
UNIT 10 AIMS AND GOALS OF EDUCATION – WESTERN THOUGHT

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10.1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall try to discuss the aims and goals as envisaged by western thinkers. Western ideologies have been influencing the aims and practice of education all over the world. On analysing the western thoughts, the pattern of thinking on education that could be identified, is grouped under three facets, namely Idea, Experiences and Praxis.

Idealists and phenomenologists believe in the existence of an idea, the only concept that is real, true and ultimate, so the aims of education, which are provided by these people, are influenced by their philosophy about reality, knowledge and value.

Another group of western thinkers like Bacon, Rousseau, Dewey and others, who have converged their educational thoughts, emanating from experiences through one's own senses, perceptions and interactions, have come out with varying shades of experiences. They are empiricists, naturalists, realists, pragmatists, analysts, positivists and interpretativists etc. whom we shall also discuss in the context of aims of education.

There is another group of thinkers who attach more importance to the social forces, which influenced education. Marxists and ethnomethodologists recognise the value of

social and non-presuppositional sources of knowledge that determine educational aims and operation.

Education reflects the socio-cultural needs, knowledge and values of society through its formulation of aims and goals that further control the choice of curriculum, methods of teaching, etc. There has been a great and dominating impact of western thoughts on education so far. Therefore, the aims and goals that are being discussed here relate to the sources of the respective category of philosophical orientations.

10.2 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you shall be able to:

- explain the philosophical basis of the systems of education according to phenomenologists and idealists;
- identify the aims of education according to phenomenologists and idealists;
- provide a comparative analysis of aims of education as provided by phenomenologists and idealists;
- explain the fundamental thinking about metaphysics, epistemology and values according to empiricists, realists, and naturalists;
- relate the aims of education with the respective philosophies as propounded by empiricists, realists and naturalists;
- explain the philosophical assumptions basic to the thinking of reconstructionists, existentialists and pragmatists;
- categorize the aims of education according to reconstructionists, existentialists and pragmatists;
- make a differential analysis of aims of education according to reconstructionists, existentialists, and pragmatists;
- describe the specific features of the philosophical thinking of analysts, positivists and interpretativists;
- discuss aims of education according to analysts, positivists and interpretativists;
- compare the aims of education as provided by analysts, positivists and interpretativists;
- describe the process of generating knowledge (epistemology) according to Marxists and ethnomethodologists;
- explain the influence of Marxists' and ethnomethodologists' thinking on aims of education;
- identify the aims of education according to both Marxists and ethnomethodologists; and
- describe the difference in emphasis on aims of education as given by Marxists and ethnomethodologists.

10.3 SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT OR 'ISM'

In the realm of Philosophy, one finds various schools of thought or 'ism'. These schools of thought emerged due to their differences in the ways they perceive reality, knowledge, and values. Hence, a school of thought is understood as a set of ideas regarding reality, knowledge, and values. These three aspects of a school of thought are very important in influencing the aims and practices of education. There are three branches of philosophy, which deal with these aspects. Meta-physics helps a person to understand the nature of reality. Epistemology deals with nature of knowledge, and its conditions, and means. Axiology deals with Ethics and Aesthetics. Ethics is concerned with the

problems of values, morality, and good and bad, whereas Aesthetics explains the beauty of life.

While discussing aims of education according to various schools of thought or 'ism', we will explain the meta-physics, epistemology, and axiology as propounded by these schools of thought.

10.4 IDEA

'Idea' is a category of philosophical emphasis, under which idealists and phenomenologists have been grouped because both share a somewhat similar kind of thinking. Plato and Descartes who are called as 'Idealists' believe that only ideas are permanent and the reality consists of ideas. There is a universal idea of 'Table', for example, which is imperfect. These ideas are metaphysically prior to man's world. Similarly phenomenologists like Husserl, Alfred Schutze and Mannheim have not recognised the existence of a physical world but have given a great cognizance to a symbolically endowed world of meaning.

10.4.1 Idealism

In the western world a wave of philosophical thinking developed which was sponsored by Plato, Socrates, Descartes, Berkeley, Fichte, Hegel, Hume, Kant, Schelling, Schopenhauer, Spinoza and Gentile. They are known as idealists because they stressed more on mind and the self-leading to the belief that the creation of the universe is a reflection of the mind. As a result of this, a philosophical school of thought that gained prominence was idealism.

Idealism is the oldest system of philosophy known to man. The origin of it goes back to Plato in the west. Its basic viewpoint holds the human spirit as the most important element in life. The universe is viewed as essentially nonmaterial in its ultimate nature. All the idealist philosophers agree on the fact that (i) the human mind is the most important element in life; (ii) the universe is not composed of material in its ultimate nature. In the philosophic sense, idealism is a system that emphasizes the pre-eminent importance of mind, soul or spirit.

Metaphysics according to Idealists

For idealists only the mental or the spiritual is ultimately real, and hence, the universe is taken as an expression of a highly generalized intelligence and will – a universal mind. Reality is reducible to one fundamental substance – spirit. Matter is not real; rather it is a notion, an abstraction of mind. It is only the mind that is real. Therefore, all material things that seem to be real are reducible to mind. The chair you are sitting on is not material; it only seems material. Its essential nature is the reflection of the mind.

Idealists such as the transcendentalists have used the concepts of macrocosm and microcosm to explain their version of reality. Macrocosm refers to the universal mind, the first cause, creator, or God. The macrocosmic mind is continually thinking and valuing. The microcosmic is a limited part of the whole—an individual and lesser self. In educational terms, the student can be conceived of as a spiritual entity that is also part of larger spiritual universe.

Epistemology according to Idealists

Idealists believe that all knowledge is independent of some experience. The act of knowing takes place within the mind. Idealist knowledge is based on the recognition or reminiscence of latent ideas that are already present in the mind. Such ideals are a priori that is, they concern knowledge or concepts that exist prior to, and independent

of, human experience about them. Man can know intrusively that is to say, he can apprehend some truths without utilizing any of his senses. Man can also know truth through the acts of reason by which an individual examines the logical consistency of his ideas. Plato was one who held that knowledge is a matter of recall. Objective idealists such as Plato think that ideas are essences, which have an independent existence. Subjective idealists such as Berkeley reasons that man is able to know only what he perceives. His only knowledge is of mental states. Existence depends on the mind that is derived ultimately from God. God is the infinite spirit.

Axiology according to Idealists

According to the basic theory of idealists, as has been explained above, the purpose of education is to contribute to the development of the mind and self of the pupil. The school should emphasize intellectual activities, moral judgement, aesthetic judgement, self-realization, individual freedom, individual responsibility and self-control in order to achieve this development.

Idealists have suggested the following aims of education:

i) Self-realization

According to idealism, the aim of education should be to make the individual aware of his 'self' i.e. full knowledge of the self or total development of the inherent powers of man.

There are four stages of this aim of self-realization—first is the physical and the biological self, second is the social self which determines the social relations and acceptance of social values, third is the mental self i.e. self-directed reasoning, and fourth is the spiritual self. At the level of the spiritual self, the total transformation of personality takes place.

- Attainment of the attributes like Satyam, Shivam and Sundaram or truth, goodness and beauty.
- Development of rational knowledge intended to understand the universe.
- Appreciation of beauty, this includes artistic activity through which the ultimate unity is expressed.
- Character building: the development of personal moral character and social justice.
- Establishing a conscious relation of man with the universal self.

Thus, the aims of education according to idealists should be the development of the mind and self, intellectual capability, moral judgement, aesthetic judgement, self-realization, individual freedom, individual responsibility and self-control. Thus, the inborn nature of a person is converted into spiritual nature and prepared for a holy life. Idealists have contributed immensely in suggesting the aims of education.

ii) Development of spiritual values

Idealists give greater importance to spiritual values as composed to material gains. Besides developing mental and moral characteristics in children, spiritual characteristics above all must be developed.

iii) Cultivation of truth, beauty and goodness

Idealists assert that to develop spiritual values in the individuals, pursuits of highest ideals namely truth, beauty and goodness should be encouraged more. The more an individual realizes these ideals, the more spiritually developed he will become. Hence, education must strive its utmost in developing the child morally and spiritually so that he achieves self-realization.

iv) Conservation, promotion and transmission of cultural heritage

God has endowed man with a keen and penetrating intellect, intelligence and an enormous capacity of assimilating knowledge of the world. Therefore, his mental and intellectual capacities must help him in assimilating cultural values and characteristics. Culture treasures all the peculiarities of human life in all its aspects. The purpose of education must be to preserve, transmit and develop the cultural heritage. A child is expected to be acquainted with his cultural heritage so that he conserves, promotes and transmit it to the younger generation.

v) Conversion of inborn nature into spiritual nature

According to idealists the inborn instincts and inherent tendencies of the child should be sublimated into spiritual qualities and values. This is the real development of the individuality. The purpose of education, hence, is to attain the fullest and highest development of the personality of a child.

vi) Preparation for a holy life

Idealists are of the view that education must provide an environment, which is conducive to the development of spiritual values in a child. If a person has a life full of piety and good ideals, he will naturally emerge as a fully developed personality with a sense of self-realization.

vii) Development of rationality

Idealists advocate the development of intelligence and rationality in children so that dialectically they may discover the absolute truth. Only highly developed minds can perceive and understand the all-pervading force.

10.4.2 Phenomenology

In the whole of the western world, there has emerged a group of thinkers like Edmund Husserl, Alfred Schultz and Mannheim and others, who have described the world not in terms of physical environment, but rather as a symbolically endowed world of meanings. A world man not only encounters but a world he seeks to understand, interpret, discover and create as a result of which objective realities of life get dissipated and contextual explanations of behaviour and knowledge become more focussed. Phenomenologists, instead of recognizing the importance of objectivity as naturalistic empiricism, advocate and emphasize the quest that is based on a search for essence in the cultural and social sphere. Husserl, a noted phenomenologist, explains it as a fully developed philosophy which may be characterized as a philosophical hermeneutic aimed to disclose the absolute ground of human knowledge through unexpressed presuppositions of knowledge. Therefore, the status of phenomenology is not based on the false guarantee of an absolute zero as a starting point but rather just to bring light to hidden biases and pre-theoretical notions which constitute the objective of a phenomenology based inquiry. Therefore, in phenomenology, the subject of study is a phenomenon, an event, a social context, and cultural, social, physical and ideational environment as they exist and constitute the reality.

Phenomenologists and Metaphysics

The phenomenologists consider metaphysics as an every day reality that is socially constructed system in which people give phenomena a certain order of reality. Every day life presents itself as a reality interpreted by men and subjectively meaningful to them as a coherent world. The outer visible world of experiences is a reality, which gives meaning to the reality that is composed of human interaction with the environment. It is an absolutely pre-suppositionless science that makes phenomena in the environment a reality, and which surrounds the whole human interaction, curiosities and cognitive

structures. Reality, therefore, for phenomenologists, is the worldview that seeks to describe appearance and events that are constituted by private consciousness.

Epistemology and Phenomenologists

According to phenomenologists, truth is inseparable from our personal perceptions and all the subjective experiences. True knowledge may be obtained through such techniques as observation, descriptions and classification, which permit a disclosure of structures and connections in nature, which do not yield to experimental techniques. Hence, it undermines any presupposition and pre-hypothesized relations. Husserl's law of obtaining knowledge is to have self-experience instead of believing in natural beliefs and fundamental associations. Phenomenology, therefore, is a critique of positivism. Their real quest is a search for essences, which were seen as being unbound to the cultural or social sphere.

Value and Phenomenologists

The phenomenologists' view about value is determined by the perceptions of the individual of the outer world. It does not attach any importance to pre-established values (social, moral, human, etc.), and it totally depends on the nature of experience that is obtained by human interaction.

Aims of Education

Though, the aims of education specifically have not been dealt with by this philosophy, yet the following aims have been derived out of the analysis of the metaphysical, epistemological and axiological formulations:

- Education must develop the capacity to disseminate what acts and experiences are desirable and what are not in view of the predominant culture and society.
- Understanding the role of authority in the educative process in a traditional way so that subjective experiences may be properly interpreted.
- Education should make an individual quite free to get experiences, analyse them, think and then act upon.
- Equipping the human mind with that knowledge of things which is obtained through the educational process of getting to the essence of the objects of focus.
- Its aim should be to emphasize the elimination of perceptual bias from human consciousness and attach importance to the essential nature of things, which are subjectively thrashed for giving meaning to the reality.
- Education must aim at developing an intuitive quality of mind because without it the object, the phenomena or events cannot be studied. Every realm of possibility may be explained by intuitive knowledge.
- Education must help individuals to develop reflective consciousness to understand, objective, subjective or intuitive sources of knowledge.

Check Your Progress

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

b) Compare your answer with the ones given at the end of the unit.

1. How do idealist thinkers define reality?

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2. List any two aims of education which idealists advocate.

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3. What is truth according to phenomenologist?

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10.5 EXPERIENCES

The proponents who based their centre of understanding on experience have been grouped under this head to distinguish them from the thinkers who attached more importance to idea. Though their approaches to organise the experiences differed from each other, culminating into a different focus, the basis of their approach or ideology remained centred around valuing experience. May it be the empiricists' concern, or the realists' fascination or any other reason all, theorists have tried to formulate their concepts or have tried to develop a theory around experience. The philosophers who believe in the study of experience though with varying interpretations (which is natural and subject to the changing nature of phenomena) are being discussed here.

10.5.1 Empiricism

Empiricism is an attitude of mind rather than a specific school of philosophy because it does not provide a definite metaphysical as well as an epistemological doctrine. However, it contains the conviction that philosophy is an attempt to systematize, explain and understand from the facts of experience and must eventually return to that experience for its final seal of approval.

Empiricism is a revolt against the attitude of thinkers who became so enamoured of the answers they found that they did not take the trouble to enquire whether it actually supplied an answer to the question or whether it fitted in with the facts of experience. Empiricists do not accept any philosophical hypothesis, which is not supported by facts or experience. Empiricism as a school of philosophical thought was advocated by the ancient Greeks who were the true originators not only of natural science but also of that philosophical tradition which keeps closest to scientific thought and of which empiricism is a typical example. Various discoveries, which were made in the field of natural science, led empiricism to gain prominence, and thus influenced the process of scientific thought.

The advocates of empiricism were Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley and Hume. They persuaded that the inductive method of reasoning is the best source of generating knowledge. Bertrand Russell is also understood to have given a start to new thinking based on positivism, which is also treated as neo-empiricism.

Metaphysics according to Empiricists

According to empiricists the reality lays in the external world, it is for the human mind to analyse it scientifically. Since mind is defined as consciousness, there can be nothing in the mind, which is not conscious. If there were innate ideas such as those of God or Substance whether material or spiritual, these ideas would be consciously present to the human understanding from its very origin. Their belief is that the truth or falsity of no idea can be established if it exists independently of experience. Locke, therefore, holds that the mind was a *tabula rasa* or empty slate, prior to the experiences of man and the source of all our ideas lies in experience.

Epistemology according to Empiricists

Since the empiricists believe in the objectivity of knowledge that is acquired by sense perceptions and scientific processes, new knowledge can only be obtained through the method of induction wherein emphasis is laid on presentation of experience, analysis of data and observed inferences leading to the development of hypotheses. It operates upon the perceptual causality. According to empiricists, that knowledge is true of which man is certain. John Locke, Berkeley and others refute the subjective state of conviction, objectivity and observe that the logical sources of acquiring knowledge cannot be questioned. John Locke proposes that sensation and reflection are the two sources of experiences. Through sensation understanding grows about the external world and through reflection it becomes aware of all the operations that it performs itself. John Locke introduced his own definition of an 'idea' by saying that 'idea' is whatsoever the mind perceives whether by sensation or reflection and ideas which the understanding receives, are simple but the understanding has certain faculties by virtue of which it can reproduce, compare and combine simple ideas to form complex ideas.

Berkeley also supports Locke and goes further by denying the abstract idea. If it has any reality at all, it must be in terms of the sensory qualities we perceive and not in something else. According to him, nothing exists but a thinking mind and its thoughts. Berkeley was a partial empiricist. He turned the empirical outlook on our knowledge of the external world but when it came to the spiritual world, he was both an intuitionist as well as a rationalist. Hume enquires whether we have any idea of substance and maintains that we have no idea. He believes, that even if we have any such idea, it must be derived from some impression, either of sensation or reflection.

Axiology

Empiricists hold the view that the objects known to the human mind are of three kinds namely: ideas, finite mind and the infinite mind of God. God is the cause of all kinds of ideas, which are experienced either by sensation or reflection. The value, therefore, has to be developed by virtue of the experience one gains. They deny the existence of any pre-established norms of morality and dogmatic beliefs. The criterion of determining what is good or what is evil is the mind, which analyses the experiences.

Aims of Education

On the basis of the analysis of this doctrine of empiricism, the following aims of education may be derived:

- To instil in a young mind such qualities as to be humane, friendly, having empirical understanding, having civil temper and wisdom.
- To develop the ability to understand simple ideas and then to develop them into complex ideas either by using sensation or reflection on the processes of the mind.
- To provide knowledge which has a high degree of certainty and which is demonstrative. Knowledge grows as a result of judgement.

- To develop the ability to distinguish between rational and empirical knowledge.
- To inculcate the scientific attitude and temper among students so that they may coordinate the sensory and reflective strength of mind to reach a right conclusion about gaining knowledge.

10.5.2 Realism

During 17th century two significant and prominent tendencies in the field of education came into prominence and posed a challenge to the contemporary thinkers: first was a protest against too much of abstractionism and stern discipline as a result of idealism. Second: development of science. Idealistic education could develop moral and spiritual qualities but failed to inculcate among children a capacity to face the problems of life and solve them for their own happiness. Consequently a new thinking wave emerged which was of the opinion that things can be known as they really are. Realists say that mind is distinct from the object of its knowledge, and that there is no priority of mind over the objects of its knowledge. Chief protagonists of realism are Mulcaster, Milton, John Locke, Comenius, Ratke, and Bertrand Russell.

Metaphysics of Realism

For a realist the material world exists independent of, and external to, the mind of the knower. The basis for understanding reality is found in a world of objects and in the perception of these objects. Matter must be encased in a form and has to assume the structure of a particular object. According to realists, the world is made up of concrete matter and matter is the fundamental element or ultimate reality of this universe.

Realists do not agree with the invisible presence of God and Soul because they believe that all living beings are a form of matter and the soul is a materialistic conscious element. According to them the phenomenal world is true. They accept the truth and reality of matter. To them, there is no world beyond this, unlike the idealists.

Epistemology according to Realists

Knowing is a process that involves two stages: sensation and abstraction. The realist's theory of knowledge has also been referred to as a 'spectator' theory. According to realists, the impressions, perceptions and sensation, which result from our contacts with the external world, through our senses, result in knowledge i.e. true and real. Realists believe that senses are the door to or a gateway to knowledge. Bertrand Russell in his book '*Analysis of Mind*' writes, "I contend that the ultimate constituent of matter are not atoms – but sensation, I believe that the stuff of our mental life consists wholly of sensations and images". The test of truth for realists is whether or not a proposition within the mind is in accord with the material object or condition outside the mind. Thus through reasoning one deduces that A must be equal to B; the proposition is true only if A is equal to B in the material world.

According to realists, man is a part of this material world; he is endowed with sense organs and the mind through which he attains the knowledge of the real external world. Realists lay emphasis on observation and experimentation.

Axiology (Value)

As we know, realism was born as a reaction to excessive idealism. It opposes the pursuit of higher ideals. It follows then, that anything consistent with nature is valuable. Standards of values are found by means of the act of reason. However, a value judgement is never considered to be factual, it is a subjective judgement based on feeling. Acceptable individual values are those that conform to the values of prevailing opinion of society that reflects a status quo of social reality.

Thus, etymologically, realism means 'About a Thing' or concerning some object. Hence, it is an angle of vision according to which things as we see and perceive them, are realities. There are various forms of realism such as described below:

Humanistic Realism

Erasmus and Milton were proponents of the view of humanistic realism, which believes that the welfare of all humans must be in view of the individuals' social and spiritual development.

Social Realism

Social realism aims to make human life happy and successful by fulfilling the needs of society. Hence, the upholders of this ideology condemned cramming and giving full importance to society and the social environment; they emphasized the attainment of real knowledge. Lord Montague, and John Locke were pro-social realists.

Sense Realism

Mulcaster and Bacon were powerfully influenced by the scientific researches, hence gave much cognizance to the knowledge which was received by the senses and so sense realism came up. Its proponents believed that knowledge primarily comes through the senses, not from words.

Neo-Realism

Whitehead and Bertrand Russell came up with the idea of neo-realism and held the view that knowledge should be obtained by analysing the rules and procedures of science, which they further believe may change with changes in circumstances.

Aims/Goals of Education

The basic purpose of education, in realist educational theory, is to provide the pupil with the essential knowledge he requires to survive in the natural world. Such knowledge will provide him with the skills necessary to achieve a secure and happy life. Realists propound the following aims of education:

- **To develop the physical and mental powers of a child**

According to realism, mind as well as the physical organs constitute the organism composed of matter, hence mental and physical powers will help him in developing his intelligence, discrimination and judgement so that he is able to solve all his problems successfully.

- To prepare the child for a happy and successful life by making him capable of making logical analysis of the environment around. He must be able to know what follows from what, by giving good reasons.
- To develop the awareness in a child about the real world. The external world is logically constructed out of sense data; therefore, the child has to understand as to how the nature of space, time and matter may be used to fit the world of senses and the world of physical objects together into a coherent whole.
- To provide the training of senses: Unless the training of senses through varied experience is not provided to the child, he will not be able to have full knowledge of the external world with which he has to adjust.
- Acquainting the child with nature and his social environment so that he may strike a balance between the two. The individual self and social consciousness of the child should be developed.
- To develop the attitude of experimentation, realists believe that education must be purposive and useful for society, therefore, the relations in the external world

must be explained to the child by ascertaining the nature of matter and making it logically possible to associate it with the external world and the social environment.

- To provide education which will train the child for a vocation. Vocational education is a must, as the child has to face the realities of life. There is a question of survival of self also and the child must be taught such vocational knowledge and skills with which he may be able to adjust in society.

10.5.3 Naturalism

There is a group of philosophical thinkers who emphasized the idea of nature, as opposed to the idea of God and Spirit, where human learning must emerge from. In the field of education, naturalism is neither the positivism of the physical world nor mechanical positivism or even biological naturalism. The revolutionary changes in physical sciences in the 18th century were instrumental in developing naturalism.

Metaphysics and Naturalism

Naturalists believe that nature is the whole reality. They are not prepared to accept that there is any super power. They endorse an attitude of mind, which denies the existence of an order transcendent nature and sense experience. It regards human life as a part of the scheme of nature. Naturalism has two-fold importance for education: one is as a philosophy and the second is the attitude towards education in the form of aims and methodology of education.

It is entirely a distinct concept which seeks to base education on the experience of the child. Its motto is 'follow nature'. Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) was the most important naturalistic philosopher of education who cried, 'what is this?' man is born free and I find him everywhere in chains'. This cry transformed the face of Europe and its echoes were heard far and wide throughout the world. Man is the supreme creation of nature. Naturalists believe that there is no other world that is real other than the world of nature that exists in the form of matter. Therefore, the reality cannot only be understood in terms of physical sciences.

Epistemology and Naturalism

Rousseau and Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) were the philosophers who criticised the aims and methods of the various schools of their time. Rousseau's concept of negative education is the real method of gaining knowledge. He said that the first education of the child ought to be purely negative. This he described as not teaching any virtue, value or truth by shielding the heart of the child from vices and mind, from errors. In other words, it would mean providing no education, no information of any kind to the child, rather let the sense organs and the power of reasoning be strengthened. Rousseau said 'Nature wants that child should remain a child till he becomes an adult'. He called this education of his times a positive education. By negative education he would mean changing the old sequence of positive education by allowing the child to grow in his own way of seeing, thinking and experiencing and thereby saving the child from groaning under the dead weight of the old imposed meaningless education.

Thus negative education is self-education. It is the education of the sense organs and the body. Thus, the self-experiences, which are acquired through the senses are the real sources of gaining or determining knowledge.

Axiology and Naturalism

Since the realists converge on the point that reality is matter, and that God, soul, mind, heaven and hell, as well as freedom of will, moral values, prayers and superhuman wonders are all illusions, therefore, there is no existence of eternal or universal values. Rather a child develops his own value system from his interaction with the external world of matter and the environment around. All concepts of goodness and morality

cannot be taught if they are left to the individual to be learnt by him. For these values are transitory not permanent. They may change with the changing interaction of the individual with the outer world.

As a result of the theoretical conception of reality, knowledge and values of realists, three shades or forms of naturalism became more important which are:

Physical Naturalism

It lays emphasis on studying the processes of matter and phenomena of the external world. It explains human activities and experiences in terms of material objects and natural law.

Mechanical Naturalism

Naturalists feel that the universe is a lifeless huge machine, which gets its form through matter and motion. In its movement no spiritual power is needed.

Biological Naturalism

It is based on Darwin's theory of evolution. According to this theory, man has evolved from lower animals by the gradual process of development. It emphasizes the development of man's natural impulses, natural propensities and inborn tendencies, which have developed, with the principles of adaptation to the environment, struggle for existence and survival of the fittest.

Aims of Education

Different philosophers have expressed and emphasized different aims and objectives of education. Even among the different forms of naturalism, variations are found with regard to educational goals. Mechanical naturalism suggests that education should aim at the efficiency and perfection of human beings. This, however, is not the representative view of naturalism as a whole. Biological naturalism stresses proper adaptation and adjustment of the child to the environment. Herbert Spencer described education to be a preparation and training for complete life. As described by Ross, the aim of education according to naturalism seems to be present and future happiness.

Naturalists believe that education should prepare the pupils, and equip them, and through them the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest ideology should be nurtured.

The following are the aims of education which have been advocated and propounded by all the naturalists:

- To develop the capacity of self-expression: when an individual interacts with the material world, then what he feels and what he thinks must be expressed for the purpose of self preservation. Rousseau was in favour of strengthening the sense organs and the power of reasoning.
- To develop the understanding that man is a part of a huge machine, therefore, every individual must work very efficiently. J.S. Ross says "Education must make the human machine as good a machine as possible by attending to its constitution, by elaborating it and making it capable of more and more complicated tasks." He advocated the concept of negative education, which was nothing, but a self-education. It was a negation of the old system of teaching and learning.
- Development of power and intelligence for self-existence: Darwin believed in the principle of struggle for the existence and survival of the fittest. One has to acquire the capacity to struggle constantly and come out victorious.
- Adaptation to environment: According to Darwinian theory, human beings, unlike other animals, have the power to adapt themselves to the ever-changing environment. This is a natural capacity of every human being. The aim of education must be to strengthen this capacity.

- Attainment of present and future happiness. Biological humanists advocate this aim of education. As described by M.C. Dougall, “education should enable the individual to attain the goals set for him by nature in ways that have individual and social value.” He also emphasized the emancipation, moulding and guiding of the basic impulses of the child and a synthesis of all these to attain natural progress and development.
- Preservation of cultural heritage: Education must conserve and preserve the cultural heritage and develop it further. As Ross very aptly puts it: “Education is the preservation and the enhancement of racial gains, generation by generation”.
- Natural Development: A child should be allowed to develop naturally according to his inborn tendencies, interests, inclinations and capacities in a free environment.
- Autonomous Development: Education must aim at developing the child into a full personality by his own experiences and realizations. The aim of education must be to become a self-developed and self-realized individual.
- According to Rousseau, through education, sense organs must be developed to acquire knowledge of various kinds and then to emphasize upon sensory, bodily, mental, social and moral development of the individual.
- According to Herbert Spencer, the aim of education should be as follows:
 - Self preservation i.e. preservation of the body and mind
 - Earning a living
 - Establishing a family and bringing up children
 - Use of leisure time should be devoted to the study and practice of painting, music, poetry and recreation
 - Citizenship development
 - Moral development

The naturalists of 19th and 20th century, however, believed that education should achieve a synthesis and adjustment between the individual and the society, between man and nature.

10.5.4 Reconstructionism

Dewey in 1920 suggested the term ‘Reconstructionism’ in philosophy for the first time. In the early 1930s, a group known as the ‘frontier thinkers’ called upon the school to lead the way towards the creation of a new and more equitable society. The leading spokesmen were George Count and Harold Rugg. In 1956 a book was written entitled, ‘*Toward a Reconstructed Philosophy of Education*’ by Theodore Brameld, wherein Brameld used this term reconstructionism. In his book he has put five main theses, which are of great importance.

- Education must commit itself to a new social order that will fulfil the basic values of our culture and at the same time harmonize with the underlying social and economic forces of the modern world. Education must lead to a profound change in the minds of man so that the enormous technological power at our disposal may be used to create rather than to destroy.
- The new society must be a genuine democracy whose institutions and resources are controlled by the people themselves.
- The child, the school, and education itself are conditioned inexorably by social and cultural forces. Progressivism overstates the case for individual freedom and understands the extent to which we are all socially conditioned. Brameld feels that civilized life, by and large, is group life; therefore, a group must play a major part in school. Groups should be recognised as they are. Brameld further advocates that we should neither cynically condemn nor passively accept their

behaviour as inevitable, but through sound diagnosis aim to build a social and educational programme that will help reduce immoralities and release the human potentialities. Thus education becomes social self-realization.

- Pupils must be convinced of the validity and urgency of reconstructionist solutions under the principle of defensible partiality, through open examination and acceptance by the largest possible majority.
- The purpose and ends of education must be tailored to meet the demands of the present cultural crises according to findings of the behavioural sciences.

Thus, the essence of Reconstructionism is that educators themselves must rebuild society by teaching the young a programme of social reform. It claims to remedy three things or failures of progressivism:

- Lack of a defined goal
- Undue emphasis on individualism
- An underestimation of the cultural obstacles to social change

Theodore Brameld is a champion of reconstructionism and under the principle of defensible-partiality he suggests the following process through the interaction of a group where by a social-consciousness of the solution may be arrived at:

- Presentation of evidence.
- Effective communication not only by lectures and reading books but involving the student in healthy activity.
- Agreement that is reached by majority. This step becomes the basis of active learning.

Thus, the metaphysical thinking of Reconstructionists is that the reality, which is felt or arrived at by collective social wisdom, is the basis for further understanding of experience and thereby approaches true knowledge.

For reconstructionists, knowledge is accepted which has social significance. According to them, knowledge can be attained through experiences by working in a group with the help of a principle 'defensible partiality'. A knowledge, which is obtained with the help of direct or indirect evidences, is a socially worthwhile knowledge.

Aims of Education

The above analysis provides a contact for the following aims of education according to reconstructionists:

- The main purpose of education is to promote a clearly thought out programme of social reform.
- Development of powerful means possessed latently by the people.
- Social realization should be the basic purpose of education. Reconstructionists think that human survival and education are reciprocally related; therefore, through education social engineers must be prepared so that a new social order may be created.
- Capability to examine the cultural heritage: Reconstructionism came up as a result of dissatisfaction from progressivists who undermined the importance of social reform. Hence, according to them, education must have those ends which can bring about an overall change in society and which can develop core ability among the children.
- Education must nurture the goal seeking behaviour of children. Therefore, ability must be developed to translate ideas into practice and to adapt them with the programme of social reconstruction. Any educational activity must be socially purposeful, to create conditions for meaningful learning.

- Through education, cooperative citizens must be prepared in the true sense. Such aims of education should not only be limited to national boundaries and a specific cultural milieu but to international limits as well.
- Problem solving capacity of children must be developed through education for generalization and abstractions.
- The aim of education should be a deliberate commitment to bringing about constructive social change.
- Cultivation of an attitude of planning.
- The result of education must be ascertained by students and teachers in their definite programmes of social, educational, political and economic change as a means of total cultural renewal.
- Awareness about bringing constructive social change: According to reconstructionists, education is to be designed to awaken the students' consciousness about social problems and to engage them actively in the solving of these problems.
- The formal education shall work as an instrument for creating alternative political, social and economic forms, institutions and processes.
- Education has to so equip the students that they may identify, examine and solve the problems arising out of socio-economic barriers and other discriminations so that a harmonized social order may be created in society.
- Students must be educated to understand the importance of an interdependent world reality so that technological advances may be used for maintaining social tranquillity and development.

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.

4. Given below are a few statements. Write 'True' if it is a correct statement, and 'False', if it is a false statement.

- a) According to empiricists, the inductive method of reasoning is the best source of generating knowledge.
- b) Bacon believes in subjective interpretation of reality.
- c) Development of scientific temper is the aim of education according to empiricists.
- d) A. N. Whitehead was a proponent of sense realism.
- e) Training of senses is an aim of education according to realists.

5. What is the concept of negative education according to Rousseau?

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6. Write any four aims of education according to naturalism.

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7. How can social consciousness be arrived at?

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8. What is the major emphasis of reconstructionist education?

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10.5.5 Existentialism

Existentialists propose a philosophical theory, known as existentialism, which developed as a reaction against both naturalism and idealism. It is treated as the latest movement of European thought and this philosophy is the newest to appear upon the intellectual scene. The important existentialist thinkers repudiate the very label, which classify them as belonging to this or any other group of philosophers. Obviously, it is a philosophy of extreme individuality. Yet there are some very important areas of common agreement among all the existential thinkers. The philosophers such as Kierkegard (1813-55), Martin Heidegger, Karl Jaspers, and Jean-Paul Sartre (1905) have contributed towards the development of existentialism. Kierkegard is called the father of existentialism.

Existential Metaphysics

Existentialists advocate that reality is a matter of individual existence. Existence precedes essence in individual development. One exists and then becomes. This means that human beings are born and enter the world without being consulted and life is fundamentally absurd because of this. The only significant discourse in living is that which is found in meaning and each individual human authentically – that is – freely chooses for himself. However everyone possesses volition or will, which gives him or her the freedom to make choices and to create his or her own purposes for existence. This is their essence, which is continually becoming. When a person is aware of his identity as an individual, he realizes his contingent nature. Whether he suffers a sense of anguish, despair or loneliness, he is still free to make his choices, which lead to personal self-definition. A person creates his or her own definition and makes his or her own essence.

Existential Epistemology

Existentialists observe that a person knows only through his experiences. However, there are levels of experience and when one is aware of the existence of the things and beings in themselves, one is functioning upon the highest level of human experience – the level of awareness. Truth is always relative to an individual's judgement. Absolute truths are non-existent. Each person must decide what is true and what is significant for him. Thus, the individual chooses the knowledge that he or she wishes to possess.

Existentialists and Value Theory

Existentialists contend that values are neither absolute nor determined by outside criteria. Rather each value is determined by the free choice of individual persons. Existence is

the basic value for each individual. Values are relative to one's individual circumstances. One must not conform to the social values and norms of one's society for the sake of conformity; if one permits society or any institution of society to impose values, then one loses authenticity and humanity. Values for existentialists are a matter of complete personal and individual concern.

There are some assumptions of existentialism:

- Centre of existence is man, not the truth.
- Man is unique, being a composite of emotions, feelings, perceptions and thinking.
- Man makes the universe meaningful.
- Man is not alone in the universe and hence the real living person is more important than anything else.
- Man is free capable of shaping his own life and choosing his destiny.

Aims of Education

The major purpose of education, according to existentialists, is to serve the individual human being. He ought to guide him into an awareness of his condition and promote his successful commitment to a significant and meaningful existence. Important aims are:

- According to existentialists the aim of education is humanitarian, which means inner development of man, development of real consciousness or real self. Thus, to impart knowledge of self-existence is the fundamental aim of education.
- Existentialists emphasize the education of the whole man i.e. development of all aspects of his inner-self, his feelings, emotions, thinking, etc. realizing ultimately what he is, what is his purpose of life and what he has to become. Education must create an environment, which is conducive to this kind of realization.
- Existentialists advocate the development of individual awareness. The choices, an individual has to make must make him a self-determined person.
- Education must create an opportunity for free, ethical choices. Since an existentialist's choice making is personal and subjective i.e. are emotional, aesthetic and poetic, education must provide open learning environments for their self-expression.
- Encouraging the development of self-knowledge should be the aim of education according to existentialists. Existentialists realize that we live in a world of physical realities and that we have developed a useful and scientific knowledge about these realities. The most important function of education is to encourage students to engage in philosophising about the meaning of human experiences of life with the help of their own self-examination of choices. This group of thinkers undermine the importance of objective reality and prefer subjective knowledge.
- According to existentialists, the aim of education is to develop a sense of self-responsibility which can be developed by extending a context where from children may learn to make independent decisions and carry them out. Human freedom demands that a person decides freely his own commitments, gives meaning to them and that becomes the source of moral and social responsibility.
- Education must aim at providing those virtues of life, which are essential to make an individual feel his essence. The virtues like, freedom, self-examination, self-awareness, humanism, inner peace, and self-realization must be inculcated in the children.

10.5.6 Pragmatism

Pragmatists like Charles S. Pierce, William James, George Herbert Mead (1863-1931), John Dewey (1859-1952), Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) believe in the doctrine that

evaluate any assertion solely by its practical consequences and its learning on human interests. Peirce stressed the use of scientific method in validating ideas; James applied pragmatic interpretations to psychology, religion and education; Mead emphasized the development of a child as learning and experiencing human being; Dewey in particular wrote extensively on education. Because of their thinking a kind of philosophical speculation called pragmatism emerged. The theory which was propounded by these thinkers is called the pragmatic theory of philosophy. According to the emphasis laid by these eminent philosophers, there are four important forms of pragmatism: (i) Humanistic pragmatism, (ii) Experimental pragmatism, (iii) Nominalistic pragmatism, and (iv) Biological pragmatism. Humanistic pragmatism asserts that all truths are human truths to be verified on the criterion of reality. Experimental pragmatism holds that truth is that which may be experimentally proved. According to Nominalistic pragmatism, the results of an experiment are always particular and concrete, never general and abstract. Biological pragmatism extends that the ultimate aim of all knowledge is harmony of man with his environment. It further asserts that the school is a miniature society which prepares the child for future life.

Metaphysics and Pragmatism

Pragmatists reject metaphysics as a legitimate area of philosophical inquiry. Reality, they argue, is determined by an individual sense experience. Man cannot know anything beyond experience. Therefore, questions pertaining to the ultimate nature of man and universe simply cannot be answered because these problems transcend one's experience. For example, there is no way for any living being to determine whether there is life after death because he can not experience life after death while living. Thus, unless we can experience the phenomena in question, it is impossible to verify any solution suggested for such problems. Attempts to answer metaphysical questions are little more than guessing games, in their opinion.

Epistemology and Pragmatism

Pragmatists do not accept the dualism that separates the perceiver from the object that is perceived. Man is both in the world of perception and of the world of his perception. All that can be known is dependent on experience. This experiencing of phenomena determines knowledge. Because the phenomena are constantly changing, it follows that knowledge and truth must similarly be changing. Truth is something that happens to an idea. Whatever is considered true today must also be considered as possibly changing tomorrow. Circumstances do alter cases. Thus, the person is constantly changing, the environment is constantly changing and the experiences or transactions are also changing. Each time a human experience is reconstructed to solve the problem; a new contribution is added to humanity's fund of experiences.

Value and Pragmatists

According to pragmatists, values are relative to time, place and circumstances. What contributes to human and social growth and development is regarded as valuable, what restricts or contracts experience, is unworthy. It is necessary then, to test and examine value assumptions in the same way that scientific claims are subjected to verification. According to pragmatists, education is inductive and based on the scientific method. Tentative assertions are based on empirical experience and must be tested. Thus, value in ethics and aesthetics depend upon the relative circumstances of the situation as it arises. Ultimate values cannot exist, for truth is always relative and conditional. Nevertheless, value judgements are useful as a means to an intelligent life that is successful, productive and happy.

Aims of Education

The pragmatists do not accept development of eternal spiritual values, discovery of pre-existing reality and universals and teaching of moral standards to pupils as the

aims of education, which were the heart of the idealist's scheme of education. According to pragmatists, the following are the aims of education:

- The cultivation of a dynamic and adaptable mind, which is resourceful and enterprising in all situations, one that is powerful enough to create values in an unknown future, should be the aim of education.
- Education must develop such a personality of a child, which may help the child to restructure his experience to solve problems through experimentation.
- The aim of education must be the growth and development of a child, but the forms and standards of these are not pre-existing, nor are they permanent and fixed. They are to be discovered in the future. All aims of education according to pragmatists must be concerned with the present and future and must be subject to modification.
- According to John Dewey, education as such has no aims. Education is an abstract idea. Education must be able to make children capable of restructuring their experiences, which they get out of their interaction with the situations. Thus, aims of education for pragmatists are more suggestive. Even these aims must possess three elements in order to be useful i.e. educand's actions and needs; educand's cooperation, and that they are specific and temporary, not permanent and general.
- Pragmatists emphasize that education must aim to realize democratic values in life. It should instil in the educand a respect for democratic institutions. Kilpatrick said, "the classrooms must become living democracies, in a democracy, it is self-directing personalities that we try to build and the progressive development of a better life for all men is the basis out of which morality and moral conduct arise". Thus, pragmatists favour the democratic ideals of education.
- Education must teach one how to think so that one can adjust to an ever-changing society. The schools must aim at developing those experiences that will enable one to lead a good life. These include, good health, vocational skills, interests and hobbies for leisure living, preparation for parenthood and the ability to deal effectively with social problems are the aims of education according to pragmatists.

Thus, pragmatists hold that any specific educational process cannot be regarded as final and useful for all times to come. It must keep on changing according to the changing needs of society. Education must aim at developing in the child the capacity of thinking, experimenting and restructuring his experiences with flexibility, utility and adjustment in all fields of human activity, promoting the continuous development of the individual and the society to the fullest extent.

10.5.7 Analysts

Analysts propose the newer approaches to issues in educational philosophy. Basically, they suggest the method of examining the language used in making statements about knowledge, education and schooling and of seeking to clarify it by establishing its meaning. Philosophical analysts have gained prominence among educational philosophers who believe that our communications about educational matters have grown increasingly confused and obscure. Philosophical analysts seek to reduce statements about education to empirical terms. The notable advocates of this philosophical thinking were Leibniz, and G. Canter who emphasized that the true philosopher is prepared to examine all preconceptions by analysing the language. G.C. Moore and Russell also described the logical structure that underlies language usage.

Metaphysics according to Analysts

According to analysts, reality consists of what is knowable, that is to say, anything that can be verified by experience. For the traditional philosophers, human mind is part of

this universal system. Philosophical analysts reject cosmic system building as a purely speculative exercise that has no real meaning for educators. Such analysts assert that the metaphysical bases of cosmic philosophers cannot be verified in human experience unless it is understood by a critical reflection of symbols and their interpretation.

Epistemology according to Analysts

Analysts assert that the method of science must be the method of philosophy. Things are knowable only through experience, which verify the truth that is apprehended. The scientific attitude of open mindedness, objectivity and critical reflection in thinking is necessary for correct thinking. The reasoning function without doubt is the most important function of man. Human beings make their expressions in terms of sentences that attempt to convey proposition about reality. Only some of these sentences are meaningful communications between persons. Meaningful sentences are either analytically true or empirically true. For example $2 + 2 = 4$ is analytically true but it can be empirically verified as $4 = 2 + 2$ and the knowledge is empirically verified and thus is true knowledge according to analysts.

Values according to Analysts

All values are relative to needs of the individual and to humanity. The social value of justice and benevolence are outcomes that follow the natural interaction between human beings. Therefore, the values are acquired by human interaction and the validity of values then is determined by empirical observations and results. This is called scientific truthfulness that is the basis of our beliefs upon observation and inferences. This is impersonal and devoid of local and temperamental biases.

Aims of Education according to Analysts

Following aims of education may thus be deduced from this philosophical thinking:

- Education must promote the intellectual and social development of the individual.
- The scientific attitude of open mindedness and objectivity should be developed through education.
- The ability to withhold one's judgement until the relevant data are collected should be developed so that verifiable knowledge can be acquired.
- The structure of experiences may be provided in school to make judgement verifiable.
- According to analysts, emphasis is laid upon the knowledge claims and propositions that can be verified. Therefore, education has the responsibility to provide that environment and developmental set, which will help students to acquire the capacity to logically and empirically verify the knowledge, they obtain in schools.
- Analysts advocate that education must aim at reducing the complexities in the usage of terminologies. Ambiguity and confusion will create problems for understanding the concepts.

Check Your Progress

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

b) Compare your answer with the ones at the end of the unit.

9. How is reality defined by existential thinkers?

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10. Write any three assumptions of existentialism.

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11. What is the fundamental aim of education according to existentialism?

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12. Differentiate between humanistic pragmatism and experimental pragmatism?

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13. What is the basic tenet of pragmatist epistemology?

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14. How is reality defined by analysts?

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10.5.8 Logical Positivism

Logical positivism is a philosophical thinking of the twentieth century. It is a philosophy of thinkers called the Vienna circle formally formed in 1928 with his members namely Rudolf Carnap, Otto Neurath, H. Feigl, and P. Frank. A.J. Ayer from London also supported this thinking. Ludwig Wittgenstein is popularly known to have contributed towards logical positivism. These positivists find that most of the scientific statements are in the material mode and some in the mixture of formal and material modes. According to positivists all statements are turned into the formal mode so as to purge them of all references to facts and experiences and confine them purely to words. Thus, each science can be translated and transformed into sentential calculus, which

can further be simplified by substituting symbols for the constants and variables of that science, as also for the words expressing the logical constants and ultimately all sciences can be linked up and unified. Positivists also feel the necessity of understanding the exact senses of the basic scientific concepts of law, probability, induction, causation, etc.

Carnap wanted to associate logic with philosophy. According to him scientific logic must replace philosophy. Thus after making a logical analysis of philosophy, it must be expressed in the language of science because logic of science is nothing but the analysis of the language of science. Wittgenstein also provides the analysis of science by logical criteria. Philosophy today is no longer considered as a discipline with some content but an attitude or a way of looking at things. Therefore, to assign some meaning to a statement, it is to be tested on the basis of some criteria of variability about its truth or falsity. G.E. Moore, Bertrand Russell, Wittgenstein are treated as language analysts and all of them advocated this philosophical thinking.

Characteristics of philosophical thinking of logical positivists

- Logical positivists do not accept any idea related to metaphysics, in fact they consider any theory of reality beyond or behind experiences. Positivists treat metaphysics as impossible and non-sensible because they emphasize to make philosophy and statements related to science amenable to logical analysis. Language analysis as used by logical positivists shows that in metaphysical statements language is not properly used so as to be able to assign any meaning to these. A statement can be true or false if it is meaningful, but since metaphysical assertions are not meaningful, the question of their being true or false does not arise. The meaningful assertions can be verified and proved empirically. The positivists allege that when language is used to express concepts, which cannot be verified or checked, it makes nonsense rather than sense. For example, if a statement is made that "all men are mortal; Mohan is mortal because he is a man". We see that this existential, descriptive statement is converted into a logical statement. But discipline statements always need a confirmation for showing them as true or false. Logical statements need confirmation on the demand of logic only. So long as they are true to logical demand they need no verification for their truth.
- Epistemologically, according to positivists, any knowledge is true that is verified on the basis of some criteria of verifiability. Any knowledge that is not directly or indirectly verified is not accepted as true. A.J. Ayer is one of the leading positivists who have written a book: *Languages, Truth and Logic*, wherein he states that any statement of knowledge is meaningful only when it is logically and empirically verified. For example, an atom is not directly visible but can be verified indirectly. Therefore, positivists advocate that knowledge can be obtained either by experiences or by intelligence, but both the experiences about the world, nature and society are to be evaluated, tested and verified against some criteria of logic.
- The question of value is associated with emotive statements, which express feelings, which can be understood, but it is difficult to prove it to be true or false. An emotive statement like "world is full of misery" is ambiguous because it does not convey the specific sense in which it is uttered and it is related with a value judgement. Any statement which involves value judgements lacks meaning in a precise manner. Therefore, the question of value is not dealt with by positivists. Logical positivists claim that there are two kinds of statements, which can be said to be true or false. The first kind is logical statements which are set in terms of the "if", or "if" and "only if" condition. They are true if constructed by the rules of logic. Another type of statement is about "matter of fact" which may be true or false. They are true if confirmed by actual correspondence or confirmation by some empirical method or by logic. Therefore, values are a matter of interpretation by logical reasoning for their meaning. Positivists have also excluded axiology from the purview of philosophy.

Logical positivists appear to believe that metaphysics should not have any place in philosophy and epistemology is a matter of confirmation and verification. Therefore, it is difficult to determine the aims of education, for objectives are value statements concluded in educational terms. So in the context of education, logical positivism tends to clarify the conceptual ambiguity and confusion showing the direction to educational theory. This educational theory aims to bring clarity to concepts, to test the coherence of the theories and to serve the therapeutic purpose dissolving those problems, which arise because of linguistic confusion. However, logical positivists reflect the following aims of education through their philosophical thinking.

- Education should emphasize upon developing conceptual clarity. The analyses of concepts help students to scrutinize various theories of education.
- Developing an ability to make a language analysis so that meaningful and sensible conclusions may be drawn.
- Equipping students with understanding to find out the meaningfulness of a statement or conclusion. A statement which may not be confirmed or verified empirically or logically is meaningless or nonsensical and should be rejected.
- The aim of education is to provide opportunities of learning in school that will help the all-round development of the personality of a child.
- To inculcate the scientific attitude among students so that they can logically solve problems of their own.
- To impart education through the method of language analysis that should be precise enough to avoid any ambiguity and confusion in understanding of the concepts.
- Education must structure the knowledge domain of students in a manner that they are able to judge the meaningfulness of the concepts through direct and indirect methods of verification.

At last, it may be concluded that it is not an educational philosophy as such, but, of course, helps in acquiring scientific knowledge through logical/empirical methods that provide a basis to verify the scientific statements. Its emphasis is on logical methods of teaching. They may help the teacher to make his teaching based on logical methods so that the communication may be more meaningful.

10.5.9 Interpretativists

Interpretativists like Martin Hammersley (1977) and Margreanes (1975) derive their thinking from adopting micro approaches to the study of richness and complexity of human life and the reality of school life. They have not given any theory of philosophy, in fact they wholly concentrate their thinking and reflections on educational processes: as to how school activities are to be understood and made more meaningful. They were not in favour of any kind of determinism in education and in fact supported free will to interpret behaviour in the right perspective. As such these interpretativists have not dealt with such philosophical issues as metaphysics and epistemology, which form the basis of formulating the aims and goals of education. These can be traced here and there in their expressions on education, classrooms, teaching-learning interactions, role of teachers, and students' perceptions. Their expositions are entirely and exclusively about the school and classes where knowledge is processed.

However, the interpretativists' views and concepts are as follows:

- According to interpretativists, reality is to be constructed from everyday activity. Ultimately every aspect of society can be traced back to the way people act in every day life. Changes in education and society are brought about by changes

in such activities, which are imposed. They emerge from the persons' autonomy and freedom to act.

- How is knowledge acquired? Interpretativists of course, answer this question. According to them, knowledge construction depends on the grasping of meaning that people give to their behaviour.

Meaning seems to include such notions as aims or intentions. It includes the idea of significance, which includes reason. These meanings are personal to the person. They are not given by any culture or society; rather they are constructed from a culture by persons involved in every day activity. All this gives meaning to our own actions and to the activities of others with whom we interact. For example, the interpretation of another person's activity depends on what we already know about him. This will include such things as age, sex, race, intelligence, motivation and the like

- Interpretativists, therefore, consider an interpretation of day-to-day activities as influencing a person's behaviour, attitude and values.
- Because interpretativists are concerned with micro-processes that take place in school, they emphasize upon the interaction with people, interaction between teacher and student. To interpret this interaction, the activities may be categorized as working, messing, etc. The full understanding of how a person comes to act or interact demands an investigation into the realm of common sense assumptions that govern our behaviour.
- Interpretativists are very dynamic in their approach since they understand that meanings and interpretations do not remain static and unchanging. Over time persons in interaction share understandings and interpretations through the process of negotiation of meaning which is a continuous process.
- Interpretativists demand that a subjective method be adopted so that one can try to get inside the actor's heads and see how they define the situation. The problem is that we have our own assumptions and categories, but close observation of the situation is essential.

Though interpretativists share a common thinking with phenomenologists and ethnomethodologists they differ in finer observations. Interpretativists tend to see the relationship of teacher and pupil as a situation of conflict in which teachers and pupils have different goals, which they want to achieve. Consequently negotiation takes place and classroom is thought of as negotiated order. Phenomenologists, on other hand, concentrate on eliciting the person's knowledge of the situation and other people. Ethnomethodologists take a somewhat different line of approach. They are interested in discovering the procedures, which people use to make the world intelligible.

Aims and Goals

Interpretativists consider everyday activity more important in education and their interpretations of meanings are considered valid which are supposed to direct the educational process in school and classes. The analysis of their thinking reveals the following aims and goals of education:

- Ability to interpret the behaviour of people in a proper context of activity and interaction.
- To acquire the ability to understand the limitations of interpretations and adopt the process of negotiation of meaning.
- The ability to understand the 'symbolic interaction' that takes place in interacting with people, teachers, administrators, etc. Interaction being the dynamic process involves continuous interpretation and decision-making by a pupils' self-conception and conception of other's perceptions.

- Education should be so planned that it must help the teachers to develop an environment in which they may get experiential knowledge of pupils so that the real understanding of the 'meaning' i.e. mission, intentions, contexts and perspectives may grow.
- Education must develop the capacity of adaptation among children. There are eight possible modes of adaptation namely ingratiation, compliance, ritualism, opportunism, colonization, intransigence and rebellion. Education must help in the development of a positive attitude towards the goals and means, which the school offers.

Thus, the aims of educations as listed above have been reflected in the literature produced by interpretativists. The studies which have been conducted by interpretativists are on interaction in classroom, teacher's perception of pupils, pupil's perception of teachers, pupil's self conception, adaptation, strategies of teaching. These illustrate the interpretativists' micro-approach for understanding the educational process. Their view was that goals come from experience. Persons create goals for them in order to make sense of their past and present experience and to project into the future an intelligible and attainable plan of life.

Check Your Progress

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

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

15. What is the main contribution of logical positivism to education?

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16. How is reality defined by interpretativists?

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17. What is common between interpretativists and phenomenologists?

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10.6 PRAXIS

10.6.1 Marxism

Marxism is a materialistic philosophy propounded by Karl Marx who is thought of as the man who claimed to have made socialism scientific. Marx's philosophy is a

combination of Hegel and British economics. Like Hegel, he thinks that the world develops according to a dialectical format i.e. both subject and object, both the knower and the things known are in a continual process of mutual adaptation which is never completed. For Marx, matter, not spirit is the driving force, which is really man's relation to matter of which the most important part is his mode of production. In this way Marx's materialism becomes economics. Marx upheld the idea that the interpretation of the world is not the main point of knowledge. Rather the fact how the world can be changed, how it can be made better and suitable to mankind is the central point of philosophy which should be stressed and interpreted. Marx conceived the dialectical laws as primarily the most universal laws of the material world and only secondarily as the law of conceptual movement. Marxist philosophy is appropriate to the modern industrial state.

Metaphysics is the reality. According to Marxism 'the truth i.e. reality and power of thought must be demonstrated in practice'. The concept of reality derives from materialism i.e. whatever exists must be material in its ultimate nature. Man must strive for a life of material happiness, which can be achieved only on a collective rather than on an individual basis. Thus, all rights are social. The individual has no rights apart from society, one's rights, duties and economic well being derive from the state. Karl Marx had the belief that societies must necessarily evolve towards communism that was supported by the dialectical theory of an idealist philosopher.

Marxists' view about Epistemology

In Marx's view all sensation or perception is an interaction between subject and object. Sensation could be better called noticing, which implies activity. According to Marxists one only notices things as part of the process of acting with reference to them and any theory, which leaves out action, is a misleading abstraction. Marxists believe every dialectical movement to be in some impersonal sense, a progress and they certainly hold that socialism once established would contribute to human happiness more than either feudalism or capitalism has done. They believe that absolute truth exists and that it exists in the ideal of communism.

Value Theory of Marxists

The Marxists' view of social phenomena is a scientific one. Marxist perspective is universalistic and there emerged a world movement called socialism. Therefore, they believe in the labour theory of value, i.e. the labourer cannot possess the product of his labour apart from society. Marxists' do not think in terms of man but men. The ideal is to give everyone what he needs and take from him, what he is able to contribute to the whole. Thus the ultimate value exists in the idea of what non-exploitative society requires. All rights of human beings are social; therefore all people must be viewed as creatures of society. Marxists' assume that all good things are intrinsically compatible with one another and that all men will pursue the same ends and share the same view of the world.

Aims of Education

For Marx, education is required to bring about the complete transformation of human existence where the essential nature of man is fully expressed. Since communism illustrates Karl Marx's ideology, education must prepare people to serve the economic state. Its role should be to prepare an ideal servant for the communist society. Thus, the following aims of education have been emphasised by Marxists:

- Development of vocational and educational skills and understandings is essential for intellectual growth; therefore skills and techniques appropriate for a child's future job must be developed by education.
- Education must impart the rules of good behaviour or the attitude suitable for a child's later economic roles.

- Education must inculcate among children a sense of modesty, resignation and submissiveness so that society as a whole may develop and prosper to bring happiness to humanity.
- Education must be able to provide training to children to become potential future leaders of the state; therefore such subjects such as mathematics, science and communism, social studies, literature are very relevant.
- Systematic knowledge, skill and habits necessary for the child's future practical activities should be developed by education.
- The purpose of education must be to provide training in the necessary emotions, inclinations and interests, habits of behaviour, feature of will power and character in accordance with the spirit and principles of communist morality. The communist ideal is based on the principle of the brotherhood of all people irrespective of their race, creed, language, nation or sex and is aimed at the liberation of all oppressed groups from economic exploitation.

10.6.2 Ethnomethodology

Ethnomethodologists are basically sociologists who have reflected on issues of philosophy and education. The whole philosophical spirit is derived from these ethnomethodologists' basic thinking about how people interact, create and maintain a conception of social reality. Philosophical thinking develops as a result of one's interaction with the social environment and education is also the representative of society. Therefore, ethnomethodologists concern themselves with those social structures of social interaction, which would be invariant to the revolutionary transformation of society's institution. The work of such sociologists as Schultz, Berger and Lukmann is primarily philosophical and macroscopic, stressing the primacy of studying the processes of human consciousness and concerned with the general nature of reality whereas others such as Garfinkel, Wallace and Wolf who are the fathers of ethnomethodology have extended their concern for symbolic interactionism and phenomenology and focus on microscopic aspects of human behaviour. Thus, ethnomethodology is basically concerned with the interpretation people use to make sense of social settings. This term was coined by Harold Garfinkel who was influenced by phenomenologists while working on cross-cultural characteristics at Yale.

Metaphysical thinking of ethnomethodology is revealed in their understanding of the social phenomena that objective reality of social facts is established as an ongoing accomplishment of the concerted activities of everyday life. It is for the people who create a sense of reality of events in terms of preconceived order for society. People rarely create a world that is indeed ordered. According to them, what is really real is the explanation given by people employing methods of persuasions to show, that in real world which emerges from human interactions.

Epistemology according to ethnomethodologists is associated with the common sense method of constructing reality. Ethnomethodology is the study of people as to how they interact to make sense out of their world. They explain as Roy Turner puts it, because ethno refers to the availability, to a member, of common sense knowledge of his society as common sense knowledge of the whatever. Therefore, ethnomethodology advocates the commonsense methods to be employed by people to make sense of every day activities by constructing and maintaining social reality for understanding community, making decisions, being rational and accounting for rational. According to Ethnomethodologists, what is most readily observable and hence, real becomes a source of constructing knowledge. Through observation, documentary interpretation, external appearance of others and linguistic analysis of communication, meaning expressed in form and structure of social interaction and use of various commonsense methods, social reality may be known to ethnomethodologist. Symbols and meanings have no existence apart from interpretation by persons in interaction. They refute the empirical methods of structuring knowledge.

Likewise the question of value, according to ethnomethodologists is a matter of perception, accounting producing and interpreting by persons in their efforts to give meaning to social interactions. Ethnomethodologists are primarily interested in the world as perceived by people and as interpreted by them within a social network. It is the interpretation of vision and images of what exists and that is what really constitutes the value system of society. Studying autobiography as well as analysis of commonsense understanding of ordinary social life help in developing values.

Aims of Education

The insight of ethnomethodologists goes into the various aspects of a community in a naturalistic setting as well as the analysis of their perception and conception of how social reality is understood and constructed and how that can be transformed through education. The following aims of education, which is the only way to influence educational structure for imbibing such sociological as well as philosophical thinking, may be envisaged:

- Emphasizing self-analysis of the environment around. Through education, the capacity to make self-analysis of situations, symbols, knowledge, literature, etc. may be developed.
- Student must be taught the ways how knowledge is obtained, processed and interpreted to develop differential perceptions to make sense out of social settings.
- The aim of education shall be to develop understanding of human behaviour and environmental realities so that students can construct their own social reality.
- Developing an interpretative and reflective mind must be the aim of education to develop holistic configuration of social reality.
- Inculcation of non-empirical attitude among students so that they can creatively use various methods to gain knowledge of various disciplines.
- Emphasizing upon the development of the qualitative aspect of a child's personality through microanalysis procedures and methodologies. The events, which reflect the worldview, describe our private consciousness, which constitutes a part of subjective as well as objective reality. Subjective reality relates to personal interpretations of phenomena, whereas objective reality is what science has to explore, therefore, education should facilitate the process of education to develop the ability of interpretation of social, political and religious domains in the social world.

Check Your Progress

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

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

18. What is the basis of Marxist philosophy?

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19. What is the purpose of education according to Marxist philosophy?

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20. What is epistemology according to ethnomethodology?

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10.7 LET US SUM UP

Aims and goals have been perceived by western philosophers according to their respective philosophical as well as educational sensitivity. The thinkers who shared common thinking were grouped in their respective categories. In the writings of Plato, Descarte, the emphasis is placed on an idea, which is the ultimate reality and exists independent of matter, space and time. Therefore, the aims of education according to idealists were self-realization, character building and spiritual and moral development. Likewise, Edmund Husserl, Schultz and Mannheim refuted the idea of physical environment and advocated the acceptance of the world of meanings to be understood symbolically. Hence, the aims of education which phenomenology advocate are to equip the children with the abilities to explore the phenomena, event or circumstance and then bring their essence to focus. The development of reflective consciousness was preferred by phenomenologists to understand the realities of the situation.

As the focus of understanding about the world, man and society shifted from idea to experiences, various dimensions of experience figured in the cognition of thinkers, whether they were empiricists (Bacon), naturalists (Rousseau), realists (Mulcaster), pragmatists (Dewey), reconstructionists (Theodore Brameld), positivists (A.J. Ayer), analysts (G.C. Moore and Bertrand Russell), existentialists (Jean Paul Sartre) and others.

The western thinkers made 'experience' as a deviating point from each other with regard to metaphysics, epistemology, values and the aims of education given by them are the consequence of their respective philosophical thinking. Empiricists suggested that education must develop the ability to arrive at empirical understanding; according to realists the aim of education is to provide the pupil with the essential knowledge one requires to survive in a natural world. Accordingly, naturalists advocate the inculcation of the power of self-expression and self-existence as aim of education.

Apart from these, there are sociologists like Theodore Brameld, Carnap, Dewey who perceived education as a social thing and interpreted education from a sociological point of view. Therefore, Brameld proposed the aim of education as being the capacity to bring about a social reconstruction of experience. Carnap was of the opinion that education must develop the ability to provide logical solutions to the problems. John Dewey emphasized on the meaningful construction of experience as the aim of education to make it socially useful and productive. Marxists also provide the socialistic aim of education. Ethnomethodologists emphasize that education should help the learner construct his or her knowledge according to the social context he or she is placed in.

10.8 UNIT-END ACTIVITY

1. Go through any other western philosophies like Perennialism, Constructivism, Habermasism, etc. and examine the aims of education as propounded by those schools of thought.

10.9 POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Aims of education of a particular school of thought are generally deduced from the way it perceives and interprets the reality or truth. Discuss this in the context of any school of philosophy.
2. How do idea, experience and praxis decide the aims of education? As a professional in education which of these three would you give more importance to and why?

10.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

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10.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. According to an idealist, mind or spirit is the ultimate reality. The universe is the manifestation of a universal mind. All material things are reducible to mind only.
2.
 - i) Attainment of the attributes like Satyam, Shivam and Sundram.
 - ii) Establishing a conscious relation of man with universal self.
3. According to phenomenologists, truth lies in the subjective interpretation of the reality. It is based on self-experience rather than natural beliefs and fundamental association.
4.
 - a) True
 - b) False
 - c) True
 - d) False
 - e) True
5. Negative education, according to Rousseau, is not teaching any virtue or truth but shielding the heart of child from vices, and the mind, from errors.

6.
 - a) Developing the capacity of self-expression
 - b) Adoption to one's natural environment
 - c) Natural development of the child
 - d) Attainment of present and future happiness.
7. According to Brameld, social-conscious can be arrived at by
 - a) Presentation of evidence
 - b) Effective communication not only by lectures and reading books but involving the student in activity.
 - c) Agreement that is reached by majority. This step become the basic of active learning.
8. Constructive social changed reform in every sphere of social activity is the major emphasis of reconstructionist education.
9. According to existential thinkers, reality is a matter of human existence. Existence of a human being precedes his essence, therefore he becomes.
10.
 - i.) Centre of existence is man, not truth
 - ii) Man is a unique creation
 - iii) Man is a free to choose his destiny.
11. Imparting knowledge of self-existence is the fundamental aim of education.
12. Humanistic pragmatism asserts that all truths are human to be verified on the criterion of reality. Experimental pragmatism holds that truth is that which may experimentally be proved.
13. The basic tenet of pragmatist epistemology is human experience.
14. According to analysts, reality comprises what is knowledge and can be understood by critical reflection of symbols and their interpretation.
15. The main contribution of logical positivism is that the learner can acquire scientific knowledge through logical/empirical methods that provide a basis to verify the scientific statements.
16. According to interpretativists, reality is constructed subjectively from the day to day activities of human beings.
17. Subjective interpretation of the reality is common to both interpretativists and phenomenologists.
18. The basic emphasis of Marxist philosophy is on matter. The reality is defined in terms of materialism – which exists must be material in its ultimate nature.
19. The basic purpose of education, according to Marxist philosophy, is to prepare people who can serve the economic state.
20. According to ethnomethodologists, epistemology is associated with the common sense method of constructing reality. It studies the way human beings interact to make sense out of their world.