
UNIT 8 BASES OF EDUCATIONAL AIMS AND GOALS

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8.1 INTRODUCTION

In Block-1, we studied that there are a variety of aims of education such as character development, citizenship training, social efficiency, complete living, modernization, national development, universal brotherhood etc. A student of education should know the conceptual and contextual bases of these aims. What do we understand by an educational aim? Why do we need educational aims? What are the ways in which aims influence educational processes? How are aims determined? How do various disciplines contribute to the determination of educational aims? What have been the aims of education in independent India and how have they been arrived at? These and related questions should be addressed in a study of educational aims. The aims of education influence schooling and classroom processes in very deep ways. The whole educational process is influenced by the aims of education. The interface between external dynamics, internal functioning of education and aims needs to be appreciated. In this unit, we will highlight the questions and concerns pertaining to aims of education.

8.2 OBJECTIVES

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

- discuss the interface between the aims of education and the goals of personal, community, social, national and global life processes;

- distinguish between aims and objectives in education;
- explain the significance of educational aims in day-to-day functioning of schools and classroom management;
- discuss the contribution of a variety of forms of knowledge to the determination of educational aims;
- point out the logic of classification of objectives of schooling; and
- critically examine the contextual significance of educational aims in independent India.

8.3 MEANING, NEED, SIGNIFICANCE OF AIMS IN EDUCATION

Let us discuss the meaning, need and significance of education.

8.3.1 Meaning of Aims in Education

All human activities can be classified as those with aims or those, which are aimless. By and large, one can discover an aim or a purpose in human activities. That is why it is observed that man is purposive by nature. There can be illustrations of activities, which are aimless. Refugees wandering in search of shelter and peace without knowing where they get it, mentally deranged persons engaging in mad behaviour, children behaving like monkeys and destroying valuable articles can be illustrations of aimless activities. But a cynic can discover aims even in these activities. He may discover that the search for security itself may be an aim of a meaningless wandering of a refugee; a search for emotional balance may be the purpose of a madman's action or a child's destruction. Like this, one can try to find a meaning and an aim in all human activities. But let us be concerned with activities, which are acknowledged as purposeful. A purposeful activity can be defined as one, which comprises three stages. It has a beginning, an end and an intervening process. John Dewey (1915) defines an aim thus: "An aim implies an orderly and ordered activity, one in which the order consists in the progressive completing of a process." Note that there are two terms in this definition viz; orderly and ordered. Orderly activity means a systematic activity, which may be sequential or multi-sequential. There should be internal consistency and coherence in the activity. Ordered activity means that which has a direction. Direction is felt at each successive step. An aim, therefore, is a systematic activity, which is carried out with a sense of direction at each stage. An aim means a foresight of the outcomes in advance, of the end, the consequences, and the fruits of action. The sense of direction is to be felt, experienced and discovered at each stage from curriculum planning, organisation, provision and through its monitoring by means of periodical, terminal and follow-up evaluation. It should be in view in planning and management of all educational processes within a system. Organic and functional linkages should be discernible right from policy making through all levels and into all levels down below including classroom processes and even informal social relationships between the teacher and the taught. Critical philosophy in its classification of "aims of education" suggests that aims are not ends that are extrinsic to what we actually do in schools and classroom. They refer more to principles of educational procedure than extrinsic end points.

8.3.2 Need for Educational Aims

According to Dewey (1915), "To have an aim is to act with meaning, not like an automatic machine". Every activity ought to have a meaning, which fits in progressively into a larger framework of meaning. It is only an idiot or an abnormal person who engages in a meaningless activity, who is not aware of the probable consequences of

his actions, who is not able to relate his activities to other's activities. Aims are necessary to make life meaningful, purposeful and free of anxieties about the consequences of actions. There should be a meaning for all our educational activities. If a child attends a school for over 200 days in a year and continues like this for 5 or 8 or 10 years, then the child should learn something of value, which is commensurate with the length of attendance at school. Value-realisation is defined and judged against the background of the aims of education. An examination of discrete educational activities including day-to-day school experiences for children form the view of their values, their contribution to programme objectives and in turn to purposes of the school, aims of education and goals of life will lend meaning to the work in which they are engaged. Such an intellectual analysis and its spread in terms of awareness among pupils, teachers and other school authorities will lead to a high level of involvement, commitment and work-discipline in the school environment. This exercise shall facilitate economy of resource-use including time-use and efficiency in work. It shall automatically lend a reality-orientation to educational activities. Hence, in view of economy of use of resources including time, efficiency in work and value-orientation to school/educational activities it is necessary to set the aims of education.

8.3.3 Significance of Aims in Education

How do the aims of education help an educational system? How are they important/significant for educators? What are the functional relationships between the aims of education and other several concerns in the processes of life and education? These questions constitute the concerns under significance of educational aims.

The physical, natural/biological and social universes around us constitute the context of human life. There is variety and complexity in human life. It is human nature to find out, discover and understand the dynamics of this timeless and vast expanse of the universe. Human beings try to locate themselves in this wide, subtle and complex schemata-the universe around. This has been the concern across generations of human civilization. In doing so, several thinkers have tried to relate themselves and their existence to certain FORCE/ENERGY/SPIRIT(s) which are beyond the observable, perceptible, transparent and concrete ken of experience and knowledge systems. They have interpreted the meaning of life in terms of the efforts to understand, internalise and integrate with this metaphysical reality. Just as one experiences a 'self', an inexplicable force or energy within us which propels us into understanding, thinking, doing, living and being, they speculate that there should be a FORCE or ENERGY, a universal SELF which must be behind the functioning of the universe and beyond the purview of commonsense understanding. Understanding this SELF and becoming one with it would constitute the ultimate goal of life, the ideal of life.

There are also a section of intellectuals, thinkers, philosophers who would not believe that there can be any reality behind/beyond this universe. Life, which can be comprehended by everyday experience, commonsense perceptions and human thought, is the only reality, both immediate and ultimate. So all goals of life should be within this universe and across the span of human life.

There is another section of thinkers who are quite skeptical regarding the setting of any goal for life either within this universe or outside. They believe that life has to be lived moment to moment. Life is full of uncertainties and it is immature to set goals for an unpredictable future.

Thus, there are a variety of views about life and the universe around us and correspondingly the goals of life.

Just as individuals contemplate about goals of life, even communities, societies and Nation States set for themselves community/societal/national goals. These goals reflect the collective thinking of the people. National development, good citizenship, discipline in public life, development of scientific temper, tolerance, humanism, universal reason,

promotion of justice, equality, freedom and brotherhood, modernisation, industrial development, balanced regional development, love of fellowmen and compassion are illustrative of community/societal/national goals of life.

Irrespective of the position taken by individuals or communities regarding the nature of goals in life, the fact that needs to be recognised about human life is that there are goals to be realised. The question that assumes significance would now be, if there were goals of life/in life, how are they to be realised? Are there any tried and tested reliable, dependable, demonstrated tools, instruments and techniques for the realisation of goals of life? In response to these questions it is to be noted that education is the chief instrument for the realisation of the goals of life.

Education has been viewed from a variety of angles alongwith variation of nature of goals of life. Goals of life are derived through an analysis of an individual's interface with the physical, biological and social universe, the concerns of a community, a society, a nation and the global civilisation. Education is a means, a tool, a peaceful/non-violent instrument to realise the goals of life. Nunn (1920) has observed "Educational aims are correlative to ideals of life."

There are a variety of goals in life. Self-realisation, social efficiency, good citizenship, global fellowship, cultural transmission and regeneration and pursuit of truth are illustrative of such goals. Educational aims are derived from the goals of life and realised through corresponding educational processes. It is this view of education, which had led 17th century philosophers like John Locke to look at education as a preparation for life and 19th century philosopher/scientist Herbert Spencer to look at it as 'Complete Living'. John Dewey went a step ahead and declared that education is not a preparation for life, but life itself.

The aims of education are significant to human life as they are the chief instruments for the realisation of the goals of life. They are also equally significant for education from within. Aims determine the nature of educational processes right from curriculum construction to student/school evaluation. They serve as the ultimate yardsticks for examining the accountability of expenditures and efforts in education.

Check Your Progress

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

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

1. What do you understand by an 'aim' in education?

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2. Why do we need aims in education?

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3. How are the aims of education significant for educators?

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8.4 AIMS OF EDUCATION AND OBJECTIVES OF TEACHING

8.4.1 Distinction between Aims and Objectives

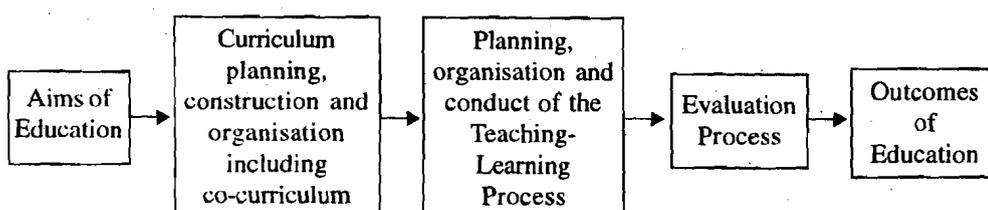
In educational literature, often we come across terms such as goals, purposes, aims and objectives. These are used interchangeably in day-to-day, casual, informal conversation. But there are important differences in their technical usage. 'Goal' is a term used in regard to life in general. Goals are set for a long duration, may be a full life, and the terminal stages of life. Goals are used interchangeably with purposes of life. While goals are abstract and too general in nature, 'purposes' are concrete and facilitate directions for life.

'Aims of life' and 'aims of education' are distinct from each other. While aims of life can be specific in contrast to goals of life, aims of education are too general in nature. For instance, a young boy/girl may respond to a question: 'what is your aim of life?' by saying: 'I want to become doctor/an engineer/a pilot officer/an army general and the like'. However, when we refer to a life-process in general, we refer to aims of education. To give an example, aims of education are too general in nature. They influence educational processes at all stages.

Objectives are normally referred to in the context of a planned programme of teaching. They are highly specific in nature. They are used while framing a lesson plan, designing a programme of instruction, charting out the contents of a curricular programme. Hence, it is essential to distinguish between aims of education and objectives in education. M.Eraut distinguishes the terms as follows: "The term 'objective' is frequently used by educators and laymen as a synonym for 'goal'. Sometimes it can be replaced by 'aim' or 'intention' without appreciable loss of meaning. However, it has also come to acquire a more technical meaning, whose significance is not so readily apparent to those unfamiliar with its use in the literature of education. In this more specialised sense, it normally refers to the intended and pre-specified outcome of a planned programme of teaching and it is expressed in terms of what it is hoped the student would have learned. The two usages are often distinguished by either referring to general objectives (goals) or to specific objectives (intended learning outcomes)." To give an illustration, if 'good citizenship' is an aim of education, an objective of teaching a course in civics on citizenship could be to 'promote environmental awareness' in children or more specifically to develop in them an appreciation of eco-diversity, to develop an attitude in them to refuse to use plastic or other articles which cannot be recycled, to efficiently use water and electricity in their houses, etc. A functional distinction should be made between aims of education and objectives of educational processes including classroom teaching. It is such orchestration which shall lend meaning to educational activities.

8.4.2 Relationship between Aims, Objectives and other Educational Processes

Just as aims of education are instrumental to goals of life, objectives of education are instrumental to educational aims. The following diagrammatic presentation is intended to indicate the functional relationships at various major stages in the educational processes:



The student of education has to appreciate these complex as well as subtle relationships between the specific activities, events, happenings, experiences and interactions in school life and classroom processes that set themselves in a systematic path leading to aims of education and eschew those processes/activities which do not contribute to the objectives of a school, aims of education and the goals of life.

The outlook for specific, concrete, transparent and accountable results from the schooling/classroom processes became so intense in the 1960s that some educators wanted to build-in minute, detailed observable behaviours that can result from teaching-learning and schooling experiences. Mager (1962) strongly recommended the discontinuation of the style of statement of teaching-learning objectives in preparation of lesson-plans that was in vogue during the 1950s. The call was for a shift from such statements as, "the student will 'know'/'understand'/'appreciate", towards; "the student will identify, distinguish, give reasons, compare, give illustrations etc". That is, the shift is from structural correlates of the outcomes of teaching to the behavioural correlates. The shift is from nouns to action-verbs. Research on objectives thereafter was directed towards identification of specificities and levels of classification of these specificities.

Objectives of education are also classified as enabling and terminal types. The merits of such classification depend upon the time-frame within which the objectives are realised and their organic linkages within the educational processes. The terminal for one process can at the same time be treated as enabling for the next process. With this understanding, we shall try to examine the use of objectives in various stages of education. Curriculum development is normally attempted by dissecting the curriculum into various components of knowledge and behaviours and identifying objectives with which inclusion/exclusion is made. In child-centred, nature-centred teaching-learning processes it is difficult to arrive at specific objectives. Objectives in the form of learning outcomes emerge from the process. The process will not be organised according to specific objectives. Play-way technique of teaching is an example in this regard. Heuristic methods of teaching, Suchman's Inquiry Training Model of teaching are other illustrations wherein objectives are not pre-set though stocktaking of outcomes is taken up.

Objectives are also used in writing lesson-plans by teachers for regular classroom instruction, for designing instruction in laboratory situations of learning, in framing unit plans, in evaluation of outcomes of learning through objective-type tests and examinations. Mastery of learning techniques and designs for the same such as Programmed Learning use objectives heavily. Among the variety of testing techniques used in student-evaluation, criterion-referenced tests heavily rely on objectives. It is also to be noted that a variety of rich learning experiences are acquired by children in co-curricular activities in schools and informal interactions with teachers for which either objectives are not clearly identifiable or time-consuming and meaningless to identify. Many a times it may be advantageous to adopt qualitative approaches for influencing student behaviour and evaluating the same rather than quantifying in precise and specific behavioural terms the objectives of the same. Emotional, social and moral development of children defies perfect delineation of objectives in terms of behavioural correlates. A large measure of success is possible in regard to scholastic activities and cognitive abilities. It is also to be noted that objectives are of value in measuring, interpreting and judging the accountability of school systems and classroom processes.

8.4.3 Taxonomy of Educational Objectives

A movement began in the 1950s, which looked at aims of education as being nebulous, amorphous and as vapours in thin air. A need was felt to crystallize them and concretize them in such ways as to render them as guides for action and as facilitators of specific plans of action. A dissection of all educational activities began in this direction. The purpose of this dissection was to analyse, identify, classify and cluster similar activities,

which contribute towards realisation of general aims of education. One such pioneering effort which became popular all over the world was made by Benjamin Bloom (1956). Writing about Bloom's taxonomy, Landsheere (1985) observes: "This taxonomy was enthusiastically received by teachers, educationists and test developers because it offered easily understandable guidelines for systematic evaluation of cognitive processes. This taxonomy had also a definite influence on curriculum development and teaching methods for the same reason: it emphasised processes rather than content matter and helped determine a proper balance between lower and higher cognitive processes." Bloom's work was followed by a number of other educators covering various domains of behaviour apart from cognitive domain such as those within affective and psychomotor domains. Taxonomies by Guilford, Gagne-Merrill, Gerlach and Sullivan, De Block, Krathwohl, Ragsdale, R.H. Dave, Simpson, Harrow and Kibler are worthy of mention herein. Bloom's taxonomy comprised six cognitive levels: Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation.

Sometimes there are problems of classification. For instance, development of the ability to make moral judgements in children poses a problem. Whether it should be classified under cognitive domain as it involves thinking or under affective domain as it implies a feeling; an orientation towards the good and the desirable behaviours is a case in point. The taxonomy of educational objectives developed by the NCERT has classified it under affective domain. Barring such debatable issues, it is worthy of attention that taxonomies have been helpful in concretising the thinking of educators, educational administrators, curriculum planners, test constructors and specifically the classroom teachers and teacher educators. They function as a bridge between verbose, grand, abstract educational ideas and micro-level experiences organised by a school/classroom teachers for their students.

During 1990's Lorin Anderson, a former student of Benjamin Bloom, with the help of a team of cognitive psychologists, revisited Bloom's taxonomy with a view to examining the relevance of the taxonomy of educational objectives developed by Bloom and his associates. Let us look at Anderson's Revised Taxonomy as opposed to Bloom's Original Taxonomy in the Figure 8.1.

Bloom's Original Taxonomy	Anderson's Revised Taxonomy
Knowledge	Remembering
Comprehension	Understanding
Application	Applying
Analysis	Analysing
Synthesis	Evaluating
Evaluation	Creating

Fig. 8.1: The Original Taxonomy and the Revised Taxonomy.

A detailed form of the Anderson's revised taxonomy of educational objectives and its broad categories and sub-categories is presented in Figure 8.2.

Category	Sub-categories
REMEMBERING	Recognizing Listing Describing Identifying Retrieving Naming

UNDERSTANDING	Interpreting Exemplifying Classifying Summarizing Inferring Comparing Explaining
APPLYING	Executing Implementing Carrying out Using
ANALYSING	Differentiating Organizing Attributing Comparing Deconstructing
EVALUATING	Checking Critiquing Judging
CREATING	Generating Planning Designing Producing Constructing

Fig. 8.2 : Detailed Form of Anderson's Revised Taxonomy of Educational Objectives.

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. Distinguish between aims and objectives of education.

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5. Delineate the functional relationship between aims of education and educational processes.

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6. What do you understand by Taxonomy of Educational Objectives?

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8.5 DETERMINATION OF EDUCATIONAL AIMS

8.5.1 Determination of an Inter-disciplinary Exercise

We have learnt under section 8.3.3 that aims of education are co-extensive with the goals of life. Human life, individual/societal/civilisational, is a highly complex phenomenon. It has also a highly intricate interdependence on the universe around. Understanding the physical/biological/social universe and living in harmony with it is essential for human survival. That will also be a goal of life. Several disciplines of knowledge contribute to our understanding of the engulfing universe. It is difficult/impossible to comprehend the universe around us and the life processes within using the tools of understanding of any single branch of knowledge. Life/the universe has to be looked at in its entirety from a holistic perspective. Several branches of learning contribute to this holistic perspective. They are, in varying degrees of contribution, the various branches of Sciences, Social Sciences, Humanities, Language and Literature, Mathematics, Measurement Sciences and Philosophy. Of all of them, the human sciences are of specific relevance to goals of life. Aims of education are influenced by all branches of knowledge and especially the human sciences. Hence, determination of educational aims is an interdisciplinary, multi-disciplinary, meta-disciplinary, cross-disciplinary exercise.

8.5.2 Sources of Inter-disciplinarity

Several disciplines of knowledge contribute to the understanding of the universe around, the life therein and hence the aims of education. Let us examine the interface between the variety of disciplines and aims of education.

- **Philosophy:** Philosophy has been defined in a variety of ways. Philosophy provides a comprehensive picture of the universe around us (S.V.P.Henderson); it examines the ultimate principles and laws that regulate the universe (Brubacher); it is a love of knowledge of the surrounding universe and wisdom in life (Plato); it is a guide to a way of life (S. Radhakrishnan); and it is also an examination of the recurrent problems faced by humanity (John Dewey). In its efforts to "seek connected truth about all available experience" philosophy operates in different modes – speculative, normative and analytical/critical. In the sphere of education, philosophy has presented a grand vision of education and educational utopias for their realization. The educational aims of great educational thinkers were rooted in their metaphysical views about man, his possibilities and destiny. Normative philosophy is concerned with values-moral and aesthetic norms, standards and guidelines for the conduct of human affairs. These are the prime determinants of the ends (aims) and means of education. In its critical phase, philosophy functions as an activity of classification and criticism of educational concepts, theories, and assignments. Critical philosophy has shown that educational activities are not to be looked upon as 'ends' extrinsic to what we actually do in schools and classrooms. It implies that something worthwhile – knowledge, character, freedom, and self-realization is being intentionally transmitted. Aims draw attention to the processes that we adopt in education.

- **Psychology:** Apart from several other concerns, psychology throws light on children's motivation to learn, their differentiated abilities, aptitudes, needs, interests, rhythms of growth and development and individual differences. All these have a bearing on the aims of education. Objectives of education need to be age-specific and orchestrated with the matrix of growth and development of children. They have to be fine-tuned to individual differences among children. A study of psychology would facilitate this process of adjustment of the curriculum/specific objectives to learners.
- **Sociology:** Education is a tri-polar process. While the child and the school constitute the two (vertices) of this triangle, the community/society represents the third vertex/pole. The function of education is the transmission of refined culture (J.S. Mill). The community has several expectations from the school. In fact, the school is looked at as a social invention that serves a social need. Customs, traditions, refined beliefs; values, taboos, mores, morals and behavioural norms of a community are promoted by a school. The development of capacities in this direction for education is contributed by a study and understanding of society, which is the subject of sociology of education.
- **Anthropology:** Invention of the steam engine facilitated long distance navigation, discovery of new lands and, of course, colonialisation. Discovery of new lands also exposed the civilised world to the life and society of innumerable tribal populations. Over the years, a systematic study and understanding of the tribal people and societies also emerged. By the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the study of tribal cultures got a firm standing in the pursuit of knowledge and knowledge systems. Personality development in tribal cultures attracted attention of researchers. The contribution of the community in building up peace-loving, non-violent, friendly, honest, co-operative and democratic persons in tribal cultures in contrast to the development of aggressive, dominating, selfish, greedy and autocratic persons became the subject of intellectual pursuits. In this context and framework, child-rearing practices of tribal communities and their effects on personality and behaviour of children became the foci of interest. As balanced personality development of children is a significant aim of education, the insights, messages and learning from anthropology assume significance in the determination of educational aims.
- **History:** A peep into the past will always remind us that though the times have changed, the problems and concerns of today are not very much different from those faced by our ancestors, across time and space. Many a times we discover that the problems of today had a genesis in the educational policies of the past and they have continued as time passes. For example, at a time (in the 1850s in India) when there was hardly any industrial development, college/university education turned out graduates fit for white-collar jobs. The BA/BSc degrees became popular over time. But by 1956, the Indian nation adopted a plan of industrialisation of the Indian economy. The path of industrialisation required a large variety of middle level skills that can be produced by technical and vocational education. There has been phenomenal progress in industrialisation in the last four decades. Still technical/vocational education has not picked up in this country. The demand for general graduate higher education has not come down. The limited success of vocational education in India is a historically evolved problem. Likewise, there is a history of compulsory primary education, lessons to be learnt from the failure of basic education, history of local-self government, management of education and the like. A lot of deadwood in education can be removed through historical analysis. In this way, aims/objectives of education can be made contextual, relevant to the times and vetted with the wisdom of the past. There is an adage that 'If you do not study history and learn lessons from the past, then you have to suffer the consequences of the repetitions of mistakes of the past.' Hence, history of education has immense value for defining and redefining the aims of education.

- **Economics:** Resources available for education is a significant parameter in the realistic determination of aims. There is no use in setting unrealisable aims of education. Fine-tuning of aims and target setting depends upon resources. To illustrate, the Constitution of India set for itself in 1950, the aim of universalisation of primary education by 1960. Even after 55 years from the year of adoption of the Constitution this has continued to be a drifting goal. Apart from other constraints, resource allocation has been a chief problem in this context. Resources can be from the State, from the community, from philanthropy, from the users and international agencies. Identification of resources is essential in delimitation of aims of education. It will add to the efficiency of a system of education. There are a host of issues and concerns in Economics of Education/Educational Planning and Management, which contribute, richly to the determination and redefinition of aims of education.
- **Political Science:** Education empowers people. It gives them a sense of freedom and builds their capacities for participative management of society and the State. Politics is the art and science of Statecraft. National policies of education that encompass the aims of education are defined through political processes. Dynamics of policy-making and policy analysis are skills, which are essential for an advanced student of education. Further, education is a public service. Administration of this public service on proper lines is a requirement for economy of resource use, efficiency, pursuit of excellence and several other intermediary objectives of education, which contribute, to the realisation of aims of education. Educational administration and management gets enriched by an understanding of the basics of political science.

Education within a country gets enriched with an understanding of the policies, practices and methods of education in other countries. Education in every country helps it realise its political goals, public purposes and national policies. The problems of education across the countries may be similar and comparable. But the ways in which each country solves its problems may be different. There are several lessons to be learnt from other countries. Comparative education would address these concerns. Political science also contributes to comparative education and the ways in which aims of education are set and realised in different nations of the world.

- **Geography:** The aims of education are both general and region-specific. Specifically, the objectives of education and target setting need to be region-specific for them to be realistic and meaningful. There are regional diversities in developmental levels of education and the problems therein. A study of geography would contribute to the understanding of regional diversities and fine-tuning of aims.

Science and Technology, Mathematics/Statistics, Literature also contribute to the determination of aims of education. They are not discussed in detail here.

8.5.3 Criteria of Sound Educational Aims

How do we judge whether the aims of education as stated in national policy documents are sound, desirable and worthy of pursuits? The following criteria would be useful in this direction.

- Aims must emerge out of existing conditions. The social, economic and political conditions of a given group of people at a particular point of time must be kept in view while setting up the aims of education. To illustrate, the Secondary Education Commission, which submitted its report in 1952, had advocated the development of citizenship as an important and immediately significant aim of secondary education. This was a befitting aim for the existing conditions as India had just then achieved independence and declared itself as a Republic; it was necessary

to build up an enlightened, socially and politically conscious citizenry. But by 1966, when the Education Commission submitted its report, it gave utmost importance to national development and to the solution of existing problems such as lack of self-reliance on the food front, unemployment and population control. In the 1980's, even after nearly 4 decades after independence, primary education has not been universalised in this country and illiteracy is very high. Hence, the National Policy on Education, 1986, kept universalisation of elementary education on top of the national agenda of educational aims. As such an aim of education in the present times should keep track of the contemporary social, economic and political problems.

- The aim should be only a plan of action, a tentative sketch, and a blueprint. It must be flexible in character. One must be able to moderately deviate from it if necessitated by changing social, economic or political conditions. If an aim is exclusively dictated from outside, the educational system tends to be rigid. External dictation, if required, must provide a broad framework of action only. Aim must be experiential in character; hence constantly evolving as it is tested in action.
- The aim must be founded upon the activities and needs of the given group of individuals to be educated. That is, it must depend upon the psychology of learning and development.
- The aim should be defined, as far as possible, in operational terms. It should not be stated in a very general and abstract way. It should lend itself to conceiving and formulating definite steps for its realisation. For instance, if it is said that the aim of education is to lead towards the 'Good Life' or assist in 'Complete Living', and left at that, it would lead to confusion when a group of people try to formulate steps for realising the aim. There would be no general agreement about the concept of the aim.
- The aim should reflect the individual and social aspirations of the people. It must be related to the life, needs and aspirations of the people. For example, the aspiration of the Indian people as declared in the constitution is to establish a democratic, socialistic, secular republic; it is to achieve growth with social justice. The Constitution has defined through various articles and clauses the meaning of these terms. So education is a powerful means to realise the aspirations of the people as laid down in the Constitution. The aims of education should reflect the aims of national, social and individual life. Take another illustration. The aim of individual life, at its minimum, is to have a decent subsistence, successful social life and happy domestic life. Education must enable the individual to realise this aim.
- Aims of education should reflect and include the long-term, permanent, core goals and values of life as well as nation/community/region specific goals of life. An understanding of the secrets of the physical/biological universe around us, the truths of life and universe around us, freedom and self-realisation and the like should be as much of value as citizenship, social service, communicative abilities, appreciation of folk culture and the like.

Check Your Progress

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

7. How are the aims of education determined?

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8. Identify the sources of inter-disciplinarity in education.

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9. Mention the criteria, which enable us to judge the soundness of educational aims.

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8.6 INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

Every national system of education has its own aims of education. These aims also go on changing in tune with the changing life-processes of a nation. It is through such timely changes that the vigour, vitality and verve of education are kept alive. It is essential to know as to how this orchestration has taken place in India.

8.6.1 Contextual Analysis of Educational Aims in India

The Indian State acquired the opportunity to decide about its own educational system, its policies, aims, curriculum and schooling only after 1947, the year of independence. There was thinking that elementary education be made free and compulsory. This pious policy was to be incorporated in the Constitution and the Constitution was in the making. There was an extended debate within the Constituent Assembly whether elementary education be made a fundamental right with a justifiable provision under which it becomes mandatory for the State to honour this right and the State can be sued in a court of law in a public interest litigation if it failed to do so. The collective wisdom of the times decided to include education under the State-list, and made it a responsibility of the State. Hence, the Constitution of India, adopted in 1950, included education under the Directive Principles of State Policy, under Article 45. It is to be noted here that economic considerations regulated this social aim of education. Colonialisation of India for more than 150 years, the partition of India including the refugee problem, food scarcity, unemployment, abject poverty among the masses (55 per cent of the Indian population or 165 out of 300 million people in 1957 were below the poverty line), caste and class imbalances in assets and incomes, regional disparities in development and many other problems had depleted the resources of India. With independence, there was an explosion of aspirations accompanied by shrinkage of resources. Hence, even though India's literacy rate was hardly 16 per cent and primary enrolment was only 50 per cent along with heavy dropout rates, universalisation of primary/elementary education could not be made a fundamental right.

With the passage of time, by 1988, the Indian State could provide a school in every village of the country. Even the National Policy on Education, 1986, declared that Universalisation of Primary Education is the chief aim of education in the country. The school was also strengthened/consolidated under a scheme known as Operation Blackboard, which provided a second teacher for a Single Teacher school and a second classroom for every single room school. Further, during the post-1991, decade,

considerable investments were made on primary education from loans/grants obtained through the international financial institutions like the World Bank. The State had developed capacities to provide at least elementary education of a tolerable quality to all its children. It was at this time that the Supreme Court directed the Government of India in 1993 to make elementary education a Fundamental Right. After considerable nation-wide deliberations, elementary education has been made a Fundamental Right in India in October 2002. This in brief is an outline of the path traversed by elementary education to acquire the status of a fundamental right, the prime aim of a national policy. It needs to be emphasised that universalisation of elementary education is a national aim, a national policy and not the aim of elementary education which has its own aims.

Reverting back to the post-Independence scenario it may be noted that the first ever Education Commission set up in India was for initiating reforms in University Education, in 1948. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan had chaired the Commission. This Commission declared that the overall purpose of university education is to provide to all the students an integral view of the universe. Even Jawaharlal Nehru had observed in 1946, while delivering the Golden Jubilee Year Convocation Address of Allahabad University that the university is a place where the values of Tolerance, Humanism and Universal Reason are pursued. The perception of the aims and values to be pursued by a university during 1940s should be compared with the perceptions of the Education Commission of 1964-66. This comparison will be taken up later on.

The first ever commission on education to be set up after India became a Republic in 1950 was the Secondary Education Commission (1952), chaired by Dr. Lakshmana Swami Mudaliar. It was quite befitting of the times that this commission recommended that the chief purpose of secondary education should be the "Development of Citizenship". India had just then adopted 'Democratic Socialism' as its philosophy and the citizens had to be educated for such a society.

By 1966, the teething problems of partition, states reorganisation, control of epidemic diseases like malaria and small pox; defence/sovereignty had been addressed by the nation. However, the other problems of poverty, inequality, food security, unemployment, national integration had persisted. By this time, India had already completed three five-year plans. The problems had persisted even then. An Education Commission had been set up in 1964 with Dr. D. S. Kothari as its Chairman. The Commission submitted its report by the end of 1966, which was adopted by the Parliament in 1968. This Commission's report was entitled 'Education and National Development' and covered all levels and forms of education. For the first time, the Indian State visualised the chief aim of education as national development. It is to be noted that in contrast to the University Education Commission report, the Education Commission visualised the role of education from a totally different perspective.

Several committees were set up to address problems of moral education (Sri Prakasha), emotional integration (Dr. Sampurnanand), vocational education (Ishwarabhai Patel, Kulandai Swamy) during the decades after independence. Reference to the National Policy on Education, 1986 has already been made.

There has been a sea change in the Indian economy, society and polity since June 1991 when a new economic policy was adopted by the Government of India. This policy is characterised by liberalisation of controls and restrictions on government functioning, privatisation of enterprises, globalisation of trade and investments, marketisation of the economy and decentralisation of the development process. It will essentially be a national development process through industrialisation of the economy. Privatisation of higher education will be encouraged. Subsidies will get drastically reduced. Considerable other similar changes are already initiated and several more are in the pipeline. Even the Government of India has entered into an agreement with the World Trade Organisation wherein higher education in India will be open to global

competition. All these macro-level changes will definitely have bearings on the aims and values of education. The objectives of schooling, the curriculum and the educational process are bound to undergo transformation. A student of education needs to wait, watch and understand the nature of emerging changes in the field of education.

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.

10. Identify the reasons for not making primary education a fundamental right when India became independent and adopted a Constitution.

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11. What were the conditions in India when elementary education was made a fundamental right?

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12. What was the aim of education as identified by the Secondary Education Commission of 1952?

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13. What were on the aim of education of the Dr. Kothari Commission Report of 1966?

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14. Identify the changes in Indian society in recent times, which may influence the aims of education.

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8.7 LET US SUM UP

We have learnt from this unit that there is an organic, functional and sequential relationship between goals of individual and social life as well as the aims of education which in turn influence the objectives of schooling, curriculum planning, curriculum design and implementation, teaching-learning processes and the contents and methods of evaluation of learning and schooling. Every activity that has a beginning and end in foresight and an intervening process is said to have an aim. While aims are general, abstract and directive in nature, objectives in relation to every aim are concrete, specific, operational, facilitative of behavioural statements and activity-oriented. It is the aims and concomitant objectives of education, which shall lend meaning to educational activities, schooling processes and teaching-learning experiences. They lend a reality-orientation to education. Aims facilitate economy of use of resources, efficiency in work and value orientation to school activities.

The behavioural outcomes of education/schooling/teaching-learning processes are observable. They are defined in advance in relation to objectives. Accountability of a system of education is judged on the basis of degree and quality of realisation of objectives. Using behavioural specifications, the objectives are classified under cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. Benjamin S. Bloom did pioneering work in the Taxonomy/classification of educational objectives.

Determination of educational aims is an inter-disciplinary exercise. The disciplines like Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology, Economics, History, Political Science, Anthropology richly contribute to the determination of educational aims.

Several criteria are used to judge the quality of aims of an educational system. Orchestration with social, economic, political, civic and cultural life of a society; flexibility in operation; synchronisation with the needs and aspirations of the learners; coverage of both the core concerns of human civilisation and the specific goals of life of the community are the criteria.

The aims of education in independent India have been determined by the contextual realities of the times. Universalisation of elementary education could become a national commitment only by the end of the 20th century. The new economic policy of June 1991, adopted by the Government of India, will have far reaching implications for the objectives of schooling and aims and values of education.

8.8 UNIT-END ACTIVITIES

1. Examine the first five-year plan document of India and identify the social, economic and political problems which acted as constraints in making elementary education a fundamental right of citizens of India and the supreme aim of the educational system.
2. Write a critical note on the National Policy on Education, 1986, with special reference to aims of education.
3. Examine the significance of the Objectives of District Primary Education Project, DPEP, launched in 1995 in India.

8.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

Bloom, B.S. et.al. (1956): *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals*, N.Y: Mc Cay.

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For revised Bloom's Taxonomy please visit: <http://rite.ed.qut.edu.au/oz-teachernet/index.php>.

8.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. An aim is noted to be embedded in any educational process, which has a beginning, an end, and an intervening process. Any orderly and ordered educational activity is to be considered to be having an aim. An aim therefore is a systematic activity, which is carried out with a sense of direction at each stage.
2. In view of economy of use of resources including time, efficiency in work and value orientation to school/educational activities, it is necessary to set aims of education.
3. Education is a life-process. There are a variety of goals in individual and collective life. Education is the chief instrument for the realisation of goals of life. The aims of education are a reflection of the goals of life. The aims are also significant to educators as they serve as parameters for curriculum construction, school organisation, classroom learning, pupil evaluation and judgements of school quality. The aims of education are significant to human life as they are the chief instruments for the realisation of the goals of life. They are also equally significant for education from within. Aims determine the nature of educational processes right from curriculum construction to student/school evaluation. They serve as the ultimate yardsticks for examining the accountability of expenditures and efforts in education.
4. Aims of education are general in nature. They influence educational processes at all levels. Objectives are highly specific in nature. They are stated for every educational process keeping in view the aims.
5. The objectives of schooling are defined in the framework of aims. Curriculum planning, design and organisation are made in conformity with aims of education and objectives of schooling. School and classroom organisation as well as classroom teaching-learning process are patterned according to the curriculum and its objectives including the co-curriculum. Monitoring of students' progress and evaluation exercises are designed in relation to the curriculum experiences. In the end, accountability in education, the stocktaking of outcomes is completed on the basis of performance of students/schools in evaluation. In this way, there is a steady and continuous influence of aims of education at all stages of schooling.
6. A movement in education began in the middle of the 20th century to look at the values of schooling in concrete, transparent, observable, precise, tangible/measurable and specific behaviours that shall be the outcomes of realisation of objectives of teaching/schooling and in turn aims of education. These behaviours were classified by various educators under cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. This classification is referred to as Taxonomy. Benjamin S. Bloom did pioneering work in this direction. His classification is quite popular.

7. Determination of aims of education is an inter-disciplinary exercise. Aims of education are instrumental to the realisation of goals of life. Life and universe around us are highly variegated and complex. Variety of disciplines of knowledge contributes to the understanding of life processes as well as the physical, biological and social universe around us. Hence, they also contribute to the dynamics of determination of educational aims. Determination of aims of education is an inter-disciplinary exercise.
8. Disciplines of knowledge such as Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, History, Economics, Geography, Literature, Political Science, Science and Technology contribute to the determination of aims of education.
9. Aims must be orchestrated with existing social, economic, political, civic and cultural life of a society. An aim should only be a plan of action, a tentative sketch, a blueprint. It must be flexible in operation. Aims must be founded on the needs and activities of the given group of individuals
10. Economic considerations did not allow the setting up of this social aim as a fundamental right. Resource depletion due to 150 years of colonialisation, partition and refugee problem, problems of national integration, food scarcity, poverty and inequality were the constraints.
11. The state had developed capacities to provide at least elementary education of a tolerable quality to all its children.
12. The Secondary Education Commission had set "Good Citizenship" as the chief aim of secondary education. This aim was befitting the times as India had just then become independent and adopted a Constitution to herald a new society known as Democratic Socialism.
13. Even after three five-year plans, the economic and social problems of India had persisted. Hence, the Education Commission looked at education as the chief instrument of change and titled its report as 'Education and National Development'. Such a concern was the need of the times.
14. Since June 1991, a new economic policy has been adopted in India. This policy is characterised by liberalisation, privatisation, globalisation, marketisation, decentralisation and a path of industrialisation for development. Such changes at macro-level influence the aims of education.