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Read section 3.3 to provide the answer
2. Aims of education were:
 - encourage and foster freedom of thought, independent spirit and free will,
 - promote moral and spiritual development of an individual, and liberate him from different kinds of bondages
 - develop the ability of assimilation and application of new ideas and knowledge, and the ability of thinking and imagination
 - make the younger generation aware of their national cultural heritage and grasp its significance for them; enable them to appreciate the cultures of other countries too and also to learn from them.
 - make Indian men and women more rational and less subject to meaningless social and individual rituals.

- help students to acquire 'scientific temper'. In other words, to stimulate constructive doubt, the love of mental adventure, the coverage and longing to conquer the world by enterprise and boldness in thought and in action.
3. From the social viewpoint, education is essential to the continuous existence and transformation of the organization of social life in all its shades and grades.
 4. In the banking concept, education is treated and practiced as a depositing activity, where students become depositories and teacher the depositor. The scope of action allowed to the students, 'extends only as far as receiving, filling, and storing the deposits.'
 5. Integration of theory and practice.
 - Theory of knowledge contesting the dualism of mind and world, thought and action.
 - Experiential education/progressive education.
 - Emphasis on learning by doing / experience.
 - Commitment to democracy.
 6. Refer to section 3.7 for understanding and then state examples from your experience.
 7. Logical perspective of education refers to 'reason why' of things. Mastering a skill or gathering knowledge does not make a person education. He must have some understanding of principles the organization of facts. Social perspective of education emphasizes that education is a potent instrument of social change

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