

Education

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ABSTRACT

Only education can ensure an all-round flourish and prosperity in human life. Without education it is quite impossible to think of the expected progress and wellbeing of the country, nation, society and global villagers above all. This is why, the very first call to mankind from the most gracious creator Allah is "Read in the name of your Lord." This 'Read' has an absolutely profound affinity to education and learning. So, education plays the most important role for the betterment of the creation. It advances humanity towards accomplishment by inspiring them into realization of a beautiful, steadfast and sacred life determined by the Creator.

Keywords: Education, Purpose, Humanity, Creator.

What is 'Education' and why?

Education arouses and nourishes the cherished virtues and noble merits of human mind. It inculcates the sublime sense of humanity in the learner, helps him appreciate the distinction between truth and falsehood, justice and injustice (or right and wrong), virtue and vice and such other binary oppositions; it also stimulates him to be energized by the ethics fueled by religious values. It is only through education that humans can unveil the mysteries of the Creator and the creation, get absorbed in the contemplation of the Creator. Education, moreover, makes humans watchful about accountability. Hence, men engage themselves into activity that pleases the Almighty and serves the cause of the well-being of humanity.

Definition of 'Education':

Education actually means knowing the unknown and discovering the extent of one's ignorance. For a child, knowing the names and identities of the objects and the people around is what comprises his education. Then again, to the scholars education denotes acquiring knowledge of space or of some intricate subject. Different philosophers, thinkers and educationalists have defined education diversely; some of those definitions are cited below:

Plato: "Education enables the individual to carry out his duties in the light of knowledge."

Aristotle: "Education is the creation of a healthy mind in a healthy body."

Socrates: "Education means driving away the falsehood and discovering the truth."

Allamah Iqbal said, "Education is the awakening of self-power."

Mahatma Gandhi: "Education denotes a thorough thriving of the body, mind and soul of the child and the adult."

According to philosopher Kant: "Education means promoting ideal humanity"

John Dewey's assertion: "Education is the process of leading life through the reconstruction of a series of experience."

Friedrik Floyebel says: "Education consists in the realization of a beautiful, trustworthy and divine life."

Rousseau affirms: "Education is the spontaneous self-blooming of a child."

Rabindranath Tagore asserted, "The best education is that which not only furnishes information but also constructs our life, coinciding with trustworthiness."

In Maulana Vashani's word: "True education inspires the man with secular as well as spiritual values.

Therefore, education refers to one's devoted attempt to flourish their every potential and to employ them in gaining accomplishment. Impossible it is to try and achieve material, corporeal, mental and spiritual improvement sans education; but, the prime aim of education is the cultivation of humanity, since an enlightened human soul can never commit any crime or sin. Thus, diverse philosophers and educationalists have defined education variedly. Analyzing the sum and substance of these definitions, we come to a point where all of them basically mean, more or less, the same. The flowering of human nature, promotion of social welfare, progress in government administration, prosperity in national life and above all the success in leading life and the world to the direction given by the Creator are what saturate these definitions or comprise their essence.

The meaning of 'Education', its purpose and necessity:

From worldly perspective academic/institutional education is what we generally call education. But, it is a meaning of education in the narrowest sense. In a broader sense, education implies the lifespan of learning from birth to death. Actually, education denotes the collection of varied, multidimensional experiences of an entire human life. Those who nurture their conscience with these experiences and become motivated to follow God's dicta by exercising humanity are the ones who succeed; and those who cannot manage to do so remain degenerate and aberrant, even after obtaining the highest degrees of scholarship in academic education. They do not even hesitate to compromise their morality and ethics for some paltry, worldly advantage and gain. They prioritize personal and group interest over the national, social and collective interest and cause. They prefer money to moral and ideals. They learn how to procure riches rather than become conscientious followers of morality and values. Only for this, do the country, nation and society demote to a deplorable state. Consequently, life becomes unbearable due to corruption, nepotism, oppression-injustice, falsity, deception, misdeed, roguery-ruffianism, bribery and terrorist activities, and they spread out everywhere like a contagious disease and corrode the society and nation from inside. The only way out of this predicament is ensuring/receiving good education.

Stating the purpose of education Socrates said, "The goal of education is to know oneself." Self-knowledge is the supreme objective of education. To him, discovery of truth is one of the goals of education. Plato affirmed about the purpose of education, "The end of education is to propel human soul into an honest and ideal direction." Many similar observations have come from a lot of other educationalists and philosophers. The very principles of good education are embedded in these aphoristic remarks.

In short, we can enumerate the following aspects regarding the goal of common education:

1. To earn money through a profession
2. Mental and technological development
3. To become elegant and modest, and to be a devotee of truth and beauty
4. To be a civilized member of human society, improving ethical nature
5. To make oneself fit for the challenges in every sphere of life
6. Amelioration of the soul
7. Flowering of selfhood, physical, emotional and psychological development
8. Developing a mentality devoted to social service

9. Developing a sense of fraternity and establishing world peace

Our dear prophet Muhammad (A.S.) asserts, “The purpose of education is to lead a holy life and to acquire knowledge about the origin of things.” He further says, “He who knows himself knows the Creator.” He proclaims, “Acquiring knowledge is a must for every man and woman, and go the distance even to China for acquiring it.”

The Almighty Allah declares in the holy Quran, “Oh, prophet, I have enlightened you with the knowledge that you knew nothing about, neither did your forefathers.” (Surah: Al An’aaam, verse no.: 92)

Allah also says in the Holy Quran “Can both a wiseman and an ignorant be equal?” (*Surah Jumar:9*)

Being knowledgeable by omniscient Allah, Rasul SW says “I have been sent to the world as a teacher for the mankind”. (*Bukhari* 1st Part, Page-16)

Rasul SW took a few practical effective initiatives besides encouragement for education in order to eradicate illiteracy. Rasul SW himself directly supervised an education programme titled ‘*DarulArkam*’ at the foot of the historic Safaa Mountain. This is the first educational institution set up by private enterprise in the history. Similarly, an educational institute was set up in the house of Abu Usama bin Jabair RA at Madina and Musar bin Umair RA was appointed as a teacher there as per instructions by Rasul SW. This was the first educational institute at Madina. The second educational institute at Madina was the personal residence of Abu Ayub RA.

Rasul SW felt the importance of acquiring/learning other tongues besides mother tongues in order to make education for all and universal. He ordered Zayed bin Sabit RA to learn Hebrew realising the importance of a translator in understanding foreign languages.

Another aspect of the education policy framed by Rasul SW is to have distinct educational institutes for non-Muslims. He managed education for non-Muslims besides undertaking education programmes for the Muslims.

The principle objective of the education policy framed by Rasul SW was that no one should be deprived of the light of education; it should be disseminated to all the people if it were the smallest speck regarding knowledge and education. Rasul SW mentioned in the speech of *Biday Hajj* regarding the issue that no one should be deprived of the light of Al Quran. He also ordered, “Disseminate to others on my behalf even if it were the smallest saying about knowledge.” (*Mishqat*, Chapter *Ilm*, Page-32)

Rasul SW also patronized besides giving importance to the development of the conscience and intelligence of women. Because, he believed that as it is not possible to ensure socio-economic development depriving women of education, so it is necessary for women to involve in the educational programmes in order to build up an educated nation or strengthen the foundation of family education. It is mentioned in the *Hadith* that once Rasul SW walked out with Billal RA. He thought the women could not listen to him as they sat on the rows behind the men. Then he reaching women learned knowledge and advice from them. It is also found in the *Hadith* that Rasul SW used to select particular days for disseminating education and advice to women only. In the beginning of Islam, there were only seventeen literate people in the Arab among whom five were women. Even, Ayasha RA, the wife of Prophet SW, was also one of the female teachers.

In order to build women’s self esteem and ethical stands, Our Prophet (S) advocates for knowledge apart from institutional learning.

How much importance has our Prophet (S) attached to learning becomes evident from the following incident:

In the historic Badarwar (624, B.C.), seventy leading soldiers of the opponent became imprisoned in the Muslim cell. On that day the deed of their release or liberation entails the illumination of ten illiterate people instead of shedding blood from their bodies. This is how those detainees ensured their salvation.

Few Hadiths of our Prophet (S) about education:

1. It is a must for every Muslim male and female to acquire knowledge.
2. Go the farthest distance, even to China, in search for Knowledge.
3. The tenure of education extends from the cradle to the grave.
4. An hour of study is much superior to a whole year of worship.
5. Advise people according to their strength/capacity; since all the people cannot realize each and every thing and so they falter into fallacy.
6. The ink of a student/scholar is weightier than the blood of a martyr.
7. He who gets out of the home to acquire knowledge remains in the path of Allah.
8. Allah allocates a lofty place in the tower of peace for the learner who pursues knowledge. Every step he takes is filled with divine bless. For every type of study, there is a reward.
9. Pay heed to what scholars say. Getting into the core of scientific lessons is greater than religious practice.
10. Knowledge is our friend in the desert, a society in desolation, a companion in isolation.
11. Knowledge leads us towards happiness, makes us patient in sorrow.
12. Knowledge is an attire among friends and a shield against foes.
13. It is through knowledge that a servant to Allah is elevated to sublimity, secures a high place, gains affinity with the big guns of the world and achieves accomplishment for the bliss in the after world.
14. Acquire knowledge; since gathering knowledge in the path of Allah is a virtuous task. He who preaches knowledge praises Allah. He who explores knowledge worships Allah. He who gives advice on learning imparts knowledge. He who imparts knowledge worships Allah.
15. Knowledge helps people realize what is prohibited and what is not. It lights up the path towards heaven.
16. He who shows respect to a scholar pays respect to me.
17. Those who are indulged in searching knowledge will inherit the world and the celestial blessings will shower upon them.

Conclusion:

This is an unshakable truth that without education, it's unimaginable to a society's all round prosperity. So for the betterment of a country or a nation or a society or even humanity in general, we should involve in all out efforts for the expansion of this learning or education.