

Meaning and Purpose of Education.

(1) Introduction

(a) Hook

(b) Background and Meaning of education

(c) Thesis: Education does not mean to acquire mere good grades in schools; it serves a broader purpose. Education plays a vital role in fulfilling economic, political, academic purpose by equipping individuals with skills for workforce, fostering informed civic participation, and promoting social cohesion and cultural understanding.

- Purpose of Education

1) Academic Purpose

(a) Education instills critical thinking ability.

(b) Equips people with necessary skills to survive in rapidly changing world.

(2) Economic Purpose.

(a) Education has a positive impact on country's economy

(b) Education provides an equitable ground for broader range of population to contribute in economy.

(3) Political and Civic Purpose.

(a) Education inculcates awareness about the complex political issues and basic human rights.

(b) Education is imperative for a robust democracy

(c) A well educated nation excels in navigating and influencing geopolitical affairs.

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(4) Social Purpose.

(a) Education fosters tolerance and harmony in society.

(b) Education plays a pivotal role in bridging gender gap.

(c) Education is crucial to curb terrorism and extremist ideologies.

(5) Conclusion.

"Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself" — John Dewey, a renowned American philosopher.

This profound observation underscores the importance of education and the fact that it is a life-long process. However, one might ask that if education is a life-long process, then why schools are considered as a main source of education? Does one have to stay in school for a lifetime to secure education? To answer this, one has to delve back in history. In the previous eras, entire environment and all activities were viewed as schools and classes, and many of the adults act as teachers. A child used to acquire knowledge by observing elders or by listening to them. However, as the societies grew, the amount of knowledge to be passed from one generation to the next becomes more than any one person can know. Hence, a requirement was created to pass on knowledge in a more effective way. The outcome is formal education — the schools and specialist called the teachers. Therefore, one may define education as a systematic way to equip children ^{with} necessary knowledge required for ^{their} betterment and society. It involves both formal and informal education; formal education is acquired from schools and informal education is acquired through life experience and self discovery. Consequently, education does ^{not} mean to acquire mere good grades in school; it serves a broader purpose. Education plays a vital role in fulfilling economic, political, academic purposes by equipping individuals with skills needed for workforce, fostering informed civic participation, and promoting social cohesion and cultural understanding.

Learn in this process

To begin with, education fosters critical thinking ability. During the formal education, individuals learn to deal with problems through pursuing different resources, facts and opinions. Moreover, while involving in debates and discussions, individuals are exposed to diverse opinions and perspectives. These practices allow them to reach well-informed conclusion by analysing and evaluating diverse arguments. Additionally, not only on academic ground, but also they develop ^{ability} to think critically about every problem they encounter in life. Einstein, while elaborating the true purpose of education has stated that, "Education is not learning the fact, but the training of mind ^{to} think". The quote highlights the fact that education's ~~ed~~ the edifice of education is not constructed on mere memorisation of facts but on the capacity to think critically while applying those facts. Therefore, education's one of the main purpose of education is to inculcate the ability to think critically.

Secondly, education equips individuals with necessary skills required in the changing world's apparatus. As world is evolving expediently, every day new technologies replace previous ones. Amidst such scenarios, one has to keep up the pace with rapidly changing world. For this purpose, the cadres of formal education—schools and universities—serve as the most effective platforms. For instance, Harvard University ^{from} 2008, has been conducting seminars and lectures on crypto currency and its potential uses. The lectures had been conducted before, at a time when one would have thought such technology could exist. Therefore, education is imperative to learn new skills in the continuously changing world.

As one of main purpose of education is .
Education not only fulfills ~~or~~ academic goals but its other purpose is to serve economically as well.

As education fulfill the academic purpose, it is not the only purpose it can serve. Education also serves economic purposes for a country and individuals.

Firstly, on economic grounds, education plays a pivotal role in the development of a nation's economy. In this era of industrialisation and technological advancement, skilled human resources are imperative for companies to drive progress and foster innovation. Education is essential for meeting this demand. For instance, an engineering graduate is likely to make a more significant contribution to the industry compared to an unskilled individual. This idea aligns with Benjamin Franklin's famous assertion that "an investment in education always pays the best interest", emphasizing that prioritising the educational sector can yield substantial economic benefits. Supporting this, a report by the International Discovery Alliance highlights that every dollar invested in education and skill development generates ten dollars of economic growth. Hence, in the modern era, achieving economic progress without investing in education remains an unattainable goal.

Secondly, education enables a broader segment of population to contribute to the economy. As women constitute 50% of the world's population, their participation in the economy is essential. However, only a minimal number of women, especially in the developing world, is able to effectively contribute to economic activities. This imbalance arises from the limited number of women in educational institutes, as education, as discussed earlier, equips individuals with the necessary skills to earn a livelihood. Consequently, a significant portion of population remains unable to actively participate in economic development. To bridge this gap, education plays a pivotal role. For instance, according to the Discovery Alliance, an additional year

of schooling can increase women's earning by 20%, and equality in education could raise a country's per capita income by 23%. This report underscores the fact that education empowers women to contribute effectively to the economy. Therefore, by integrating women's role into the economy, education fosters sustainable economic growth.

Beyond economic purposes, education also serves the political and civic purpose. While its economic purpose focuses on equipping individuals with skills to contribute effectively to the work force, education plays a pivotal role in fostering awareness, a robust economy, and establish a robust political presence in foreign affairs.

Firstly, education inculcates awareness about the complex basic human rights and complex political issues. In formal education settings, such as schools, the curriculum is designed to familiarise students with basic human rights. For instance, K.P.B's Board English textbook for English includes a chapter of Human Rights Declaration. The chapter provides a detailed insight into the basic human rights that UN's signatory countries have agreed upon. Additionally, in the Pakistan Studies book of the same board, a chapter provides the explains the political history of Pakistan. This information provides information about how wrong decisions of civil and military leadership have exacerbated the political stability of Pakistan. This history enables students to understand the complex political issues Pakistan is currently facing. Such awareness about the political issues and human rights leads to a robust democracy.

The awareness about politics and human rights is prement for a robust democracy. This awareness empowers people to correctly assess the leaders they have chosen or will choose. If they are unaware of their rights, they will be unable to demand them from their leaders. Moreover, the leaders can exploit this ^{un}awareness for their own benefit. Additionally, lack of awareness about complex political issues provides an open ground for corrupt politicians to galvanise people around issues that are either not relevant to them, or serves ~~to~~ to their problems, or serves the interests of the politicians. All these factors, consequently, erodes people's trust in democracy, thereby weakening its foundation. While emphasizing the same point, Franklin D. Roosevelt has said, "Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are ready to choose wisely". This quote underscores the fact that political wisdom of people is essential for democracy to thrive. This wisdom can only be achieved when the people are cognisant of their rights and fully aware about the intricacies of political issues. As stated in the aforementioned paragraphs, such awareness can only be achieved through education; therefore, education is essential for strengthening democracy.

Besides promoting political awareness and strengthening democracy, another purpose that education serves is to enable nations to excel in navigating and influencing geopolitical affairs. In an era of technological advancements and global dependency on innovation, research and development (R&D) play a pivotal role in securing a nation's geopolitical standing by providing cutting-edge technology. Universities, as hubs of R&D, rely on quality education system to foster such advancements.

For instance, Israel boasts one of the most advanced educational frameworks, ranking 13th in the World Innovation Index. This strong emphasis on education has positioned Israel as a leader in technology, providing critical innovation to countries like India, France and Australia. Consequently, despite limited natural resources vis-a-vis Arabian nations, Israel has retained significant geopolitical influence, particularly in military technology. Thus, through investment in education, nations can strengthen their position in global affairs and excel in geopolitical affairs.

Having explored the political purpose of education, it is equally important to recognise its role in shaping societal progress. Purpose of education is not only to foster economic growth and democracy, but also to maintain cohesion and equality in society, by promoting tolerance and equity.

Firstly, education fosters tolerance and harmony in the society. In educational institutes, students belonging from different cultures and ethnicities, learn and live together. By doing so, they learn how to tolerate and respect different cultures, opinions and beliefs. For instance, universities like Oxford and Harvards are joined by people from almost every corner of world. Students studying there gain exposure to different cultures. Having such exposure, they learn how to work with different people, while maintaining appreciation for their differences. Hence, ~~this leads~~. This, resultanty, leads to a more tolerant and harmonious society.

Secondly, another social purpose of education is to bridge the gender gap in the society. Education empowers women to equally contribute in the society alongside men. For instance, Finland has one of the finest education systems in the world. This education system has been successful in bridging the gender gap in Finnish society. As according to the OECD, Finland is the only developed country where girls are outperforming boys in science score overall and majority of top scoring students are girls. Whereas where in the other parts of world modelling or vocational works are considered as suitable occupations for girls, education has enabled women Finnish women to excel in science and technology. Therefore, education serves as a tool to bridge gender gap.

Lastly, education curbs terrorism and extremist ideologies in the society. Terrorism mostly flourish on societal grievances, such as poverty, deprivation and social polarisation. As mentioned earlier, education efficiently curbs all those grievances. Moreover, by enrolling citizens in educational institutions, they are kept away from the extremist ideologies. For instance, in Pakistan, initiatives like Punjab Education Reforms has improved school enrollment in vulnerable areas. By providing quality education, children are kept away from extremist ideologies. Moreover, the curriculum of educational institution is designed to promote critical thinking, tolerance, and encourage youth to reject terrorists' ideologies, reducing their susceptibility of believing on terrorists' fake propaganda. Therefore, education eradicate the social evils that fuels terrorism and extremism.

In retrospect, education is the amalgamation of formal and informal learning. Schools, universities and colleges serve as best sources of both formal and informal learning. However, true meaning of education is not just to memorise facts and figures, but serves a broader purpose. From instilling critical abilities to modify individuals' skillset according to need of modern world; education serves its academic purpose. Moreover, it also serves economic purpose. It has a positive on the economy of a country by producing skilled labour, and, also, it enables a wider range of population, especially women, to contribute in the economy. Additionally, the enumeration of purposes of education does not stop here; it serves politically, it fosters awareness about basic human rights and complex political issues that is essential for a robust democracy. Moving on to the social purpose, it is essential for a more tolerant, harmonious, equitable and moderate society. Therefore, education serves a wide range of purpose and it is essential for a better and prosperous world. In the last, the famous quote of Sydney J. Harris is worth mentioning, "The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows".