THOUGHTS
AND
IDEAS OF GREAT EDUCATORS

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Reviewer

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INTRODUCTION

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Philosophy and education have been very important components to develop and enrich the personality of individuals and citizens of a country. Philosophy develops a high degree of control over our own powers and actions. Therefore, philosophers have earned much respect and reliance throughout history.

The thoughts and views of great thinkers such as Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, Rabindranath Tagore, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Madam Maria Montessori and many more, have shaped the educational scenario of the world. Their philosophical theories on topics such as liberty, justice, rights, authority and education have often paved the way for revolutions and changes all over the world. Almost all political ideologies of the world have been guided by these thinkers.

The philosophical perspectives offer the foundation of education in terms of values, aims and objectives. Education as a subject should have value-orientation for its impact on philosophy, society and other elements of education. The interface between these areas has made the interdisciplinary approach practicable today. The philosophical basis of education attempts to support the requisite for a direction which education should follow. It provides directives and provides values to which education should be oriented from time to time. It is assumed that the knowledge of metaphysics and ethical thinking facilitates an educationist to put education in the correct perspective. The philosophical foundation makes education more purposive towards objectives which are fundamentally good. Thus, education without philosophical basis remains rather shaky.

For students, it is imperative to understand the political, philosophical and educational theories of thinkers such as Dewey, Rousseau and Froebel in order to analyse any situation especially pertaining to the field of education.

This book, *Thoughts and Ideas of Great Educators*, deals with these significant theories of thinkers such as Dewey, Rousseau, Froebel, Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Gandhi, Tagore and Montessori. This book is written in a self-instructional format and is divided into four units. Each unit begins with an 'Introduction' to the topic followed by an outline of the 'Unit Objectives'. The content is then presented in a simple and easy-to-understand manner, and is interspersed with 'Check Your Progress' questions to test the reader's understanding of the topic. A list of 'Questions and Exercises' is also provided at the end of each unit, and includes short-answer as well as long-answer questions. The 'Summary' and 'Key Terms' section are useful tools for students and are meant for effective recapitulation of the text.

UNIT 1 VIVEKANANDA AND AUROBINDO

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Structure

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will study about Swami Vivekananda, who is considered as a key figure in the introduction of Hindu philosophies to the Western world, and Aurobindo Ghosh, a prominent name in India's freedom struggle.

Vivekananda's philosophies and ideologies influenced the political ideas of contemporary India. He propounded the concept of nationalism. According to him, national unity could be achieved only through the acceptance of a common religion. His concept of nationalism went beyond common spirituality. He said spiritual freedom is the inherent spiritual necessity for all forms of life to exist. He was the first Indian to designate himself as a socialist. Vivekananda's theory of humanism asserts that an individual is not only an end in himself but also divine by nature. He started the Ramakrishna Mission in 1897 for national awakening.

Sri Aurobindo Ghosh was a famous freedom fighter as well as a philosopher. He was a prominent radical thinker. He stood for complete Swaraj of his country. He is regarded as the Prophet of Indian nationalism. For Aurobindo, nationalism was not just a mission or a goal of life, but an end to be pursued as vigorously as religion. He recognized the nation as the real instrument of human progress. He was convinced that moral and spiritual energy was the key to social progress. Aurobindo advocated a free world-union rather than a world-state or a world-empire. He viewed democracy and socialism as the by-products of humanism. Besides being an ardent nationalist, Aurobindo was also a great humanist and internationalist. His greatest contribution towards humanity was the concept of inner freedom of the human spirit.

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1.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Analyse the political ideas of Swami Vivekananda and discuss his concept of democracy
- Describe the formation of the Ramakrishna Mission
- Explain the educational philosophy of Vivekananda
- Discuss Vivekananda's concept of man-making education
- Discuss the life and works of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh
- Analyse the philosophies of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh
- Discuss Aurobindo's views on integral education and his principles of teaching

1.2 SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Swami Vivekananda, whose original name was Narendranath Datta, was born in Calcutta which at that time was the centre of an intellectual upsurge. As a child he developed great taste for music and was adept in sports. He began mastering the Hindu classics under the tutelage of his mother. Vivekananda proved to be a voracious reader with a prodigious memory. Later, he would often display a verbatim familiarity with the Encyclopaedia Britannica. Rev. W. W. Hastie, his principal, was once moved to remark, 'Narendranath is really a genius. I have travelled far and wide but I have never yet come across a lad of his talents and possibilities, even in German Universities, among philosophical students.' And it was from Hastie that he first came to hear about the famed spiritual leader Sri Ramakrishna. At the age of 18, urged by his burning thirst for divine enlightenment, he first met Sri Ramakrishna. During the ensuing six years of association with the master, he had a spiritual transformation and emerged as Swami Vivekananda.

After the death of Sri Ramakrishna in 1886, Swami Vivekananda organized the master's disciples into the illustrious Ramakrishna Mission. He devoted most of the last fifteen years of his strenuous life to communicating his universal message of unity and tolerance. The impact of his dynamic personality and brilliant oratory was enhanced by his utter sincerity and informality. He travelled to all corners of India and he, who had known personal adversity, experienced the anguish of the country's impoverished multitudes. He visited much of Eastern Asia, Europe and the United States. It was in Chicago, at the Parliament of Religions in 1893, that he first gained international attention.

1.2.1 Swami Vivekananda and His Theories

This section discusses various theories and beliefs of Swami Vivekananda.

Religious Theory of Nationalism

Swami Vivekananda has propounded the political concept of nationalism with a religious interpretation which he has defined as a form of spiritualism. Spiritualism

according to him goes beyond religious rituals, social dogmas, ecclesiastical formulations and obsolete customs.

The pursuit of spiritualism has not only defined India's way of life but also can make her more dynamic at home as well as abroad. India's spirituality has survived through the traditions of the Vedas and Upanishads, which have helped to strengthen the nation as well as retain the faith of its masses. That is also one of the reasons why Swami Vivekananda stressed on the importance of the social and political institutions to be national as well as spiritual in character. His concept of nationalism is deeply intrinsic with his religious philosophy because he was a spiritual man himself.

According to Swami Vivekananda, national unity can be achieved only through the acceptance of a common religion incorporating all the common principles of diverse religious sects. He wanted to strengthen the nation by imposing unity between 'brain of a *Brahamana* and heart of a Buddhist, the Islamic body and Vedanta brain and the European society with India's religion'. In other words, he conceived the idea of a universal religion based on the synthesis of virtues taught by different religions.

Vivekananda attaches the highest importance to the unity as well as fusion of all religions into one universal entity of faith, as religion constitutes the very nature of man and unites him to his fellowmen. The spirituality of a religion is the base which promotes the feeling of fraternity that leads to nationalism. The concept of nationalism that Vivekananda has propounded is an integral aspect of the common spirituality to emanate out of a common religion. Due to this reason, Vivekananda's concept of nationalism is called a religious theory of nationalism. All the more so, since it has also influenced the Indian national movement.

Concept of Internationalism

Vivekananda's concept of nationalism goes beyond the concept of a common spirituality. That is why nationalism is complementary to universalism since he feels that the ultimate aim of spirituality is to embrace the whole of humanity in universal brotherhood.

Universalism, according to Vivekananda, is based on the fact that the whole universe exists as a single entity. Therefore, the diversities that are exhibited on account of different nationalities would facilitate exchange of knowledge as well as mutual contacts. As families grow into tribes, tribes into races, races into nation, nations into humanity and all parts of this humanity can form spiritual unity on the basis of their universal existence. It is in this scenario that India can play a role of spiritual leadership for the world.

Spiritual leadership can be achieved through spiritual unity of mankind. Vedanta which advocates universal outlook and can solve all national and international problems can bring about such spirituality. Vivekananda's universalism seeks to coordinate the identity of nations on the basis of spiritual unity without any subordination or precedence to nationalism. He was hopeful that the world would unite on scientific as well as spiritual bases.

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Concept of Freedom

Vivekananda made monumental contribution to the concept of freedom in political thought. He says that man is born free but life constrains his natural freedom. It makes him an atomized, isolated 'individual' whose sole interest is unrestricted pursuit of desires and aims. These aims bring into conflict the equivalent of freedom. Although the virtues of individuality were essential for the development of their creative personalities, the essence of the spiritual self along with the social nature needs to be brought out.

It is in this sense that Vivekananda classified different types of freedom as follows:

- **Spiritual freedom:** It is the inherent spiritual necessity for all forms of life to exist. It is a product of struggle between the internal life and external nature. Vivekananda considers freedom to be absolute and infinite, changeless and quality-less, self-existent and immanent. He believes in the indispensability of freedom for the spiritual growth of the individual. However, the spiritualistic concept of freedom does not accept competitive freedom among individuals and stands instead for altruism.
- **Individual freedom:** It is the natural possession of all individuals. He wanted each individual to cultivate a free body, mind and spirit. According to Vivekananda, individuals perfect themselves by acting freely and in turn the perfect individual perfects society. Due to this reason, he opposed any kind of restrictions on individual freedom born of any external pressure.
- **Social freedom:** It is closely related to individual freedom. Vivekananda opposed any individual social barriers which would curb the individual initiative and hamper the social growth. He felt that social upliftment can be attained by coordinating social liberty with social equality. He considered liberty and equality complimentary to each other and therefore wanted the society to spend more on education of the poor than on the rich and intelligent.
- **Economic freedom:** It is necessary because economic poverty obstructs individual freedom. Vivekananda stressed on the interrelation between material freedom and individual happiness. According to him, the right to property is the natural right of the individual although his concept of economic freedom is not based on exploitative and acquisitive instinct of the individual.

Concept of Equality

Vivekananda's concept of freedom leads to his concept of equality as he emphasizes that equality is the sign of freedom. According to him, no man or nation can hope to attain freedom without physical and mental freedom that comes from equality. He was concerned with the process and not the different forms of equality. He stood for equal rights and opportunities and was opposed to any privileges or discrimination of any form. In fact, his concept of equality reflects his Vedanta philosophy, which stresses on the gradual growth of the individual.

Concept of Socialism

Vivekananda was the first Indian to designate himself as a socialist. He found in socialism the key to social unity and economic justice. In fact, the Vedantic concept of unity postulates freedom and equality, which induced him to expound the concept of socialism. The principle of justice—social, economic and political—has inspired him to call himself as a socialist.

He described socialism as a movement for the liberation of masses and postulated socialism on the spiritual basis of society with commitments of freedom and equality. He was against any rigid social stratification like the caste system traditionally interpreted in the country. He advocates for social equality and creating equal chances for all the inhabitants in the country, which can be compared with Laski's concept of equality. However, he did not sanction violence for the attainment of socialism.

Concept of Caste

According to Vivekananda, caste is a socialistic institution, which forms the base of Indian society. He found in the caste system a clear translation of the principle of unity. It functioned on the principle of social and economic coordination and not on the rivalries among castes. His thoughts on the issue reconcile individual good with social good and individual liberty with social equality and harmony. Hence, he described the caste system as individualistic in nature but socialistic in function. Individualistic because it encourages freedom of the group to maintain its own affairs and socialistic in the sense that each group thinks itself as a part of the community and cooperates with other groups to maintain social harmony and economic prosperity.

He compares the caste system with the class system of the West. Unlike the West, here the caste system has degenerated into a hereditary caste, which has bred social exclusiveness and has prevented social progress. Nevertheless, the caste system is indispensable for ushering in prosperity, social equality and spiritual unity. He suggested abolishing the unjust customs within the caste system such as the practice of untouchability rather than abolishing caste in totality.

Concept of Democracy

According to Vivekananda, democracy facilitates peace as all individuals can have their voice heard irrespective of their social standing. He has categorized democracy into three components, which have been mentioned as follows:

- **As a way of life:** According to Vivekananda, democracy is a way of life as it stands for freedom, equality, brotherhood and union. It also ensures individual dignity and rights as it facilitate individual growth and freedom. He denounced vested interests in society that deprived the masses of their legitimate rights.
- **As a form of government:** For Vivekananda, democracy as a form of government could provide an opportunity for the people to uplift themselves and brighten their future as it is the government of the people and by the people.

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- **As a decision-making process:** The worth of the government depends on the worth of the people according to Vivekananda. He wanted to improve the people through education, which will contribute towards a qualitative change in the democracy. He wanted the individuals to perform the functions of the government so that the decision-making process can be transparent and accountable to the people whom they represent.

Theory of Resistance

Vivekananda contributed to the theory of resistance. In this theory, he recommended regenerating the nation through education and religiosity, which will strengthen the people. It will strengthen the weak from the oppression of the tyrant ruler and lead to full freedom in the true sense. So, he did not openly advocate the cause of India's independence.

Theory of Humanism

Vivekananda's theory of humanism asserts that an individual is not only an end in himself but also divine by nature. He being a great humanist asserted that for the glory and purity of human nature, man should be treated as a manifestation of divinity. He advocated the concept of *Humanistic Advaita*, which identifies humanity with divinity. He considered man as God, denounced social, economic and religious evils of society, and put an emphasis on inculcating faith and strength in the individual. He said that each man should be treated not as what he manifests but as what he stands for.

Vivekananda's humanism expounds that man who is an end in himself must also become a means to serve humanity. As an end, man illuminates his own divine light and as a means he helps others to find divinity in them and make them conscious of their divinity.

Ramakrishna Mission

The national awakening of the Indian people found expression in the movement inspired by Swami Ramakrishna Paramhansa, a great Hindu saint who sought religious salvation. He sought it through the following traditional ways:

- Reincarnation
- Meditation
- Devotion (*bhakti*)

He lived with mystics of other faiths, including Muslims and Christians. He, again and again, emphasized that there were many ways to God and salvation and that the service of mankind was the service of God, for man was the embodiment of God.

It was Swami Vivekananda, his great disciple, who after the death of the saint founded the Ramakrishna Mission in 1897 to propagate his teachings. The mission aimed at protecting Indians from materialistic influences of the Western civilization. It idealized Hinduism including its practice of idol worship and polytheism. It aimed at the spiritual conquest of the world through revived Hinduism (Figure 1.1).

Fig. 1.1 *Swami Vivekananda*

Vivekananda stressed on social action and gave the idea of religious socialism. Earlier in 1893, he attended the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, and was able to communicate with the learned people of the world. His speech impressed all because of his rationality and reasoning. He said that in the West the goal of an individual was independence, his language was money-making, and his education was means to politics. But in India, the goal of an individual was *mukti* or self-realization, the language was the Vedas and the means were self-renunciation.

Vivekananda emphasized the indispensable oneness of all religions and harshly condemned any narrowness in religious matters. At the same time, he was convinced of the superior approach of the Indian philosophical tradition. He himself subscribed to Vedanta, which he declared to be a fully rational system.

Vivekananda criticized Indians for having lost touch with the rest of the world and become stagnant and mummified. He realized that India was in real need of science. He even condemned the caste system and the current Hindu emphasis on ritual, ceremonies and superstitions. He urged people to imbibe the spirit of liberty, equality and free thinking. Vivekananda was also a great humanist. Touched by the poverty, misery and suffering of the masses of the country, he said to the educated Indians, 'So long as the millions live in hunger and ignorance, I hold every man a traitor, who having been educated at their expense, pays not the least need to them.'

The Ramakrishna Mission has many branches in different parts of the country and it carries on social service by opening schools, hospitals and dispensaries, orphanages, libraries, etc.

1.2.2 Philosophies of Swami Vivekananda

This section discusses the various philosophies of Swami Vivekananda.

Harmony and Peace

In his famous address at the Parliament of Religions in 1893 at Chicago, he summed up his message and philosophy by saying that upon the banner of every religion will

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soon be written, in spite of resistance, 'Help and not Fight', 'Assimilation and not Destruction', 'Harmony and Peace and not Dissension'. He said, 'The fundamental elements of all religions, divested of all special forms and names, were conceived to be the universal religion. Religions of the world are not contradictory but they are various phases of one eternal religion. I accept all religions that were in the past and worship them all. Not only shall I do all these but I shall keep my heart open for all that may come in the future. Salutations to all the prophets of the past, to all the greatness of the present and to all that are to come in the future.' Swamiji has further observed, 'My ideal indeed can be put into a few words and that is: to preach unto mankind their divinity and how to make it manifest in every moment of life.'

Swami Vivekananda to his last days strove for the reconciliation of human contrast and conflicts, and the establishment of brotherhood of man. To the world he held out the vision of the universal religion which would recognize divinity in every man and woman, and which would help humanity to realize its own true, divine nature. Swami Vivekananda declared, 'It is man-making religion that we want; it is man-making theories that we want; it is man-making education all round that we want.' He saw the divine in the form of the poor whom he called *Daridra Narayan.*

God as the Universal Reality—Vedantic Philosophy and its Implications

Vivekanada's philosophy and his views on religion can be summed up in the words of Dr V. K. R.V. Rao, an eminent economist and educationist as under:

'God is the one reality that exists in the world and He is the Universal Reality. All phenomena, animate and inanimate, man and animal, body, mind and soul, are all His manifestations. Therefore, there is no difference between man and man in his basic essence and this should lead to all men feeling about and treating each other as they would do with their own individual selves. This understanding of the real nature of man, the universe and God is, however, hidden from man because of the veil cast by Maya; and it is the objective of "Vedanta" to tear this veil and let man see himself in reality. And this can be done through learning and practising "Jnana Yoga" or "Raja Yoga". The Vedanta, however, does not only propound the Advaita doctrine. It also puts forward the dualistic understanding of God through the worship of the Personal God or one's "Ishta Yoga" because it is based on man's natural feeling for loving one's nearest and dearest. And for doing this, he had to find a guru who had the power to transmit spirituality. At the same time, he himself should be fit to receive and get stimulated by this transmission. When a man reaches this stage he gets filled with overwhelming love for God and the universe which he finds enveloped with God, and for all men whom he finds are but manifestations of his Personal God. His religion thus leads him to love all men and find in their service his means for worshipping God. There is yet a third method of obtaining liberation from the shackles of one's ego and reaching God-consciousness. And this is Karma Yoga, the gospel of work without attachment, without selfishness and for the service of one's fellowmen. Even if one does not believe in God, one can follow the path of Karma Yoga and obtain, liberation, harmony and the peace that passes all understanding as was shown by Buddha. To these he added the teachings of Buddha, Christ and Mohammed with their special stress on compassion, service and equality. And he

concluded by talking of the One, who he felt was the perfect example in actual life of all that he taught—Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.'

Religion Means Realization

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To Vivekananda, religion was not just a question of belief. 'Religion', he said 'was realization, nor talk, nor doctrine, nor theories, however beautiful they may be. It is being and becoming; not hearing and acknowledging. It is the whole soul becoming changed into what it believes. That is religion. Religion has to be practised if it was to have meaning, and the practice had to take account of the call of social reality.' In a letter written from Washington on 27 October 1894, he made his position very clear. He wrote, 'I do not believe in a God or religion which cannot wipe the widow's tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth. However sublime the theories, however well-spun may be the philosophy, I do not call it religion as long as it is confined to books and dogmas. The eye is in the forehead and not in the back. Move onward and carry into practice that which you are very proud to call your religion, and may God bless you.'

The essence of Vivekananda's teachings on religion was the universality of God and his accessibility both in form and without form, the divinity of man, respect and understanding of all religions, the equality and brotherhood of men, the supreme virtue of compassion, work without attachment, devotion without renunciation of the personal ego, and service of all men, especially of those who were poor or maimed or illiterate or disinherited, the *Daridra Narayans* of this world.

Ethics and Morality—The Real Basis of Life

The basis of all system, social or political, rests upon the goodness of men. No nation is great or good because Parliament enacts certain laws, but because its men are great and good. People often work for the same ends but fail to recognize that fact. One must admit that law, government, politics are phases that are not final in any way. There is a goal beyond them where law is not needed. All great Masters teach the same thing. Christ saw that the basis is not law, that morality and purity are the only strength.

Love and Renunciation—The Motive Power of the Universe

Vivekananda has observed, 'What is the watchword of all ethical codes? "Not I, but thou", and this "I" is the outcome of the Infinite inside that is trying to manifest itself on the outside world. This little "I" is the result, and it will have to go back and join the Infinite, its own nature. Every time you say, "Not I, my brother, but thou" you are trying to go back, and every time you say "I", and not thou, you take the false step of trying to manifest the Infinite through the sense-world. That brings struggles and evils into the world, but after a time renunciation must come—eternal renunciation. The little "I" is dead and gone. Why care so much for this little life? All these vain desires of living and enjoying this life, here or in some other place, bring death.'

'We have been degraded down to the animal, and are now going up to emerge out of this bondage. But we shall never be able to entirely manifest the Infinite here. We shall struggle hard, but there will come a time when we shall find that it is

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impossible to be perfect here, while we are bound by the senses. And then the march back to our original state of Infinity will be sounded.'

'This is renunciation. We shall have to get out of the difficulty by reversing the process by which we got in, and then morality and charity will begin.'

Main Features of the Philosophy of Vivekananda

The main features of the philosophy of Vivekananda are as follows:

1. Vedanta constitutes the essence of the highest spiritual and ethical values of mankind.
2. The teachings of the Upanishads have strength enough to provide solutions to our social problems.
3. Human being is the incarnation of God.
4. The essential parts of all religions are the same.
5. *Atma* is the true reality.
6. *Karmayoga* as a system of ethics and religion is needed for the attainment of self-control and self-realization.
7. Service to mankind is the highest goal of religion.
8. The best image for worshipping God is a human being who resides in every human heart.

Educational Philosophy of Vivekananda

His educational philosophy may be encompassed within these ten words, 'Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man.' All knowledge, secular or spiritual, is in the human mind. Man manifests knowledge, and discovers it within himself, which in turn pre-exists from eternity. What we call powers, secrets of Nature and force are all within. Like fire in a piece of flint, knowledge exists in the mind; suggestion is the friction which rings it out. Swami Vivekananda explains this as, 'Knowledge is inherent in man, no knowledge comes from outside, it is all inside. What we say a man "knows", should, in strict psychological language, be what he "discovers" or "unveils". What a man "learns" is really what he "discovers" by taking the cover off his own soul, which is a mine of infinite knowledge. We say Newton discovered gravitation. Was it sitting anywhere in a corner waiting for him? It was in his own mind; the time came and he found it out. All knowledge that the world has ever received came from the mind; the infinite library of the universe is in your own mind. The external world is only the suggestion, the occasion, which sets you to study your own mind. The falling of an apple gave the suggestion to Newton, and he studied his own mind. He rearranged all the previous links of thought in his mind and discovered a new link among them, which we call the law of gravitation. It was not in the apple or in anything in the centre of the earth.'

Character-building Education

Vivekananda was a firm believer in education as an instrument of human betterment. He was greatly distressed to see the degradation in which the masses had fallen

because of the denial of literacy and education. He was highly critical of the educational system itself with its western bias and lack of attention to the development of the mental ability and moral character in its pupils. He wanted a thorough re-orientation of the educational system. He declared, 'We must have life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas. If education is identical with information, the libraries are the greatest sages of the world and encyclopaedias are the *rishis*.' He quoted an old Sanskrit saying '*yatha kharaschandanabharavahi bharasya yetta na tu chandanasya*', which means, 'The ass carrying its load of sandalwood knows only the weight and not the value of the sandalwood.' Vivekananda scoffed at the importance being given by the educational system to book learning and memory training. 'Education', he said, 'is not the amount of information that is put in your brain and run riot there, undigested all your life.' Swami Vivekananda observed, 'We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded and by which one can stand on one's own feet.'

How to judge a man of character

Swami Vivekananda observed, 'If you really want to judge the character of man, look not at his great performances. Watch a man do his most common actions. Those are indeed the things which will tell you the real character of the great man. Great occasions rouse even the lowest of human beings to some kind of greatness, but he alone is really great whose character is great always the same whatever be.' According to him 'intellectuality' is not the highest good. 'Morality' and 'Spirituality' are the things for which we strive. He remarks, 'Our women are not so learned, but they are more pure.' He does not consider a man as educated if he manages to pass some examination and deliver good lectures. The basis of all system, social or political, rests upon the goodness of man.

Cultivation of Heart

'It is the heart', he said, 'which takes one to the highest plane, which intellect can never reach. Always cultivate the heart.' He always attached the greatest importance to the development of the compassion and fellow-feeling for the common man. In fact, his Vedantic philosophy convinced him that education must play an important role in making the pupil discover his identity with the rest of humanity, and especially with those who were much worse off than himself in economic and social condition.

Vivekananda reminded that the nation lived in the cottage, and therefore, it was the duty of every educated youngster to go from village to village and make the people understand their real condition, awake them from their long slumber and advise them how to improve their own miserable lot. The sunken vitality of the helpless victims of social injustice was to be restored physically, intellectually as well as spiritually. He said, 'I call him a Mahatma who feels for the poor. Let these people be your God—think of them, work for them, pray for them incessantly—the Lord will show you the way.'

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Aims of Education

Swami Vivekananda enunciated the following goals:

1. Education for character building
2. Education for making people self-reliant
3. Education for developing spiritual life
4. Education for serving humanity
5. Education for developing the feeling of brotherhood
6. Education for developing the spirit of renunciation
7. Education for attaining self-sufficiency
8. Education for physical development

Function of the Teacher

Vivekananda laid great emphasis on the personal contact of the pupil with the teacher—'Guru grihavasa'. One should live from his very boyhood with one whose character is blazing fire, and should have before him a living example of the highest teaching. The first condition necessary for the teacher is sinlessness. A question is often asked: 'Why should we look into the character and personality of the teacher?' This is not right. The sine qua non of acquiring truth for oneself, or for imparting to others, is purity of heart and soul. He must be perfectly pure and then only comes the value of his words.

The second condition necessary for a teacher is that he must know the spirit of the scriptures. He said, 'The whole world reads Bibles, Vedas and Korans; but they are only words, syntax, etymology, philology—the dry bones of religion. The teacher who deals too much in words and allows the mind to be carried away by the force of words loses the spirit. It is the knowledge of the spirit of the scriptures that constitutes the true teacher.'

The third condition is in regard to the motive. The teacher must remember that the only medium through which spiritual force can be transmitted is love.

The fourth condition is that the teacher should not think that he is making the child grow. 'You cannot teach a child to grow,' he said, 'you can only help. A child teaches itself. The external teacher offers only the suggestion which rouses the internal teacher to work to understand things.'

Swami Vivekananda laid stress on the following qualities that a teacher should possess:

1. The first condition is that he should be sinless.
2. The second condition is that he should understand the spirit of scriptures.
3. The third condition is the spiritual force of the teacher should be based on love for the students.
4. The fourth condition is that the teacher should think that he is only helping the child grow. He is the external teacher and he offers the suggestion which arouses the internal teacher, i.e., the mind of the child.

5. The fifth condition is the example set by one's teacher, which have a profound impact on students. In this context Swamiji says, 'Words, even thoughts, contribute only one-third of the influence in making an impression—the man two-thirds.'
6. The sixth condition is teaching through positive thoughts. Vivekananda says, 'We should give positive ideas. Negative ideas only weaken men. If you speak kind words to them and encourage them, they are bound to improve in time.'

Qualities of the Learners

The important qualities that a learner should possess are as follows:

(i) The power of concentration is the only key to the treasure house of knowledge.

(ii) The conditions necessary for the students are purity, a real thirst for knowledge and perseverance.

(iii) Facts should be assimilated and not memorized.

Methods of Teaching and Learning

Swami Vivekananda stressed the following:

1. A child educates itself. We have to do only so much for the students that they may learn to apply their own intellect to the proper use of their hands, legs, ears, eyes, etc., and finally everything will become easy. He said, 'Like fire in a piece of flint, knowledge exists in the mind; suggestion is the friction which brings it out.'
2. The mind works through various stages to attain its fullest development. First, it lays hold of the concrete, and only gradually deals with abstractions.
3. The teaching must be modified according to the needs of the students. A true teacher is one who can immediately come down to the level of the student and transfer his soul to the student's soul and see through and understand through his mind.
4. Concentration is the best method and is the key to the treasure house of knowledge. Vivekananda observed, 'To me the very essence of education is the concentration of mind, not the collecting of facts.' *Brahmacharya* is necessary for concentration.
5. The learner must have great power of endurance.
6. The learner must be able to control the internal and external senses. There must be a continuous struggle, a constant fight, an unremitting grappling with our lower nature, till the higher want is actually felt and victory is achieved.
7. The pupil's faith in himself will enable him to imbibe knowledge effectively.
8. Reverence for the guru should be inculcated in the pupil.
9. Learning and intellectual development can be fostered through frank and open discussion on all topics of study between the teacher and the student.

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10. Purity of thought, speech and act is absolutely necessary in the student and also in the teacher.
11. Travel leads to broadening our horizon, and enables us to share our knowledge with others.

Education of the Masses

Vivekananda gave prime importance to the education of the masses. He asserted, 'The chief cause of India's ruin has been the monopolizing of the whole education of the land by dint of pride and royal authority among a handful of men.' He further observed, 'If we are to rise again, we shall have to do it in the same way, that is, by spreading education among the masses.' He considers that 'the great national sin is the neglect of the masses, and that is one of the causes of our downfall. No amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses in India are once more well-educated, well-fed and well cared for. They pay for our education, they build our temples, but in return they get kicks. They are practically our slaves. If we want to regenerate India, we must work for them.'

Social Education

Vivekananda had the most modern idea about social education. He said, 'If the poor boy cannot come to education, education must go to him. There are thousands of single-minded, self-sacrificing *sanyasis* in our country going from village to village, teaching religion. Some of them can be organized as teachers of secular things; hence they not only preach but teach as well. Suppose two of them go to a village in the evening with a camera, a globe, some map, etc., they can teach a great deal of astronomy and geography to the ignorant. By telling stories about different nations, they can give the poor a hundred times more information through the ear than they can get in a lifetime through books. But this requires an organization.'

Physical and Health Education

Vivekananda was not satisfied with an education that merely looked to the development of the mind. He was also greatly concerned about the proper care of the body and the healthy development of one's physique. 'Be strong, my young friends', he urged, 'that is my advice to you. You will be nearer to heaven through football than through the "Gita". These are bold words, but I have to say them to you. I know where the shoe pinches. You will understand the Gita better, with your biceps, your muscles a little stronger. You will understand the mighty genius and the mighty strength of Krishna better with a little of strong blood in you. You will understand the "Upanishads" better and the glory of the "Atman" when your body stands firm upon your feet and you feel yourself as men. Strength, strength is what the "Upanishads" speak to me from every page. Freedom, physical freedom, mental freedom and spiritual freedom are the watchwords of the Upanishads.' He emphasized repeatedly, 'Strength is goodness. Weakness is sin.'

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Religious or Secular Education

Vivekananda preached 'Religion is realization. No scriptures can make us religious. We may study all the books that are in the world, yet we may not understand a word of religion or of God.' His was a practical religion. He declared, 'It will not do merely to listen to great principles. You must apply them in the practical field, turn them into constant practice.' According to him, service of the poor was the best religion.

Vivekananda had great regard for all religions. He said, 'Let us take in all that has been in the past, enjoy the light of the present and open every window of the heart for all that will come in the future.'

Education of Women

Vivekananda was an ardent champion of education of women. He remarked, 'Women have many and grave problems but none that cannot be solved by that magic word: education.' Manu, the legendary Hindu lawgiver says, 'Daughters should be supported and educated with as much care and attention as the sons.' His view was that 'our Indian women are as capable of doing it as any in the world. It is only in the homes of educated and pious mothers that great men are born. By raising the women, their children will, by their noble actions, glorify the name of the country. Then, culture, knowledge, power and devotion will awaken the country. Vivekananda, while advocating the cause of women also said, 'Any attempt to modernize our women, if it tries to take our women away from the ideal of Sita, is immediately a failure as we see every day.' He suggested the following programmes for educating women:

1. Female education should be spread with religion as the centre. Religious training, the formation of character and observance of the views of celibacy—these should be adhered to.
2. *Brahmacharins* of education and character should take up the task of teaching. Through such devout preachers of character, there will be a real spread of female education in the country.
3. History and 'Puranas', housekeeping and the arts, the duties of home life and principles that make for the development of character have to be taught.
4. Sewing, culinary art, rules of domestic work and upbringing of children should also be taught.
5. *Japa*, or worship and meditation, shall form an indispensable part of the teaching.
6. Along with other things, they should acquire the spirit of valour and heroism.

Learning from Others but Keeping our Own

While Vivekananda welcomed the impact of Western thought, science and technology, he cautioned his countrymen against being dazzled by its materialist success and going in for a slavish imitation of its customs and way of life. He advocated, 'What we want are Western sciences coupled with Vedanta, *Brahmacharya* as the guiding

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motto and also *Shraddha* in one's self. Another thing that we want is the abolition of the system which aims at educating our boys in the same manner as that of the man who battered his ass, being advised that it should thereby be turned into a horse. When we take anything from others, we must mould it after our own way. We shall add to our stock what others have to teach, but we must always be careful to keep intact what is essentially our own.'

National Integration

In an article in *Modern India* in 1899, he wrote, 'Forget not that the lower classes, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper, are thy flesh and blood, thy brothers. Proudly proclaim "I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother." Say "the soil of India is my highest heaven, the good of India is my good".'

Dr V. K. R. V. Rao has summed up the views of Vivekananda as 'To sum up Vivekananda's ideas on education, its main base was his faith in the youth of the country for national regeneration. Hence, his anxiety that they should get the right type of education and also go about the right way for getting the best out of education. Asked to define his idea of right education, he answered: "I never define anything. Still it may be described as a development of faculty, not an accumulation of words, but a training of individuals to will rightly and efficiently".'

He wanted man-making education for the young and he wanted such educated young men to use their education to make men out of others. And when he talked of men, he included women also.

Life-long Learning Process

Vivekananda said, 'We have many things to learn from other nations. The nation that says it knows everything is on the very brink of destruction. As long as live so long do I learn.'

Mania of Becoming Westernized to be Discarded

Though Vivekananda appreciated Western culture, he did not want Indians to discard their own values. He raises the following question, 'Of course new things have to be learnt, have to be introduced and worked out, but is that to be done by sweeping away all that is old, just because it is old?'

Vivekananda's Concept of Man-making Education

Swami Vivekananda saw the 'Divine in the form of the poor' whom he called *Daridra Narayan*. This denotes the direction of 'Man-making' education. It implies that education should develop a spirit of service, and the poor and the needy must be helped to raise themselves.

Man-making education also brings out the significance of the famous words said by Vivekananda at the Parliament of Religions held in 1893 at Chicago. These were HELP, ASSIMILATION, HARMONY and PEACE. Accordingly, education should develop these qualities in man.

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Man-making education is inherent in character development as well as vocational development. Man-making education is a very comprehensive concept.

Man-making education includes physical and health education. He was also greatly concerned about the proper care of the body and the healthy development of one's physiques.

Following are the chief elements of man-making concept:

1. Swami Vivekananda believed in the *Vedanata* philosophy, which considers that the ultimate goal of human life is to attain 'Unity with the Creator'. An individual must fully understand this.
2. Service to man is equated with devotion to God. According to Swami Vivekananda, God resides in every human heart. Thus man should develop the spirit of service to his fellow beings.
3. Swami Vivekananda believed in the liberal concept of religion. Essential elements of all religions are the same. No religion is inferior to other religion. Man should follow an attitude of respect for all religions.
4. According to Vivekananda love is the highest goal of religion. Man should imbibe love for all and hatred for none.
5. Swami Vivekananda developed a synthesis between science and spirituality. Man should attain knowledge of science and spirituality.
6. Swami Vivekananda was a prophet of humanity. His concept of man transcends the cultural boundaries of the East and the West. He was a rationalist and a man must develop a rational attitude in life.
7. Vivekananda reminded that the nation lived in the cottages and therefore it was the duty of every educated young man to go from village to village and make the people understand their real condition, awake the village and make the people understand their real condition, awake them from their long slumber and advise them how to improve their own miserable lot. The sunken vitality of the helpless victims of social injustice was to be restored physically, intellectually as well as spiritually. He declared, 'I call him a Mahatma who feels for the poor. Let these people be your God—think of them, work for them, pray for them incessantly—the Lord will show you the way.' Swami Vivekananda aimed at the removal of social injustice.
8. Man-making education must develop such individuals who are ethically sound, intellectually sharp, physically strong, religiously liberal, socially efficient, spiritually enlightened and vocationally self-sufficient.
9. Swami Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna Mission which is engaged in the task of man-making through its multifarious activities. It has opened several educational institutions, libraries and reading rooms, and hospitals and dispensaries. Hundreds of selfless workers of the Mission are working for the upliftment of the masses.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. According to Swami Vivekananda, how can national unity be achieved?
2. What promotes the feeling of fraternity that leads to nationalism?
3. What is the basis of universalism according to Vivekananda?
4. Why did Vivekananda describe the caste system as individualistic in nature but socialistic in function?
5. What are the three components of democracy?

1.3 SRI AUROBINDO

Aurobindo Ghosh was born in Calcutta on 15 August 1872. It is a remarkable coincidence that India got her independence on the same date, seventy-five years after his birth. Though an Indian and a Hindu, his father Dr Krishnadhan Ghosh had adopted the Westernized way of living and wanted to bring up all his children in English fashion and culture. Aurobindo got his early education in the Loreto Convent School of Darjeeling and was taken to England at the age of eight. In London in 1885, he was sent to St. Paul's school and later on to King's College. During his fourteen-year stay in England, he had mastered some European languages like Greek, Latin and French. During this period, his close links with the Indian *Majlis,* a students' association and a secret revolutionary organization of Indians named *Lotus and Dagger,* gave him ample opportunity to foster his patriotism. It is an irony that Aurobindo who stayed away from India for long, even during the most impressionable years of his life and who was consciously forbidden to come in touch with anything Indian—Indian society, culture and polity—lest he should become an Indian in spirit, became the most ardent champion of India and Indian nationalism. Later on, his father's disillusionment with the Britishers made him think and fight for the Indian cause. There were times when he sent his son in England, messages and newspaper cuttings of oppressive British rule in India. This gave a fillip to the already cherished nationalist feelings of Aurobindo.

After the completion of his higher studies, Aurobindo appeared for ICS examination and qualified in the written test but deliberately stayed away from the horse riding test as he had no inclination towards the ICS. Destiny perhaps wanted him to be a free nationalist and a spiritual humanist than a servant under the British yoke. In 1893, he came back to India and joined Baroda state service as a professor of English in Baroda College. For a short period, he acted as its principal too, and later he became the principal of National College, in Calcutta. Within a short while of his return to India, he took part in active politics. He associated himself with the journals and periodicals like *Jugantar*, *Bande Mataram* and *Karmayogi* through which he could criticize British imperialism by preaching the gospel of militant nationalism. Almost perplexed and terrified, the British authorities tried to punish Aurobindo. In 1908, he was arrested on the charge of the Alipore bomb conspiracy

but was acquitted after a long trial. In April 1910, he shifted to Pondicherry, a French territory then, and thus, slipped out of the snare of the British authorities who were planning vigorously to deport him on the charge of publishing seditious articles in the *Karmayogi*. He stayed there till his death in 1950 and lived the life of a yogi.

Sri Aurobindo was influenced not only by the Western thoughts but also by his study of the works of Bankim Chandra Chatterji. Much of his political outlook on individual and nation was affected by his study of Bankim's *Anand Math*, *Krishan Charita* and *Dharma Tattva*. From Bankim, he got the three-fold formula for moral strength, which was as follows:

1. Sacrifice and devotion
2. Self-discipline and organization
3. Religion and patriotism

He was also indebted to sister Nivedita whose essay on *Kali* influenced him. He spiritualized his life and completely changed it after the study of the Gita.

While at Pondicherry, Sri Aurobindo kept only indirect touch with Indian politics. However, the retirement of Sri Aurobindo from active politics was not due to any feeling of helplessness or disappointment. Some of the important writings of Aurobindo are *The Life Divine*, *On the Veda*, *Essay on the Gita*, *The Mother and the Ideal of Karmayogi*, *Savitri*, *The Ideal of Human Unity*, *Defense of Indian Culture*, etc.

Philosophical and Spiritual Foundations

Aurobindo studied in England and as such he was very much influenced by Western philosophy and culture. But after returning from England, he made a deep study of the Indian literature and philosophy. He reconciled divergent ideas of Indian spiritual idealism with Western secular materialism. Hence, he created a metaphysical synthesis reconciling spirit and matter. According to Kenneth L Deutsch, 'The revolution that Aurobindo pursued was a spiritual revolution. His was a moral and spiritual task. This task is grounded upon three basic concepts of his philosophy—Sachchidanada or the Supreme Reality, Supermind or the Truth—consciousness and Evolution.'

During his detention as an under-trial political revolutionary in 1908, Aurobindo underwent a spiritual transformation by having some mystical experiences, which had a profound influence on his mind and thinking. He came to realize that spiritual power was superior to the power of arms. Hence, he tried to find a solution to the problem of greater magnitude than winning the freedom of the country. Later on when invited several times to lead the freedom struggle, he politely declined the honour because of his single-minded devotion to the pursuit of the spiritual problems of the mankind. A. B. Purani argues, 'The life divine is not an arm-chair philosophy, not a mere academic product; it is the result of a very earnest and singleminded search extending over forty years.' The basic principle of Aurobindo's idea is the conquest of matter by spirit. Thus, he advocates the control of matter, that is, material energy by the spirit. Still, in order to be able to do that, man must rise above his present state of consciousness; he must rise to the supermind. In the words of

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Dr Gokak, this work of Aurobindo opens up new horizons that spell new cultures upon earth.

The Life Divine of Aurobindo satisfies man's deepest need—his aspiration for integral perfection. On the one hand, it satisfies the spiritual need of mankind, and on the other, it is a characteristic contribution of India to the human culture of the future. Hence, Sri Aurobindo's work may be said to be the international form of Indian culture. Sri Aurobindo shows that man must ascend to the supermind—the Truth-Consciousness—if he is to attain perfection. The Life Divine propounds the inevitability of evolution of man from mind to supermind. The process of evolution has proceeded from matter to life and from life to mind. Man, the mental being, is transitional, because he has yet to ascend to higher consciousness beyond mind. The Life Divine is a call 'to spiritual adventure, to a spiritual exploration. It initiates a vision of heights of consciousness, which have indeed been glimpsed and visited but have yet to be discovered and mapped in their completeness.' Purani says, 'The Life Divine is not a poetical dream, an abstract weaving of mere intellect, it is a discovery that makes available a new source of knowledge and power to man.'

After his return to Pondicherry, Aurobindo kept a close watch on all that was happening in the world and in India. He actively intervened whenever necessary but solely with a spiritual force and silent spiritual action. Thus, Aurobindo advocated for power of spiritual consciousness. According to V. P. Verma, 'At the philosophical level, Aurobindo had reconciled the divergent trends of Indian ascetic, a cosmic transcendental idealism and Western secular materialism.' He pleaded for the spiritual elevation of the mind of the mass. He wrote, 'The metaphysical and cosmic understanding cannot be separated from the socio-political existence of humanity.'

Political Ideas of Aurobindo

According to Dr Karan Singh, the contribution of Sri Aurobindo to modern political thought may be conveniently summarized under four headings, these are as follows:

1. His concept of spiritual nationalism and the divinity of the motherland which imparted an esoteric significance to the movement of India's liberation
2. His exposition of the ideal of complete freedom from foreign rule and his role in invigorating, inspiring and radicalizing the national movement
3. His contribution to the theory of boycott and passive resistance, as also to the use of force, if necessary, to achieve freedom
4. His vision of the broader role that India was destined to play in world affairs and his enlightened ideal of human unity that must ultimately transcend mere national development. India could not fulfil her predestined spiritual role as a 'guru of nations' as long as she herself was bound hands and feet and her great spirit confined and constricted

1.3.1 Aurobindo's Views on Democracy, Socialism and the State

Like Dadabhai Naoroji, Aurobindo strongly criticized British imperialism. He was critical of the tendencies towards centralization, concentration, and acquisition in the capitalist system. He was also critical of the Western concept of democracy.

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According to him, democracy suffered from four weaknesses. First, although the idea of quality has been loudly preached, in actual practice, a dominant class has obtained social and political leadership in the name of democracy. Second, Aurobindo felt that perfect democracy existed here in the world and 'everywhere the propertied and professional classes and the bourgeoisie have governed in the name of the people'. Third, he stated that behind the democratic structure, the really active force was a powerful ruling minority. Everywhere there is trend towards the growth of this elite, which is dangerous for perfect democracy. Fourth, Aurobindo was also critical of the mechanism of modern representative system where the legislators do not really represent the electorate.

As the democratic system suffers from several defects, Aurobindo was sceptical about it being the guarantee of liberty. It is correct in that some of the highly advanced democratic countries, democracy has protected people from the tyranny as found in older times. But Aurobindo says, 'We see today the democratic form of government march steadily towards such an organized annihilation of individual liberty as could not have been dreamed of in the old aristocratic and monarchical system.'

Besides being a critic of the modern representative democracy of the West, Aurobindo was also opposed to the Benthamite utilitarian principle of the greatest good of the greatest number, and gave up this idea. Aurobindo regarded the mathematics of Bentham as artificial and egoistic. It neglects the interest of the minority. The ultimate reality, according to Aurobindo, is the spiritual being, and an individual should direct his efforts towards the realization of the good of all human beings. The utilitarian theory of 'pleasure and pain' should be replaced by the ethical ideal of good of all human beings.

He was critical of socialism also as it resulted in the emergence of an omnipotent authoritarian State. Bureaucracy in a socialist state received undue importance and resulted in authoritarian regimentation. Though he was a critic of socialism, Aurobindo emphasized on the socialist objective of equal opportunity and the guarantee of a social and economic minimum to all as a laudable goal for organized social life.

With regard to Aurobindo's philosophy of the State, it is stated that he did not develop any systematic theory of the State like Hegel, Green and Bosanquet. His theory of the State is based on his conception of the role of reason in the socio-political evolution of man. The first state of human evolution, according to him, is infra-rational and is marked by the dominance of instincts and impulses. The second is the rational state when the communal mind becomes more and more intellectually self-conscious. The third stage belongs to the future where the stress is on the supra-rational subjective consciousness. In the third stage, the powers of institution, over-mental and even supra-mental consciousness would be used for the total change of individual and the divine perfection of society. Hence, Aurobindo was against giving any ethical or moral character to the State. In this connection, he said, 'It has no soul or only a rudimentary one. It is military, political and economic force; but it is only in a slight and undeveloped degree, if at all, an intellectual and ethical being. Unfortunately the chief use it makes of its undeveloped intellect is to blunt by fictions, catchwords and recently by state philosophies, its ill-developed ethical conscience.'

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Internationalism in Aurobindo's Philosophy

Besides being an ardent nationalist, Aurobindo was also a great humanist and internationalist. His entire political philosophy is founded on the bedrocks of cosmopolitanism, universal purpose and world federation. Aurobindo did not allow his nationalism to degenerate into mere chauvinism or narrow revivalism. He looked upon India's emancipation as a necessary thing so that India could fulfil her destiny as the spiritual guide of humanity at large. Hence, Aurobindo's nationalism developed into internationalism. In his weekly newspaper *Bande Mataram*, Aurobindo wrote, 'India must have Swaraj in order to live well and happily; she must have *Swaraj* in order to live for the world, not as a slave for the material and political benefit of a single purse-proud and selfish nation, but as a free people for the spiritual and intellectual benefit of the human race.'

In his book, *The Ideal of Human Unity*, Aurobindo has advocated the concept of internationalism. He has immense faith in man. According to him, man is not a mere physical conglomeration. Every human being is a divine soul, which is the self-expression of the supreme or universal soul. The society or nation is a congregation of various individual souls with different divine purpose. Yoga unites the human consciousness or the individual soul with the supreme soul and liberates the individual spiritually. He observed, 'India is the guru of nations, the physician of the human soul in its profounder maladies; she is destined once more to new-mould the life of the world and restore the peace of the human spirit . . . She has always existed for humanity and not for herself and it is for humanity and not for herself that she must be great.' Thus, Aurobindo was a true internationalist. Like Dante and Kant, he dreamed for the formation of a world government. He tried his best to find a proper reconciliation between nationalism and internationalism.

Contributions of Aurobindo

Romain Rolland described Aurobindo as 'the completest synthesis of the culture of the East and of the West, holding in his outstretched hands the bow of creative impulse, the promise of a greater tomorrow'. Aurobindo's contribution to the Indian culture and philosophic thought has been unique. An ardent patriot who inspired and guided the freedom movement, he was one of the young revolutionaries who stood against the British rule and led and inspired the struggle for freedom. He was also the prophet of a new divine order—an order which prepares man for the reception of a higher consciousness and rise to divine status.

Aurobindo remained in the Indian political scene only for a few years. But during this short period, he achieved much more than what most of the national leaders achieved at that time. Aurobindo's greatest contribution to the Indian political thought and the freedom struggle was his concept of spiritual nationalism. He was an ardent supporter of divinity of the motherland. Thus, Aurobindo gave to his countrymen a new creed, the creed of nationalism, the truth of which came to him from the heavenly source of Yogic consciousness. His most famous saying was, 'Nationalism is not a mere political programme; nationalism is a religion that has come from God.' According to Dr Karan Singh, 'Aurobindo imparted a new dimension

to the national movement, leaving it above the purely material plane and placing before it an inspired and inspiring spiritual ideas.'

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Aurobindo was the first Indian leader to say in clear words that the aim of the national struggle was complete freedom from foreign yoke. He had the courage to declare that we do not beg for freedom. Rather it is our birth right to have freedom. Aurobindo made nationalism a mass movement and a mass organization. In the words of Sisir Kumar Mitra, 'Aurobindo's supreme contribution was that he created in the people—what was still inchoate—a definitive national consciousness and infused into it a total denial of foreign rule which he called a *maya* illusion; and this *maya* he wanted to dispel by unceasingly reiterating and emphasizing complete freedom as India's goal.' Hence, the creation of this new spirit by Aurobindo stood out in the history of India's freedom movement as the greatest thing ever done for her emancipation. By giving a divine touch, Aurobindo broke the old apathy and timid method of national struggle. To Aurobindo, India was the living image of the mother of his vision, the embodiment of a force and light of the supreme *Shakti* whom he hailed as *Durga* and whose worship, he said, would bring about the all-round liberation of India.

R. C. Majumdar called Aurobindo the 'prophet of nationalism.' Similarly M. A. Buch observed, 'The nationalism of Aurobindo was a burning religious emotion, the voice of God in man, the invincible demand on the part of the great Indian spiritual culture for expression through the reawakened soul to the world.' Thus, to Aurobindo, Swaraj was a passion and nationalism a religion. According to V. P. Verma, the greatest contribution of Aurobindo was the concept of inner freedom of human spirit. He supplemented the demand for political freedom with the quest for spiritual freedom. He advocated a synthesis of external and inner freedom. To V. P. Verma, 'Aurobindo will be hailed not only as a mighty prophet of humanity, as one of the leaders of India renaissance and liberation, as a yogi, poet, metaphysician and critic but also as a leader in idealistic political theory.'

Similarly, Dr Karan Singh analyses the contribution of Aurobindo under four heads. They are as follows:

1. His concept of nationalism and the divinity of the motherland
2. His exposition of the ideal of complete freedom from foreign rule
3. His contribution to the theory of boycott and passive resistance
4 His vision of the high role that India was destined to play in world affairs and his ideal of human unity

Critics alleged that Aurobindo was afraid of jails and hence he left India as he came to know about his arrest. However, this view is not correct. He left the British territory for spiritualism. The retirement of Sri Aurobindo from active politics was not due to any feeling of helplessness or frustration. He observed, 'I went away because I did not want anything to interfere with my Yoga and because I got a very distinct *Adesh* (order) in the matter. I have cut my connection entirely with politics, but before I did so, I knew from within that the work I had begun that was destined to be carried forward, on the lines I had foreseen, by others, and that the ultimate

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triumph of the movement I had initiated was sure without any personal action or presence. There was not the least motive of despair or sense of futility behind my withdrawal.' Staying at Pondicherry, he kept indirect contact with Indian politics. Aurobindo continued to write and attract followers from India and abroad, who saw in him a prophet of the new age of man in which the East and the West would be joined in a common understanding. Hence, Rabindra Nath Tagore hailed him as the 'voice incarnate, free, of India's soul'. He observed, 'Through Aurobindo India would express her message to the world. He was the messiah of Indian culture and civilization.'

Aurobindo's nationalism was not confined to intense love for one's nation. He was a votary of world culture and a worshipper of the universal along with the national. He advocated for independence of India in the wider interests of the humanity. He wrote, 'Our ideal of patriotism proceeds on the basis of love and brotherhood and it looked beyond the unity of the nation and envisages the ultimate unity of mankind.' Federic Spiegelberg, a renowned scholar rightly called Aurobindo as 'guiding star of our Earth and the prophet of our age'.

In the midst of the darkness and distress of today's world, Aurobindo provided a ray of hope to mankind. He envisaged a new man, a new society and a new civilization. Sri Aurobindo is said to have 'an amazingly creative personality with deep insight into the past, a firm hold upon the present and a prophetic vision of the future'. To conclude Dr S. Radhakrishnan said, 'Aurobindo was the greatest intellectual of our age and a major force for the life of the spirit. India will not forget his services to politics and philosophy and the world will remember with gratitude, his invaluable work in the realms of philosophy and religion.'

1.3.2 Aurobindo's Philosophy on Education

The basis of his entire thought is his stress on the need to become aware of the divine which can be realized through Integral Yoga. Aurobindo considered that while philosophy is a quest for the truth of things by the human intellect, the endeavour to realize the truth in the inner self and in outer life is 'Dharma'. Sri Aurobindo immersed himself in Vedanta and Yoga. Instead of seeing conflict or finding inconsistencies between the East and the West, he evolved a synthesis of both. He also evolved a synthesis of spirit and matter, of science and Vedanta. According to Sri Aurobindo, everyone has in him something divine, something that is his own, a chance of perfection and strength in however small a measure. The task is to find it, develop it and use it. His life is based on spiritual discipline. He is of the view that one end that is ardently sought after is the attainment of the life divine while living in the world.

Sri Aurobindo considers all forms in the universe as multiple cells of One Consciousness. He considers Yoga as the means through which one can come in contact with the true self and unite the separate parts of oneself and see the same divine in others. In his Yoga, work is as important as meditation. His Yoga is not that of a *Sanyasi* who turns away from life in order to turn towards God. On the other hand, his Yoga is of the ordinary man who has put God on the shelf, while he carries on his worldly pursuits. The seeker must experience the 'Ananda', love, consciousness and energy of the 'Supreme.' Work done in full concentration and in the spirit of

surrender takes one's consciousness nearer to the Divine. Knowledge, work, devotion and meditation are all integrated in his Yoga. The most important thing is to have an inner urge for the Divine. As Sri Aurobindo says, 'One who chooses the Divine is chosen by the Divine. As the call for the Divine grows more intense, so does His help come more readily.'

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Aurobindo says that we must aim not only at an inner realization but an outer realization also—the establishment of the kingdom of God not only within the heart but also in the world of human affairs, such as in economics and politics. And he assures us that this is possible.

Yoga can be practised in ordinary life. If a merchant wishes to follow this yoga, his business itself is regarded as work divine, and he cannot practise corruption or black-marketing. In the same way a student would look for higher values and will be saved from many useless and harmful activities. *Brahmacharya* (self-control) is the most important thing in a student's life. Sri Aurobindo says, 'The practice of *Brahmacharya* is the first and the most necessary condition of increasing the force within and turning it to such uses as may benefit the possessor or mankind. All human energy has a physical basis. The source of life and energy is not material but spiritual; but the basis or the foundation on which the life and energy stand and work is physical. The ancient Hindus clearly recognized this distinction between *Karan* and *Pratishtha*, the north pole and the south pole of being. Earth or gross matter is the *Pratishtha*, the Brahman or the spirit is the *Karan*. To rise up from the physical to the spiritual is *Brahmacharya*, as by the meeting of the two, the energy which starts from one and produces the other is enhanced and fulfils itself. The more we can, by *Brahmacharya*, increase the store of *tapas* (heat), *tejas* (light), *vidyut* (electricity) and *ojas* (life force), the more we shall fill ourselves with utter energy for the works of the body, heart, mind and spirit.'

Meaning of True Education

What does a true education really signify? Sri Aurobindo said that there are three things that education must take into account: (1) the man, (2) the nation or people and (3) universal humanity. To appreciate Sri Aurobindo's educational thesis, we should understand the inter-relationship among these three, and realize that the purpose of life—individual, national, universal—is spiritual development.

He said that a true and living education 'helps to bring out to full advantage, makes ready for the full purpose and scope of human life all that is in the individual man, which at the same time helps him to enter into his right relation with the life, mind and soul of the people to which he belongs and with the great total life, mind and soul of humanity of which he himself is a unit, and his people or nation a living, a separate and yet inseparable member.'

Education is the Discovery of Soul

The importance of education in the discovery of the soul is shown by Sri Aurobindo. When speaking of new educational trends evidenced by the experiments carried out in various countries, he says, 'The discovery that education must be a bringing out of the child's own intellectual and moral capacities to their highest possible value and

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must be based on the psychology of the child-nature was a step forward towards a more healthy system; but it still fell short because it still regarded him as an object to be handled and moulded by the teacher. But at least there was a glimmering of the realization that each human being is a self-developing soul and that the business of both parent and teacher is to enable and to help the child to educate himself, to develop his own intellectual, moral, aesthetic and practical capacities and to grow freely as an organic being, not to be kneaded and pressured into form like an inert plastic material. It is not yet realized what this soul is or that the true secret, whether with child or man, is to help him to find his deeper self, the real psychic entity thin.'

The closer touch attempted with the psychical entity within the vital and physical mentality, and an increasing reliance on its possibilities must lead to the ultimate discovery that man is inwardly a soul and a conscious power of the Divine and that the evocation of this real man within is the right object of education and indeed of all human life if it would find and live according to the hidden truth and deepest law of its own being.

Integral Education

Education, to be complete, must have five principal aspects relating to the five principal activities of the human being: the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual. Usually, these phases of education succeed each other in a chronological order following the growth of the individual. This, however, does not mean that one should replace another but that all must continue, completing each other, till the end of life.

Principles of Teaching

Sri Aurobindo enumerated three principles of teaching: The first principle of true teaching is that nothing can be taught. The teacher is not an instructor or taskmaster, he is a helper and guide.

The teacher's work is to suggest and not to impose on the mind of the students. He does not actually train the mind of his student but helps him to perfect his mind, the instrument of knowledge and encourages him in every way in this process. Thus, he does not impart knowledge, but shows the way on how knowledge can be acquired. Knowledge is within the pupil and the pupil has to help himself to bring it out, but he needs help. Somebody must tell him where it is and how it can be 'habituated to rise to the surface'. Teacher alone can do this work.

The second principle is that the mind has to be consulted in its growth. The idea of hammering the child into shape as desired by the parent or teacher is a barbarous and ignorant superstition.

The third principle of teaching is to work from the near to the far, from the known to the unknown. Man's nature is moulded by his soul's past, his heredity and his environment. The past is the foundation, the present is the material and future is the aim. Each of us must find his/her due and natural place in any national system of education.

Moral Education through Personal Example

The best method of suggestion is by personal example, daily conversation and the books read from day-to-day. These books should contain for the younger student, the lofty examples of the past given not as moral lessons, but as things of supreme human interest; and, for the elder student, the great thoughts of great souls, the passages of literature which set fire to the highest emotions and prompt the highest ideals and aspirations, the records of history and biography which exemplify the living of those great thoughts, noble emotions and aspiring ideals. This is a kind of good company, 'satsanga', which can seldom fail to have an effect so long as sententious sermonizing is avoided. It has the maximum effect if the personal life of the teacher is itself moulded by the great things he preaches. It cannot, however, have full force unless the young life is given an opportunity, within the limited sphere, of embodying in action the moral impulses which rise within it.

Discipline and Liberty

Sri Aurobindo suggests perfect liberty for the child. He says, 'I would not like any hard things to be brought into the child's experience.'

He advises teachers not to be arbitrary, despotic, impatient and ill- tempered.

He says, 'If education is to bring out to full advantage all that is in the individual child, we should first guarantee a safe custody of all that is in the individual. Nothing is to be lost or damaged, twisted or crushed. Everyone has in him something divine, something his own, a chance of perfection and strength in however small a sphere which God offers him to take or refuse. That Divinity in man is not to be insulted, that chance of perfection is not to be lost, that spark of strength is not to be extinguished. The task of a teacher is to help the child to feel that touch of Divinity, to find that "something", to develop it, and use it. Education should help the growing soul to draw out the best that is within and make it perfect for a noble cause.'

Physical Education

'Perfection is the true aim of all culture…. If our seeking is for a total perfection of being, the physical part cannot be left aside, as the body is the material basis and the instrument which we have to use.' Sariram Khalu dharmasadhanam, says the old Sanskrit adage—the body is the means of fulfilment of dharma, and dharma means every ideal which we can propose to ourselves and the laws of its functioning and its action.

It is true that in the past the body has been regarded by spiritual seekers rather as an obstacle, as something to be overcome and discarded than as an instrument of spiritual perfection and a field of the spiritual change.

An Analysis of Integral Education

We have explained in brief the meaning of integral education as expounded by Aurobindo. An attempt has been made here to analyse the various dimensions of integral education. According to him, the human body, mind and intellect combine together to form a magnificent machine; we call it a machine for want of a better

world but it is superior to any other equipment built by man. Education must integrate these elements to serve its real purpose.

Bases of Integrated Education

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The bases of integrated education are as follows:

1. Individuality is one whole.
2. Humanity is one. There are no inconsistencies in the East and the West.

1. Wholeness of Individuality

(a) *Harmonious development of individuality:* Body, mind and soul have their significance when they are harmoniously developed as they constitute the whole individuality. Likewise individual's intellectual development must develop in relation to his moral, emotional and spiritual nature and vice versa. In other words, integral education must develop all the dimensions of the individuality of the person. According to Sri Aurobindo, there should be a balanced and harmonious development of all the aspects of human personality—cognitive (knowledge), conative (skills) and affective (attitudes and values). An individual thus becomes an integrated individual.

(b) *Socio-economico-politico integration:* Man has neither been regarded as a pre-eminently reasoning animal so that education should aim at developing only his mental capacities, nor has he been seen as an economic, political and social being only so that education should train him as a productive and disciplined member of the society. These, no doubt, are aspects and characteristics of human being but they do not define the whole of the real man. The real man is not only a bundle of selfish interests, nor an intellectual entity, nor merely a social being. He is something more. Beyond the physical and mental bounds there is spiritual existence. Sri Aurobindo said, 'India has seen always in man the individual, a soul, a portion of the divinity enwrapped in mind and body.'

(c) *Different dimensions of the 'self' but 'self' is one:* Man is a conscious manifestation of the universal spirit. We may distinguish in man different aspects of his being—mental, intellectual, ethical, practical, aesthetic, physical and the like—but all these have been as powers of the 'self' that manifests through them and yet they are not the 'self'.

(d) *Inadequacy of academic perfection alone:* The study of the mind is fundamental in education. Any system of education which concentrates on academic perfection of the child and disregards the mind is destined to fail. It would hamper the intellectual growth and would fail to produce an integrated mind.

2. Oneness of Humanity

Sri Aurobindo immersed himself in Vedanta and Yoga. Instead of seeing conflict or finding inconsistencies between the East and the West, he evolved a synthesis of both. He also synthesized 'Spirit' and 'Matter', 'Science' and 'Vedanta'.

3. Multiple Cells Consciousness

Sri Aurobindo considers all forms in the universe as multiple cells of one consciousness and the Yoga as the means through which one may come into contact with the true 'self' and unite the separate parts of oneself and see the divine in others.

4. Both Inner and Outer Realization

Aurobindo says that we must aim not only at an inner realization but also at outer realization, that is, the establishment of the Kingdom of God not only within the heart but also in the world of human affairs.

Functions of Integral Education

What really is the task of integral education? Sri Aurobindo said that there are three things that education must take into account:

1. The man
2. The nation or people
3. Universal humanity

Education must enable us to understand the inter-relationship among these three.

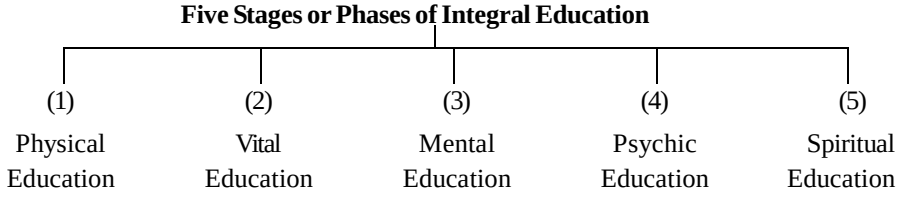
Stages or Phases of Integral Education

According to Aurobindo, integral education must have the following aspects relating to the five principal activities of the human being:

1. The physical
2. The vital
3. The mental
4. The psychic
5. The spiritual

Sri Aurobindo stated that usually these stages or phases of education succeed each other in a chronological order following the growth of the individual. This, however, does not mean that one stage should replace another before some other stage is complete, but that all must continue, complementing each other till the end of life.

Five Stages or Phases of Integral Education



1. *Physical Stage of Education*

   It includes:

   - Total harmonious and integrated development of the body
   - Physical discipline, i.e., control of various part of the body
   - Freedom from diseases

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2. *Vital Stage of Education*

   The vital education has two elements:

   - Development and utilization of senses
   - Becoming conscious and gradually controlling them

   Thus vital education is very important in training senses.

3. *Psychic stage of Education*

   The word 'psychic' implies sensitiveness regarding non-material elements. Psychic education, therefore, implies education which includes development of non-material values. In the words of the Mother, an outstanding disciple of Sri Aurobindo, 'One thing is absolutely indispensable, the will to discover.' Psychic is related to Yoga.

4. *Mental Stage of Education*

   Mental education has the following aspects:

   - Development of power of attention and concentration
   - Development of the capacity to extend mental horizon
   - Development of the capacity to enrich mental horizon
   - Development of the capacity to organize ideas around a central theme
   - Development of reasoning power so as to accept desirable thoughts and reject undesirable ones
   - Development of the power to accept or reject ideas coming from different quarters
   - Development of the power to get inspiration from the higher regions of the being

5. *Spiritual Stage of Education*

   This is the highest level of education. It is also called 'super-mental education'. This stage is reached after one develops physical, vital, mental and psychic elements. According to the Mother, 'It will, by its all powerful action, work not only upon the very substance of which they are built and upon the environment in which they live.' This requires deep and intensive insight and persistent efforts. This leads to 'eternal bliss'.

Measures for Achieving the Ends of Integral Education

Following are the measures suggested by Sri Aurobindo:

1. *Role of the teacher*: According to Aurobindo, 'The teacher is not an instructor or a taskmaster; he is a helper and a guide. His business is to suggest.'
2. *Principles of education:* Sri Aurobindo enumerated the three principles:
   - The teacher's work is to suggest and not to impose principles on the minds of the students.
   - The second principle is that the child has to be consulted in the growth.

- The third principle is to work from the near to the far, from that which is to that which shall be.

3. *Discipline:* Aurobindo wrote, 'If education is to bring out to full advantage all that is in the individual child, we should first generate a safe custody of all that is in the individual. The divinity in man is not to be insulted.'
4. *Moral training:* According to Aurobindo.
   - It should be through personal example of the teacher
   - *Sadhna* should be the basis of moral training
   - It should be based on practical opportunities
   - It should come through Yoga.
5. *Immense faith in the potentialities of the child:* Teacher must have an immense faith in the capacity of the child.
6. *Physical education:* Perfection or integral development is the true aim of all culture. Therefore, the physical part of it cannot be left aside. Sri Aurobindo refers to the old Sanskrit adage *Sariram Khalu Dharma Sadhanam*—the body is the means of fulfilment of 'dharma'.
7. *Curriculum at the International Centre, Pondicherry*: It includes:
   - Psychic and spiritual studies
   - Academic subjects
   - Physical and health education
   - Cultural activities like art, music, drama
   - Vocational training
   - Educational for international understanding
8. *Basic principles of integral teaching and learning:* Integral teaching and learning process involves the following elements:
   - *Sense training:* It is developed through observation of natural phenomenon under the guidance of the teacher.
   - *Developing power of investigation:* Observation plays an important role in developing power of investigation.
   - *Training of memory and mind:* It is done by equipping the students to note similarities and dissimilarities.
   - *Training in making judgements:* The above factors provide suitable training in making judgements.
   - *Training of logical faculty:* This depends upon:
     (i) Ascertaining correctness of facts
     (ii) Collecting accurate data
     (iii) Sifting facts by eliminating false elements

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6. *Training of imagination:* This depends upon the following three elements:
    - Forming correct images
    - Developing the power of creative thinking
    - Training in appreciating the existence of truth, goodness and beauty of soul in all existing things
7. *Training of language:* This is done by appropriate methods of teaching through concrete things.
8. *Free environment:* Sri Aurobindo has stressed the significance of free environment under the guidance of the teacher.

To understand the concept of integral education as propounded by Sri Aurobindo, we must understand the inter-relationship among the different elements within man, the nation and the universal humanity. We must see the synthesis among these.

Sri Aurobindo Ashram at Pondicherry

The Ashram located near the seashore has a number of fine buildings scattered over a vast area. Over 800 inmates of the Ashram are drawn not only from different parts of India but also from around the world. There are poets, musicians, artists, physicians, surgeons and people from all walks of life. No one is superior or inferior in the Ashram. The Ashram is intended to provide an environment of peace and harmony. All the inmates engage themselves in one activity or the other. Efforts are made to put into practice the 'Ideal of Human Unity'. A strict code of discipline has to be maintained by the 'Sadhaks', the people who stay in the Ashram and also the visitors. All activities in the Ashram are taken in the spirit of service and dedication to the Devine. The Library and the Reading Room are well-equipped.

The Ashram School

The school was originally started in 1943 for the children of Sri Aurobindo's disciples. It expanded gradually from a primary school to a full-fledged high school. There are boarders as well as regular students.

The International Centre of Education

The objectives underlying the centre are as follows:

1. To evolve a system of education for making it dynamic and ideal for society
2. To organize an environment which may provide inspiration and facilities for the exercise and development of the five aspects of personality—the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual
3. To emphasize the unity of all knowledge
4. To develop the sense of oneness of mankind
5. To discover and prepare for the role India has to play in the formation of a new international harmony

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The Curriculum

It includes:

(1) Psychic and spiritual studies

(2) Academic subjects

(3) Physical and health education

(4) Cultural activities like art, music, drama

(5) Vocational training

(6) Education for international understanding

Auroville

Auroville, 'the city of dawn', near Pondicherry was inaugurated by the Mother on 28 February 1968, with representatives from 121 nations pouring soil from their respective lands into a lotus-shaped urn symbolizing the unity of the human race. It was intended to give practical expression to Sri Aurobindo's vision of a modern, self- supporting community whose members would take full advantage of scientific developments while laying greater emphasis on spiritual awareness.

According to its charter, Auroville belongs to nobody in particular. It belongs to the humanity as a whole. Conceived as 'the city of human unity', its objective was that there should be a place somewhere in the earth that no nation could claim as its sole property, a place where all could live freely as citizens of the world.

Alas, the objective is far from reality. Today, Auroville is a house divided against itself. Apart from the two major societies, many number of small groups within groups have taken shape to protect their own self-interest.

The most disturbing factor is that a large number of residents of this 'city of dawn' are either drug addicts or people who are simply running away from life. They feel that sex is consistent with Sri Aurobindo's philosophy of evolutionary spiral—that of man evolving into a higher consciousness.

Check Your Progress

6. Name three texts by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee which influenced Sri Aurobindo Ghosh.
7. Name any three important writings of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh.
8. What is man's deepest need according to Aurobindo?
9. What is Aurobindo's philosophy of the State based on?
10. According to Aurobindo, what is the first state of human evolution?

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1.4 SUMMARY

- Swami Vivekananda, whose original name was Narendranath Datta, was born in Calcutta which at that time was the centre of an intellectual upsurge.
- At the age of 18, urged by his burning thirst for divine enlightenment, he first met Sri Ramakrishna.
- During the ensuing six years of association with the master, he had a spiritual transformation and emerged as Swami Vivekananda.
- After the death of Sri Ramakrishna in 1886, Swami Vivekananda organized the master's disciples into the illustrious Ramakrishna Mission.
- Swami Vivekananda has propounded the political concept of nationalism with a religious interpretation which he has defined as a form of spiritualism.
- Spiritualism according to him goes beyond religious rituals, social dogmas, ecclesiastical formulations and obsolete customs.
- According to Swami Vivekananda, national unity can be achieved only through the acceptance of a common religion incorporating all the common principles of diverse religious sects.
- The spirituality of a religion is the base which promotes the feeling of fraternity that leads to nationalism.
- Universalism according to Vivekananda is based on the fact that the whole universe exists as a single entity.
- Spiritual leadership can be achieved through spiritual unity of mankind.
- Swami Vivekananda, says that man is born free but life constrains his natural freedom. It makes him an atomized, isolated 'individual' whose sole interest is unrestricted pursuit of desires and aims.
- Swami Vevekananda described socialism as a movement for the liberation of masses and postulated socialism on the spiritual basis of society with commitments of freedom and equality.
- According to Vivekananda, caste is a socialistic institution, which forms the base of Indian society.
- Swami Vivekananda, compares the caste system with the class system of the West. Unlike the West, here the caste system has degenerated into a hereditary caste, which has bred social exclusiveness and has prevented social progress.
- According to Vivekananda, democracy is a way of life as it stands for freedom, equality, brotherhood and union.
- Vivekananda contributed the theory of resistance. In this theory, he recommended regenerating the nation through education and religiosity, which will strengthen the people.

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- Swami Vivekananda, advocated the concept of *Humanistic Advaita*, which identifies humanity with divinity.
- The national awakening of the Indian people found expression in the movement inspired by Swami Ramakrishna Paramhansa, a great Hindu saint who sought religious salvation.
- The mission aimed at protecting Indians from materialistic influences of the Western civilization.
- Swami Vivekananda declared, 'It is man-making religion that we want; it is man-making theories that we want; it is man-making education all round that we want.' He saw the divine in the form of the poor whom he called *Daridra Narayan*.
- The main features of the philosophy of Vivekananda are as follows:
  - o Vedanta constitutes the essence of the highest spiritual and ethical values of mankind.
  - o The teachings of the Upanishads have strength enough to provide solutions to our social problems.
  - o Human being is the incarnation of God.
  - o The essential parts of all religions are the same.
- Vivekananda's educational philosophy may be encompassed within these ten words, 'Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man.'
- Vivekananda laid great emphasis on the personal contact of the pupil with the teacher—'Guru grihavasa'.
- Vivekananda gave prime importance to the education of the masses. He asserted, 'The chief cause of India's ruin has been the monopolizing of the whole education of the land by dint of pride and royal authority among a handful of men.'
- Vivekananda was an ardent champion of education of women. He remarked, 'Women have many and grave problems but none that cannot be solved by that magic word: education.'
- Swami Vivekananda believed in the *Vedanata* philosophy, which considers that the ultimate goal of human life is to attain 'Unity with the Creator'.
- Aurobindo Ghosh was born in Calcutta on 15 August 1872.
- Ghosh associated himself with the journals and periodicals like *Jugantar*, *Bande Mataram* and *Karmayogi* through which he could criticize British imperialism by preaching the gospel of militant nationalism.
- According to Kenneth L. Deutsch, 'The revolution that Aurobindo pursued was a spiritual revolution. His was a moral and spiritual task. This task is grounded upon three basic concepts of his philosophy—Sachchidanada or the Supreme Reality, Supermind or the Truth—consciousness and Evolution.'

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- The Life Divine of Aurobindo satisfies man's deepest need—his aspiration for integral perfection.
- Like Dadabhai Naoroji, Aurobindo strongly criticized British imperialism. He was critical of the tendencies towards centralization, concentration, and acquisition in the capitalist system.
- With regard to Aurobindo's philosophy of the State, it is stated that he did not develop any systematic theory of the State like Hegel, Green and Bosanquet.
- Aurobindo's theory of the State is based on his conception of the role of reason in the socio-political evolution of man.
- The first state of human evolution, according to him, is infra-rational and is marked by the dominance of instincts and impulses. The second is the rational state when the communal mind becomes more and more intellectually self-conscious.
- Besides being an ardent nationalist, Aurobindo was also a great humanist and internationalist.
- In his book, *The Ideal of Human Unity*, Aurobindo has advocated the concept of internationalism. He has immense faith in man.
- Romain Rolland described Aurobindo as 'the completest synthesis of the culture of the East and of the West, holding in his outstretched hands the bow of creative impulse, the promise of a greater tomorrow'.
- The basis of his entire thought is his stress on the Life Divine which can be realized through Integral Yoga.
- Aurobindo's Yoga is not that of a *Sanyasi* who turns away from life in order to turn towards God. On the other hand, his Yoga is of the ordinary man who has put God on the shelf, while he carries on his worldly pursuits.
- Sri Aurobindo said that there are three things that education must take into account: (1) the man, (2) the nation or people and (3) universal humanity.
- Education to be complete must have five principal aspects relating to the five principal activities of the human being: the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual.
- Sri Aurobindo enumerated three principles of teaching: The first principle of true teaching is that nothing can be taught. The teacher is not an instructor or taskmaster, he is a helper and guide.

1.5 KEY TERMS

- **Universalism:** It refers to the theological doctrine that all people will eventually be saved.
- **Altruism:** It is the belief in or practice of disinterested and selfless concern for the well-being of others.
- **Postulate:** It refers to a thing suggested or assumed as true forming the basis for reasoning, discussion or belief.

- **Reincarnation:** It means the rebirth of a soul in a new body.
- **Polytheism:** It is the belief of multiple deities or a group of gods and goddesses
- **Seditious:** It means inciting or causing people to rebel against the authority of a state or monarch.
- **Detention:** It is the action of detaining someone or the state of being detained in official custody, especially as a political prisoner.
- **Cosmic:** It means of or relating to the universe or cosmos.
- **Esoteric:** It is something intended for or likely to be understood by only a small number of people with a specialized knowledge or interest.
- **Internationalism:** It is a political principle which advocates a greater political or economic cooperation among nations and people.
- **Integral Yoga:** It is the yoga-based philosophy and practice of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother (Mirra Alfassa). Central to Integral yoga is the idea that Spirit manifests itself in a process of involution, meanwhile forgetting its origins.

1.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. According to Swami Vivekananda, national unity can be achieved only through the acceptance of a common religion incorporating all the common principles of diverse religious sects.
2. The spirituality of a religion is the base which promotes the feeling of fraternity that leads to nationalism.
3. Universalism, according to Vivekananda, is based on the fact that the whole universe exists as a single entity. Therefore, the diversities that are exhibited on account of different nationalities would facilitate exchange of knowledge as well as mutual contacts.
4. Vivekananda described the caste system as individualistic because it encourages freedom of the group to maintain its own affairs and socialistic in the sense that each group thinks itself as a part of the community and cooperates with other groups to maintain social harmony and economic prosperity.
5. The three components of democracy are as follows:
   (a) Democracy as a way of life
   (b) Democracy as a form of government
   (c) Democracy as a decision-making process
6. Much of Aurobindo's political outlook on individual and nation was affected by his study of Bankim's *Anand Math*, *Krishan Charita* and *Dharma Tattva.*
7. Three important writings of Aurobindo Ghosh are *The Life Divine, The Mother and the Ideal of Karmayogi* and *The Ideal of Human Unity.*
8. According to Aurobindo man's deepest need is his aspiration for integral perfection.

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9. Aurobindo's theory of the State is based on his conception of the role of reason in the socio-political evolution of man.
10. According to Aurobindo, the first state of human evolution is infra-rational and is marked by the dominance of instincts and impulses.

1.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. How did Swami Vivekananda classify freedom?
2. What is the difference between individual freedom and social freedom?
3. What does Swami Vivekananda's theory of humanism assert?
4. What are the various methods of teaching and learning as given by Vivekananda?
5. Write a short note on Aurobindo's concept of *Dharmayudha*.
6. List the weaknesses of democracy as suggested by Aurobindo.
7. Write a short note on Aurobindo's Ashram at Pondicherry.
8. State the objectives underlying the International Centre of Education.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Explain Swami Vivekananda's concept of spiritualism in your own words.
2. Discuss the concept of internationalism as given by Swami Vivekananda.
3. Describe how Swami Vivekananda's concept of freedom leads to his concept of equality.
4. How does the book *The Life Divine* satisfy the deepest need of man?
5. Give the main features of Vivekananda's philosophy and describe at length his educational philosophy.
6. Discuss the term 'New Nationalism' in relevance to Sri Aurobindo Ghosh.
7. Describe Aurobindo's greatest contribution to the Indian political thought and freedom struggle in your own words.

1.8 FURTHER READING

Appadorai, A. 1987. *Indian Political Thinking in the 20th Century*. New Delhi: South Asian Publishers.

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UNIT 2 TAGORE AND GANDHI

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Structure

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will study about the renowned poet Rabindranath Tagore and the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi and their respective views on education.

Rabindranath Tagore, originally Ravindranatha Thakura (1861–1941), popularly known as Gurudev, was a litterateur, musician, and artist in the late 19th and early 20th century who achieved a synthesis between the Western and Eastern schools of thought. An instance of a flowering of an original genius, he was schooled, trained, inspired, and perfected by both the Western and Eastern traditions into a startlingly unique and original genius. He was the first non-European to win the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913. In translation, his poetry was viewed as spiritual and mercurial, and he is proudly referred to as 'the Bard of Bengal'. To study Rabindranath Tagore is to know the essence of Indian artistic traditions, to understand a great man who became a cultural hero and international figure.

Similarly, Mahatma Gandhi was the greatest Indian political thinker of modern India. He stood firm against British imperialism and colonial rule in India. He started and successfully guided India's freedom struggle. He is respected all over the world for his political and democratic ideals. He conceived the non-cooperation movement as a measure of discipline and self-sacrifice. Gandhi was a man of action. He was a realist and a pragmatist and believed in the essential goodness of man. He started the Swadeshi Movement. Gandhi opposed modern machine-based industrial development because according to him, they deprive men of their employment and render them jobless.

2.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Discuss the life and works of Rabindranath Tagore and explain his philosophy of humanism
- Examine Tagore's views on education and its various aspects
- Discuss idealism and naturalism in education and outline the background of his Shantiniketan Ashram and Visva Bharati
- Discuss the life and works of Mahatma Gandhi
- Describe the concept of Gandhian economics
- Assess the meaning of education as given by Gandhi

2.2 RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Tagore was born in 1861 in a family which was famous for its progressive and enlightened views. He was the fourteenth and the youngest son of Maharshi Devendranath, and grandson of Dwarkanath Tagore. He received his early education at home from a private tutor. He also studied the Upanishads, Astronomy and Sanskrit from his father. He loved beauty, music and poetry. He attended the seminary and the Bengal Academy for his other studies. When he had grown a little older he was sent to St. Xavier's School, Calcutta. Tagore was unable to adjust himself to the 'dead routine and lifeless teaching' of the educational institutions. His teachers pronounced that he was 'unfit' for studies. Tagore considered himself 'fortunate to escape' from these 'book-learning factories'. He observed later on, 'The Masters and Pandits who were charged with my education soon abandoned the thankless task ... and realized that this boy could never be driven along the beaten track of learning.'

In 1877 at the age of 16, Tagore was sent to England to study Law, but this subject did not appeal to him and he returned to India after a year. While in England he developed a taste in English literature and joined the London University for three months. While still young, he commenced writing for Bengali periodicals. His first collection of poems was published when he was only twenty.

In 1901, Tagore established a school at Bolpur, which was 93 miles from Calcutta. In 1921 this became the famous Visva Bharati, an international university seeking to bring about an understanding between eastern and western cultures.

In 1909, his world famous work *Gitanjali* was published. He visited England in 1912. An English edition of *Gitanjali* was published in 1912 and an introduction to it was written by the renowned Irish poet W. B. Yeats who regarded this as 'work of supreme culture'. Through this Tagore was introduced to the people of the West. The publication of the English version of *Gitanjali* was a turning point in his life. In 1913, Tagore was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. He became a world

figure in his own right. Besides visiting England thrice he visited Europe, Japan, Russia and the United States.

The then British Government made him the 'Knight' in 1915, but in 1919 he renounced it as a protest against the massacre of innocent people in Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar. While giving up the title, Tagore addressed a letter to the Viceroy on 29 May 1919 in which he expressed his sentiments in these words, '… Time has come when badges of honour make our shame glaring in the incongruous context of humiliation and I, for my part, wish to stand, shorn of all special distinctions by the side of those of my countrymen who for their so-called insignificance are liable to suffer degradation not fit for human beings.' From 1921 to 1941, the poet devoted his life to develop various institutions such as Kala Bhavan, Cheena Bhavan and others at Visva Bharati. Tagore, the great apostle of peace and universal brotherhood, passed away on 7 August 1941.

Tagore—A Traditionalist, Modernist, Nationalist and Internationalist

Tagore, sobriquet Gurudeva, represented a multitude of things. The most dominant impression which one gets about him is that he was one in the long line of ancient sages and *rishis* whom India has produced from time to time. Yet this tradition did not prevent him in the slightest from being a modern of moderns and making the whole world his field of thought and action. He was a Bengali, but this did not come in the way of his being a great Indian. He was an intense nationalist, yet his nationalism did not come in the way of his widest internationalism. He broke down barriers which might limit his personality and his message was to break down barriers wherever they were—in our customs, in our thinking, in our lives, in our general functioning and in our traditions.

Philosophy of Humanism

Tagore observed, 'I have great faith in, humanity. Like the sun it can be clouded, but never extinguished. I admit that at this time when the human races have met together as never before, the basic elements appear predominant. The powerful are exulting at the number of their victims. They take the name of science to cultivate in the school boy superstitions that they have certain physical signs indicating their eternal right to rule, as the explosive force of the earthquake once might have claimed, with enough of evidence, its never-ending sway over the destiny of this Earth. But they in their turn will be disappointed.'

Universal Culture

Tagore holds, 'The best and noblest gifts of humanity cannot be the monopoly of a particular race of a country, its scope may not be limited nor may it be regarded as the miser's hoard buried underground. We should remember that the doctrine of special creation is out of date and the idea of a specially favoured race belongs to a barbaric age. We have come to understand in modern times that any special culture which is wholly dissociated from the universal is not true at all. Only a prisoner condemned to a solitary cell is separate from the world. It will not do to keep our culture so reverently shackled with chains of gold. The age has come when all

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artificial fences are breaking down. Only that will serve which is basically consistent with the universal.

But before we are in a position to make a comparison with the other cultures of the world, or truly co-operate with them, we must base our own culture on a synthesis of all the different cultures we have.'

Religious View of Tagore

Gurudeva observed, 'My religion is a poet's religion; all that I feel about it is from vision and not from knowledge. I frankly say that I cannot satisfactorily answer your questions about evil, or about what happens after death. And yet I am sure that there have come moments when my soul has touched the infinite and has become intensely conscious of it through the illumination of joy. It has been said in our Upanishads that our mind and our words come away baffled from the Supreme Truth, but he who knows that, through the immediate joy of his own soul, is saved from all doubts and fears.'

Spiritual Unity

Rabindranath says, 'In the night we stumble over things and become actually conscious of their individual separateness, but the day reveals the great unity which embraces them. And the human being, whose inner vision is bathed in an illumination of his consciousness, at once realizes the spiritual unity reigning supreme over all differences of race, and his mind no longer awkwardly stumbles over individual facts of separateness in the human world; accepting them as final, he realizes that peace is in the inner harmony which dwells in truth, and not in any outer adjustments, that beauty carries an eternal assurance of our spiritual relationship to reality, which waits for its perfection in the response of our love.'

2.2.1 Tagore and Education

Tagore is of the view that education is nothing short of the highest purpose of human being—the fullest growth and freedom of soul. To the child, the environment will provide an ever-ready background for its spontaneous activity; to the adolescent, it will be an object of scientific or artistic curiosity; the adult will see in her the soil, on which his country and his people grow, the cultural and economic background of human existence.

All-round Education

Tagore says that there is a close and inseparable connection between the faculties of mind and the body. Each gains strength by cooperating with the other. If education of the body does not proceed along with education of the mind, the latter cannot gather strength. We should know that the great task of our educational effort in our institution is to provide for the education of the mind and all the senses through various activities. He believed that in his ashram every pupil should be taught to master some form of handwork or the other. To learn a particular type of handwork is not the main objective. The fact is that through the exercise of the limbs the mind is also strengthened.

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Realism in Education

Gurudeva believed that education should cover every aspect of our life—economic, intellectual, aesthetic, social and spiritual; and our educational institutions should be in the very heart of society, connected with it by the living bonds of varied cooperation. The purpose of true education is to realize at every step how training and knowledge have organic connection with our surroundings.

Education and Freedom of Mind

Tagore says, 'I believe that the object of education is the freedom of mind which can only be achieved through the path of freedom—though freedom has its risk and responsibility as life itself has. I know it for certain, though most people seem to have forgotten it, that children are living beings—more living than grown-up people, who have built their shells of habit around them. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary for their mental health and development that they should not have mere schools for their lessons, but a world whose guiding spirit is personal love. It must be an ashram where men have gathered for the highest end of life. In the peace of nature, where life is not merely meditative, but fully awake in its activities, where boys' minds are not being perpetually drilled into believing that the ideal of the self- idolatry of the nation is the truest ideal for them to accept; where they are bidden to realize man's world as God's Kingdom to whose citizenship they have to aspire; where the sunrise and sunset and the silent glory of stars are not daily ignored; where nature's festivities of flowers and fruit have their joyous recognition from man; and where the young and the old, the teacher and the student, sit at the same table to partake of their daily food and the food of their eternal life.'

Discipline and Freedom

Regarding education and freedom Tagore said, 'I never said to them: Don't do this, or don't do that. I never prevented them from climbing trees or going about where they liked. From the very first I trusted them and they always responded to my trust. Parents used to send me their most difficult children, who were supposed to be incorrigible. When the children found themselves in an atmosphere of freedom and trust, they never gave me any trouble. The boys were encouraged to manage their own affairs, and to elect their own judge, if any punishment was to be given. I never punished them myself.'

Discipline through Self-Government

Gurudeva held the following views on discipline, 'No coercion is employed to enforce discipline among the boys, they must come to realize, of their own accord, what is anti-social and what is desirable. Cooperation here again is encouraged and any disputes that arise are dealt with first in the Vichara Sabha, or court of justice, where they are settled or punishments meted out to the offenders. A record is kept of these cases, the offences and punishments. Should, however, the Vichara Sabha find itself incompetent to settle a dispute, the matter is taken to the teacher who is addressed as dada (elder brother) and who takes this as an opportunity of demonstrating how useless, wasteful and disturbing to fruitful work are dissensions and quarrels.'

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An Ideal School

According to Tagore, 'An ashram must be an ideal school where men have gathered for the highest end of life, in the peace of nature; where life is not merely meditative, but fully awake in its activities; where boys' minds are not being perpetually drilled into believing that the ideal of the self-idolatry of the nation is the truest ideal for them to accept; where they are bidden to realize man's world as God's kingdom to whose citizenship they have to aspire; where the sunrise and sunset and the silent glory of stars are not daily ignored; where nature's festivities of flowed and fruit have their joyous recognition from man; and where the young and the old, the teacher and the student, sit at the same table to partake of their daily food and the food of their eternal life.'

Learning through Mother Tongue

Tagore said, 'It was because we were taught in our own language that our mind quickened; learning should as far as possible follow the process of eating. When the taste begins from the first bite the stomach is awakened to its function before it is loaded, so that its digestive juices get full play. Nothing like this happens, however, when the Bengali boy is taught in English.'

'The first bite bids fair to wrench loose both rows of teeth—like a veritable earthquake in the mouth! And by the time he discovers that the morsel is not of the genus stone, but a digestible bonbon, half his allotted span of life is over. While one is choking and spluttering over the spelling and grammar, the inside remains starved, and when at length the taste is felt, the appetite has vanished.'

English Language

Tagore observed, 'We must admit that the English language cannot lose its seat of honour in our universities. It is not because it is indispensable to the present needs of our daily life, but because the science and learning of Europe have today won the respect of all mankind. To deny this fact gut of sheer national vanity will forebode evil. English education is as necessary for our economic and political security as for its powerful influence towards emancipating our mind and conduct from stupidity.'

Religious Education

Rabindranath articulated, 'What is really necessary is neither temples nor external rites and rituals. We want the ashram where the clear beauty of nature combined with the pure pursuits of the human mind has created a sacred site for worthy endeavours. Nature and the human spirit wedded together shall constitute our temple, and selfless good deed our worship…. Such a spot, if found, shall provide the true atmosphere for religious education. For, as I have said before, according to the mysteries of human nature, religious education is possible only in the natural atmosphere of piety; all artificial means only pervert or obstruct it.'

Teaching of Religion

Tagore realized that teaching of religion can never be imparted in the form of lessons, it is there where there is religion in living. Therefore, the ideal of the forest colony of

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the seekers of God as the true school of spiritual life holds good even in this age. Religion is not a fractional thing that can be doled out in fixed weekly or daily measures as one among various subjects in the school syllabus. It is the truth of our complete being, the consciousness of our personal relationship with the infinite; it is the true centre of gravity of our life. This we can attain during our childhood by daily living in a place where the truth of the spiritual world is not obscured by a crowd of necessities assuming artificial importance; where life is simple, surrounded by fullness of leisure by ample space and pure air and profound peace of nature; and where men live with a perfect faith in the eternal life before them.

True Culture

Culture brings fulfilment from the depths of the self to the faculties and aptitudes of a human being as a whole. Under its influence a human being spontaneously attains an all-around fulfilment, and the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake and the enthusiasm for unselfish actions become natural. True culture sets greater store by natural courtesy than mechanical observance of custom and convention. It does not encourage artificial politeness calculated to serve practical ends in human dealings. A cultured person will rather injure than humiliate himself. He is ashamed of purposely parading himself or selfishly forcing himself to the forefront. Whatever is mean or false pains him. He takes delight in respecting excellence in all spheres, because of his intimate acquaintance with all that is best in art, literature and history. He can judge and forgive and can appreciate the good point in others in spite of divergence of views. To be envious of others' success is to humiliate himself.

Tagore's Naturalism in Education

Tagore pleads in his essay 'Abaran' to let fresh air and free light into our mind and our life, and to uphold and honour the supremacy of this simple and the natural. Another essay titled 'Tapovan', (Forest Colony) may be considered a valuable supplement to 'Shiksa Samasya'. It interprets the spirit of the forest as the birthplace of ancient civilization. The unity or the universal consciousness runs through all existence, and the forest is its grand manifestation.

The forests hold a message to us of peace and purity, of sublime feeling and pure joy—of austerity and renunciation. Nature in the forest 'provides a grand perspective against which all objects, all feelings, lose their exaggerated shape and assume due proportions'. In 'Tapovan' a new idea is introduced. The message of the forest can be received and felt only through the expansion of sympathy or enlarging the 'feeling' aspect within us. It is not the eye or the ear, nor all the senses and not even the intellect that could read this grand message. It is only the feeling. One has to learn to feel, to enlarge the depth of feeling and the scope of sympathy. 'Bodher Sadhana', or what we may call 'Education of the Feeling'—that is really wanted. Tagore remarked, 'We must constantly remember that neither the education of the senses, nor the education of the intellect, but the education of the feeling should receive the place of honour in our schools.' That is why he pleads that 'our true education is possible only in the forest, through intimate contact with Nature and purifying austere pursuits.'

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'A Poet's School' is an important writing showing the place of Nature in life and education. Children have the gift of freshness of senses. They can become natural with Nature and human with the human society. Tagore said, 'For our perfection we have to be vitally savage and mentally civilized.' But the misery is that a child is offered crowded solitude in a city where humans are everywhere, with never a gap for the immense non-human, the Nature. The inexpensive power to be happy that the children bring to this world is 'constantly worn away by friction with the brick-and-mortar arrangement of life'. The city-built education does take no heed of the non-civilized in us, which thirsts for colour, for music, for the movement of life. This is why Tagore tried his best to develop in the children of his school 'the freshness of their feeling for Nature, a sensitiveness of soul in their relationship with their human surrounding'.

He pointed out the great significance of the school atmosphere in the life of children whose mind, like the tree, has the power to gather food and nourishment from its surroundings. The cultural atmosphere keeps the mind sensitive to rich racial inheritance, glorious traditions and concentrated wisdom of ages. The school atmosphere must also develop sensitiveness of the soul and allow freedom to the mind from the bondage of ignorance and apathy.

Tagore's Message of Freedom of Mind, Peace and Universal Love

At the doorsteps of the atom and hydrogen bomb, the world has much to learn from Tagore's message of freedom of mind, of peace and universal love, of fullness of life and human loyalty, so that a better world could be created out of the ashes of the old world. He says, 'When the mind is without fear and the need is held high, Where knowledge is free, When the world has not been broken into fragments by narrow domestic walls, where words come out from the depths of truth, Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection, Where the clear stream of reason has lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit, Where the mind is led forward by Thee into ever-widening thought and action, Into that heaven of Freedom, my Father, let my country awake.'

Shantiniketan Ashram (Abode of Peace)

Rabindranath was a great educational practitioner. He was not a dreamer who left behind a legacy of his principles and philosophy of life. He worked them out in the most constructive way. He had always wanted to create an atmosphere which he felt was more important than the teaching of life. From his own experience at school, he was convinced that the four walls of the classroom restricted the freedom of young children. The traditional school to him was like a prison house. He observed, 'the house was more like a pigeon-holed box than a human habitation…. Naturally our whole being was depressed. The time spent had been thoroughly wasted.' About his teachers he writes, 'Of the teachers, I remember only one, whose language was so foul that, out of sheer contempt for him, I steadily refused to answer any one of his questions.' He further remarks, 'I learnt about all the injustice, impatience, anger and partiality underlying the process of instruction, more easily than my lessons.' The school according to him was 'completely isolated from the surrounding life and

beauty'. It was a 'relentless nightmare like a jail'. The atmosphere was suffocating where no attempt was made 'to attract the boyish heart. The whole being was depressed'.

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Bases of Shantiniketan

It was in this background that the school was established in 1901 at Bolpur, which is located at a distance of about one hundred miles from Calcutta. Tagore established this school for giving practical shape to his ideals. Following were the main objectives of the school:

1. To give spiritual training to the students
2. To help the children cultivate a of love of Nature, and have sympathy for all living creatures
3. To impart knowledge to children in their mother tongue
4. To educate children by providing an atmosphere of freedom
5. To educate children by making them aware of their natural surroundings
6. To educate children by providing an environment of living aspiration based upon the contact between the teacher and the student
7. To provide an environment after the fashion of ancient 'Topavanas'—forest schools about which he had read so much in the Upanishads

Main Characteristics of the School

The main characteristics of the school are as follows:

1. It is based on the concept of freedom of the mind.
2. It is a co-educational and residential institution.
3. It is a community school where there is no distinction of caste and creed.
4. Mother tongue is the medium of instruction.
5. Teaching of crafts like sewing, book-binding, weaving, carpentry is provided in the school.
6. Drawing, art and music form an integral part of the curriculum.
7. Students are provided adequate opportunities for choosing their hobbies and occupations.
8. It is a self-governing institution—it has a dairy farm, post office, hospital and workshop. Students hold their own courts.
9. It provides for close personal contact with the teacher. The number of students in the classes is very small.
10. There is an atmosphere of freedom—an atmosphere that is free from do's and don'ts.
11. There is a well-equipped library.
12. It provides for manual labour.

13. It is situated in natural surroundings. There prevails the atmosphere of Nature's own beauty with her varied gifts of colours and dance, flowers and fruit, with the joy of her mornings and the peace of her starry nights.

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Visva Bharati

Tagore has described the main features as follows:

1. 'At first, I had founded the school in Shantiniketan and invited children here with the purpose of liberating them in the wide field of Nature. But gradually it occurred to me that the formidable gulf that existed between man and man had to be removed and all of men had to be released in the vast Universe of Man. This inner aspiration found expression in the history of the evolution of my institution. For, the institution that bore the name of Visva Bharati was founded with this call that man had to be set free not only in the field of Nature but also among mankind.'
2. 'The greatest distinction of our school is the direct and immediate emotional contact of our pupils with their teachers and with external nature.'
3. 'A speciality of our institution is that we want to bring up our pupils in inseparable association with Nature. We do not aim at the acute development of some particular faculties. Our aim is to bring about an all-round development of individual personality through harmonious union of the spirit with the environment.'
4. 'The power of man has reached its limit. The limit has come for striving for union. Shall we not succeed in initiating at our institution this supreme mission of our age? Shall we not succeed in holding before the world the ideal of the University of Man?'
5. 'Our centre of culture should not only be centre of the intellectual life of India, but the centre of her economic life also.'
6. 'Being strongly impressed with the need and the responsibility, which every individual today must realize according to his power, I have formed the nucleus of an International University as one of the best means of promoting mutual understanding between the East and the West.'
7. 'Before Asia is in a position to co-operate with the culture of Europe, she must base her own structure on a synthesis of all different cultures which she has.'

'In this belief, it is my desire to extend by degree the scope of this university on simple lines, until it comprehends the whole range of eastern cultures—the Aryan, Semitic, Mongolian and others. Its object will be to reveal the eastern mind to the world.'

Sriniketan—Centre of Rural Reconstruction

The objective of Sriniketan is to bring back life in its completeness into the villages, making them self-reliant and self-respectful, acquaint them with the cultural traditions of their own country, and make them competent so that they can use the modern resources for the improvement of their physical, intellectual and economic condition.

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The aims and objectives of the institute, as originally set forth in detail, are as follows:

1. To win the friendship and affection of villagers and cultivators by taking a real interest in all that concern their life and welfare, and by making a lively effort to assist them in solving their most pressing problems
2. To take the problems of the village and the field to the classroom for study and discussion and to the experimental farm for solution
3. To carry the knowledge and experience gained in the classroom and the experimental farm to the villagers in an endeavour to improve their sanitation and health; to develop their resources and credit; to help them to sell their produce and buy their requirements that gives them the maximum advantage; to provide them better method of growing crops and vegetables and of keeping livestock; to encourage them to learn and practise arts and crafts; and to bring home to them the benefits of associated life, mutual aid and common endeavour
4. To work out practically an all-round system of elementary education in the villages based on the boy scout ideal and training, with the object of developing ideas of citizenship and public duty such that they appeal to the villagers and are within their means and capacity
5. To encourage in the staff and the students of the department itself a spirit of sincere service and a willingness to sacrifice in the interest and in terms of comradeship with their poorer, less educated and greatly harassed neighbours in the village
6. To train the students to a sense of their own intrinsic worth, physical and moral, and in particular to teach them to do with their own hands everything which a village householder or cultivator does or should do for a living, possibly, more efficiently
7. To help students acquire practical experience in cultivation, dairying, animal husbandry, poultry keeping, carpentry, smithing, weaving, tanning, practical sanitation work and in the art and spirit of co-operation
8. To give the students elementary instruction in the science connected with their practical work to train them to think and record the knowledge acquired by them for their own benefit and for that of their fellowmen.

Various Institutions at Visva Bharati

Following are the various institutions which have developed at the Visva Bharati and form an integral part of this university:

1. Sisu Bhavan (Nursery School)
2. Path Bhavan (School Section—Matriculation Examination)
3. Siksha Bhavan (Higher Secondary)
4. Vidya Bhavan (College of Under-Graduate and Post-Graduate Studies and Research)

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5. Vinaya Bhavan (Teachers' College)
6. Kala Bhavan (College of Fine Arts and Crafts)
7. Sangit Bhavan (College of Music and Dance)
8. Sriniketan (Department of Rural Reconstruction)
9. Siksa Satra (Rural High School)
10. Silpa Sadana (College of Industrial Training)
11. Cheena Bhavan (School of Languages, e.g., Chinese, Tibetan, etc.)

Contribution and Influence of Tagore

Tagore was a great practitioner. He worked out his ideas and ideals in a very constructive way. The fulfilment of all his theories and concepts found expression in various directions. He 'struggled to implement his social ideals and strove to build up a social structure through education'. He created Shantiniketan to realize his educational ideals. In the words of Calcutta University Syndicate, 'Through him (Tagore) India has given her message to mankind and his unique achievements in the field of literature, philosophy, education and art have won imperishable fame for himself and have raised the status of India in the estimation of the world.'

Tagore, the versatile genius and the giver of our National Anthem *Jana gana mana,* called upon the Indians to nourish the unity of the country and be devoted to it.

As a naturalist philosopher, Tagore surpasses Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Froebel. Foster Watson observes in Encyclopaedia and Dictionary of Education, 'Tagore substantially adopts Rousseau's ideal of return to nature, but included human nature, as well as external nature, basing both upon a primal sympathy.' In place of 'Negative Education' of Rousseau, Tagore wanted richer environment of experience and ideas. Rousseau's ideology remained theoretical. On the other hand, Tagore gave a practical shape to his ideology. Tagore was a realist. He also deserves credit for having attempted for the revival of ancient Indian ideals of education in the modern times and combining what is best in western arts and sciences with the manners, customs and arts of India. His stature stands out at the cross-road of two ages—traditional and modern; and of two worlds—The East and the West.

Factors influencing Tagore's philosophy of education

Tagore's philosophy of education was influenced by the following factors:

1. Influence of the home environment
2. Influence of the school environment
3. Love for Nature
4. His extensive visits

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Who wrote *Gitanjali*? When was it published?
2. State Tagore's view of education.
3. What is Tagore's view on teaching of religion?
4. When was the school at Shantiniketan established?
5. List three main objectives of the school at Shantiniketan.
6. What is the objective of Sriniketan?

2.3 MAHATMA GANDHI

M. K. Gandhi (Mohandas Karam Chand Gandhi) was born on 2 October 1869, at Porbander in Kathiawad. His father was a Dewan of a petty state: As a student at school, he was slow, shy and hesitant. However, his observance of truth was real and continuous. After matriculating at the age of 18, he was sent to England for qualifying himself for the bar. On his return to India after four years, he practised law in Bombay but was not very successful. In April 1893, he sailed for Durban in South Africa in connection with professional work on behalf of a firm. His stay in South Africa for about 20 years was the formative period of his political life. It was in South Africa that he put into practice his weapon of *Satyagraha* (the policy of non-violent resistance) when he saw a series of insulting events of disgracing Indians. He founded the Natal Indian Congress in 1894.

Gandhi's educational philosophy took shape through his educational experience at the Tolstoy Farm at Transvaal in South Africa. On the farm he undertook the responsibility of educating his own sons and other children. The children had to devote 8 hours a day for vocational training and only 2 hours to book learning. The children aged from 6 to 16 were very happy in 'learning by doing' and 'learning by cooperation'.

Having won his laurels in South Africa, Gandhi came to India in 1914. He continued his educational experiments for a short time at Shantiniketan and then at Sabarmati and Sewagram, where he established his own ashrams. Sewagram Ashram is located 11 miles from Wardha. It was here that Gandhi not only conceived the idea of his new system of education but also fought his battle for freedom.

2.3.1 M. K. Gandhi: Life and Works

Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) came on to the Indian political scene at a crucial period of the Indian national movement. The people had lost faith in the principle of political moderation as imperialistic exploitation and oppression had become extremely severe and the whole nation was reeling under poverty and deprivation. The Moderate leaders had been rejected, but the Extremists and Terrorists were equally frustrated and leaderless. With most of the extremists behind bars and with the increasing

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intensity of repressive measures by the government, political extremism had been severely restricted. Extremist leaders like Aurobindo Ghosh, Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai, changed their political methods and programme after the Surat Congress in 1907. It appeared that for the time being, at least, they had suspended their uncompromising attitude towards the government. Aurobindo Ghosh condemned the terrorists and stressed that in their struggle for their rights, Indians should not harbour hatred for the government established by law. He also moderated his earlier stand of revolution by saying that his party would be prepared to cooperate with the government on the basis of progressive steps towards Swaraj.

Bipin Chandra Pal also changed his uncompromising stand by proclaiming openly that passive resistance did not deny the British government of India its right to rule. It was mainly aimed against the arbitrary and excessive administrative authority. Lajpat Rai too had become frustrated with the results of the militant movement in Punjab and the consequent government oppression. He, therefore, avoided political activity and gave his time to three issues—famine relief, Hindu–Muslim relations, and the untouchables.

At this critical juncture, the country was in dire need of a leader of the stature and determination of Mahatma Gandhi. In his personality, there was the harmonious blending of the best elements of political moderation and extremism. Like the moderates, he had great faith in the sense of justice and fair play of the British government. He had great admiration for the parliamentary institutions of Britain and during the First World War, he appealed to the Indian people to extend all help to the British government. He accepted G. K. Gokhale as his political 'Guru' and preached the principles of love and ahimsa, including love towards the enemy—the British government. But at the same time, he knew that the moderate methods of prayers and petitions would no longer be of any use. He talked with a strength and determination unknown to the extremist leaders, and even while talking softly but steadfastly in the language of love and non-violence, he struck terror in the hearts of the imperialist rulers. He symbolized religious nationalism with all its esoteric significance and like the extremists, had the highest regard for India's ancient traditions, customs and culture. He was a humanist and radical revivalist who fought against superstitious practices, religious hatred, casteism and many other kinds of vested Indian interests with equal vigour and dynamism.

With the passage of time, Gandhi became increasingly disillusioned with the British government in which he once had great confidence. During the First World War, Gandhi had asked the Indians to support the British government and make sacrifices with the hope that the government would take progressive steps in the direction of realization of Swaraj. But the Government of India Act, 1919 was a bitter experience for Gandhi.

The Government of India Act, 1919, known as the Montagu–Chelmsford Reforms, introduced the novel system of diarchy in the provincial government. The functions of the government were divided into two halves—the reserved and the transferred. The governor with an irresponsible bureaucracy administered the reserved subjects and he administered the transferred subjects on the advice of the

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responsible ministers. This led to serious complications and resulted in deadlocks between the two halves of the government.

The Central Government had not undergone any change. The Government of India was still responsible to the British Parliament through the secretary of state. It was still an unrepresentative government with large powers in the hands of the officials. The autocratic and repressive nature of the government did not change. There was no indication of the government becoming more responsive to public demands or public welfare. All this was very much against Gandhi's expectations.

Gandhi's bitterness with the British government increased after the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy, the proclamation of Martial Law in Punjab and the findings of the Hunter Committee. He lost all faith in the good sense and fair play of the British government, and decided to start the non-violent and non-cooperation movement.

With the advent of Mahatma Gandhi, Indian politics in general and the nationalist movement, in particular, assumed a kind of dynamism which was not known before. Under the leadership of Gandhi, the Congress decided to launch the non-cooperation movement in 1920. The movement was proposed to be a revolutionary step aimed at completely paralyzing British administration in India. For the first time in its history, the Indian National Congress decided to follow a policy of direct action.

There were several reasons for the Congress to launch the non-cooperation movement. Gandhi was convinced that there was the need for creating a mass base for the Congress and to involve the whole nation in the movement. Without mass participation and support mobilization, it was not possible to put pressure on the British to get them to concede to genuine Indian demands and give up the policy of bureaucratic high-handedness and despotism.

Gandhi was sure that the old method of cooperation with the government and faith in the British sense of justice had to be given up. It was possible for Gandhi to decide on a course of direct action against the British government in India, as by 1920, the moderates had been completely eliminated from the Congress and the extremists were in a majority.

After the First World War, Turkey had been humiliated and it suffered many restrictions owing to the Treaty of Sevres, which it was forced to sign with the Allies. The Muslims of India greatly resented the British attitude towards Turkey and started the Khilafat Movement against the British government. Gandhi extended support to the Khilafat Movement and he was sure that in the event of the Congress starting a non-cooperation movement, the Muslims of India would join hands with it as well.

The non-cooperation resolution was moved by Mahatma Gandhi himself in the Calcutta Congress, held in September 1920, under the president-ship of Lala Lajpat Rai. Although the non-cooperation resolution was opposed by C. R. Das, B. C. Pal, Annie Besant, Madan Mohan Malviya and Jinnah, Gandhi was able to get it passed by a majority of 1855 against 873.

The famous non-cooperation resolution passed by the Congress said, 'In view of the fact that on the Khilafat question both the Indian and imperial governments

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have signally failed in their duty towards the Muslims of India and the prime minister had deliberately broken his pledged word that it is the duty of every non-Muslim Indian in every legitimate manner to assist his Muslim brother in his attempts to remove the religious calamity that has overtaken him, and in view of the fact that in the matter of the events of April 1919 both the said governments have grossly neglected or failed to protect the innocent people of the Punjab and punish officers guilty of un-soldierly and barbarous behaviour towards them and have exonerated Sir Michael O'Dwyer, who proved himself directly responsible for most of the official crimes and also callous to the suffering of the people placed under his administration, and in view of the fact that the debate in the House of Commons and specially in the House of Lords, betrayed an awful lack of sympathy with the people of India and showed virtual support to the systematic terrorism and frightfulness adopted in the Punjab and the latest vice regal pronouncement is proof of the entire absence of repentance in the matters of Khilafat and the Punjab, this Congress is of the opinion that there can be no contentment in India without redress of these two wrongs and that the only effectual means to vindicate national honour and to prevent a repetition of similar wrongs in future is the establishment of Swaraj.'

In addition, it was said, 'This Congress is further of the opinion that there is no course left open for the people of India, but the approval of and the adoption of the policy of progressive non-violent, non-cooperation, until the said wrongs are righted and Swaraj is established.'

2.3.2 Gandhism: Ideas and Ideals

M. K. Gandhi was a man of action, a realist and a pragmatist. Even though he was an ordinary man like any other, he was able to achieve that realization, which made him the 'Mahatma'. He was essentially a religious man. He was not a politician. In his own words, he was not a politician masquerading as a religious man, but a religious man, who had been dragged into politics because of his great concern for his fellow human beings. He, therefore, practiced whatever he professed and never asked to follow anything that he had not practised in his own life. He did not believe in armchair theorizing or system-building. Thus, it was intuition and action rather than logic and system-building, which characterized the political philosophy of Gandhi. He entered the hot-bed of politics to emancipate the people from the yoke of foreign domination. Swaraj, therefore, was the most important thing, which he kept in the forefront of his political programme. To achieve Swaraj, Gandhi adopted certain means and worked out his programme with the help of these means. The principles, which were followed by Mahatma Gandhi, were woven into a political philosophy by his followers. Gandhi did not differentiate between thought and action; for him, to think was to act.

With his novel method of non-violent struggle against the British imperialists, Gandhi became a dynamic force in the political and spiritual life of India. The Indians could have never fought the British with force, because it would have been suppressed by still greater force, which the British commanded. The symbolic use of the weapons of non-violence and Satyagraha were responsible for spreading patriotic fervour throughout the country. The British were not prepared for such an attack and had to

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surrender. During this period, Gandhi became the most vital force and his life and activities were identified with the Indians' struggle for national independence. His spiritual and moral impact was so great that after his assassination the Manchester *Guardian* rightly commented that 'he was a saint among politicians and a politician among saints'. Gandhi's sincerity of purpose, his devotion to duty and the noble principles that he practiced, made him the ideal of many national leaders in India. Humayun Kabir had rightly said that Gandhi was an objective student of reality and that his method was essentially experimental and scientific. Jawaharlal Nehru, who was a close associate of Gandhi for many years, has said 'we are associated (with him) seldom in logical debate and argument or philosophical discourses, we were associated in action'.

Influence on the thought of Gandhi

Gandhi read little in the realm of political theory or political thought. But whatever he read, he assimilated perfectly. He read the Bhagavad Gita and gave it a novel interpretation. He read it several times and considered it as the book of spiritual reference. He learnt about truth and non-violence from the Bhagavad Gita. He was also influenced by Patanjali's *Yogasutra*, the Ramayana and Mahabharata. He read some of the Jain and Buddhist writings and was deeply influenced by the principles of truth and non-violence. From the Upanishads, he got the inspiration for his faith in non-possession. He read the New Testament of the Bible and was greatly influenced by the 'Sermon on the Mount'. The dying words of Jesus: 'Father forgive them for they know not what they do', awakened Gandhi's faith in the rightness and value of Satyagraha.

The teachings of Lao-Tse and Confucius also influenced Gandhi's thought to some extent. Lao-Tse had taught the philosophy of non-assertiveness of ideal life. From the writings of Confucius, Gandhi learnt the principles of reciprocity. The principle means that men should not do to others what they would not do to themselves.

Secular writers like Thoreau, Ruskin and Tolstoy also influenced the moral and political philosophy of Gandhi. He learnt the principle of civil disobedience from Thoreau. Ruskin instilled in Gandhi, respect for manual labour. Tolstoy inspired him to think in terms of philosophical anarchism.

Comparing Thoreau and Gandhi, Pyarelal Nayyar says, 'Neither of these thinkers was a system-builder but both were profound thinkers, truth-seekers and truth-speakers. Both had a passion for truth and both represented a philosophy in action. Both also believed in the ideal of voluntary poverty.'

Philosophy behind Political Action: Spiritualization of Politics

Gandhi was not a politician in the ordinary sense of the term. But he exhibited unusual tact and intelligence in choosing the time as well as the methods and techniques to be used in launching his non-violence agitation. This made him the ideal of all the political leaders, who were striving for India's independence. The greatest contribution of Mahatma Gandhi to political theory and politics was the spiritualization of politics. He believed that if politics is to be a blessing for mankind and not a curse, then it has to be guided by moral and spiritual principles. The

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leaders must be guided by a sense of sacrifice and service. Gandhi stressed the importance of means and said that right and just means must be adopted to achieve right and just ends. Only the right means, he believed, could lead to the right ends. Thus, according to him the ends and the means are the same things, looked at from different points of view.

Philosophical Anarchism

Gandhi believed in the essential goodness of man. According to him, left unto himself, man can develop his spiritual and moral personality. Man alone is capable of achieving wonders in the world. The state should not interfere in the activities of the individual. Gandhi believed that the state is an instrument of exploitation. It exploits and oppresses the poor. The excessive interference of the state kills individual initiative and action. The state originates in an essentially violent society but in a society where the people are non-violent, orderly and disciplined, the state becomes unnecessary. Gandhi believed that all initiative must come from within man. Anything that is imposed by an external agency is evil, because it does not elevate the human soul. It deprives and degrades the human soul and stands as a positive hindrance to the spiritual and moral development of the individual's personality. In his introduction to Thoreau's essay on Civil Disobedience, Mahatma Gandhi (quoted by Pyarelal) writes, 'I heartily accepted the motto, that government is best which governs least … carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe, that government is best which governs not at all.' Instead of state activity, Gandhi preferred individual activity. The instruments of state, like force and coercion, rob individual action of its morality. Both Thoreau and Gandhi looked upon the state as a soulless machine. The ideal society envisaged by Gandhi is a stateless democracy. About the state of his imagination, he wrote in his *Young India*, 'In such a state (of enlightened anarchy) everyone is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour. In the ideal state, therefore, there is no political power, because there is no state.'

In spite of his distrust for the state, Gandhi did not dogmatize it. He believed that the state is necessary to perform certain functions for the good of the masses. He wanted it to exercise minimum functions, transferring more and more functions to voluntary associations. State action should be judged on its own merit and only that action which promoted the welfare of the masses was to be justified. In performing its functions, the state's object should be to serve the masses and these functions must be performed with minimum use of force. The state must follow persuasive rather than coercive methods.

Welfare Concept of the State

According to Humayun Kabir, Gandhi was an inheritor of the liberal tradition; of the tradition of philosophical anarchism; and of the tradition of collectivism, that the good things of life ought to be shared. He would support a welfare state because of his great concern for the masses. Gandhi would have liked the Five Year Plans and other methods of planned development if they could have originated of the people. But a plan which increases government post, favouritism, nepotism and opportunities, corruption and laziness, would have been definitely rejected by him. He was, therefore,

not in favour of concentration of heavy industries and the grand multipurpose river valley projects, which did not benefit the people in the proportion of the huge amounts spent on them.

His concern for the misery and exploitation of human beings compelled him to start a vigorous agitation against untouchability in whatever form it might exist. He condemned the practice of untouchability and broke the unhealthy practice of the caste system by such means continuous propaganda against untouchability. But at the same time, he upheld the Hindu ideal of the *varnashrama dharma*, according to which every person was to perform his allotted task in the society, in accordance with his training and capacities. Gandhi's ideal of 'class' was not Marxian. He called himself a weaver and a cultivator by profession and identified himself with those people with regard to food, dress, speech and the like.

Philosophy of Non-violence

Non-violence as taught and practiced by Gandhi is a product of the Indian doctrine of ahimsa or non-injury. Also, it means refraining from causing pain or taking anybody's life. Ahimsa means avoiding injury to anything on earth, in thought, word and deed. It also means the avoidance of harsh words, harsh judgements, ill-will, anger and cruelty. It means that one should not even permit an uncharitable thought against one's enemy.

On its positive side, ahimsa is similar to the Christian principle of love. It is omnipotent, infinite and synonymous with God himself. It is an all pervasive eternal principle.

Gandhi was not the originator of the idea of non-violence and other such means. However, he was the first to use them on a mass scale and in the field of politics.

As followed and practiced by Gandhi, non-violence did not mean weak submission to one's enemy, passivity or pacifism or sitting with one's hand folded in the face of danger or evil. It did not submit to the will of the evil doer. It is in short, Satyagraha, which means resistance to evil with all the moral and spiritual force that a person can command. It is the use of moral force or firmness in the vindication of truth. It stands for self-sacrifice and conscious self-suffering. In Gandhi's own words, 'It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer.' It is positive, dynamic and constructive.

Satyagraha is the weapon of the non-violent struggle. According to Gandhi, it can be successfully followed by those who are physically and morally strong but never by those who are morally weak. Pyarelal however writes, 'The starting point of Gandhi's technique was that non-violence is the strength of the weak.' It can also be used by women and children and illiterate man who are generally considered to be weak. Satyagraha means non-violent resistance to evil, not by another evil but by good. It is the overcoming of evil by good. In Gandhi's own words, 'The injunction, love your enemy is not only the noblest idealism, it is the most practical politics.'

Truth must be the basic principle of Satyagraha. Therefore, non-violence is a struggle for truth. The *satyagrahi* who wages the non-violent struggle must see

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that the cause for which he fights is absolutely true, so far as God enables him to see the truth. Whenever he knows that there is a violation of the principle of truth, he must not hesitate to confess it and renounce whatever gains he may have made. For the *satyagrahi*, truth is even more precious than victory. Thus, non-violent struggle is impossible without the realization of the principle of truth. It cannot be taken in a light-hearted spirit. According to Gandhi, it is not enough to say that God is Truth, rather, Truth is God. Thus, truth brings the *satyagrahi* nearer to God. He takes his orders from Him.

Gandhi believed that there is something of God in every man and that the *satyagrahi* can appeal to this divine element in man through love and conscious self-suffering. The satyagrahi has to rouse the moral giant who lies asleep in the nature of every man, through love and conscious self-suffering. In the words of Pastor Niemoller: 'Suffering strengthens those who suffer and weakness those who inflict suffering.' If truth is the basic principle of non-violence, love is the means by which it is realized. Non-violence according to Gandhi can 'melt even the stoniest hearts'. Gandhi discarded the use of force and wanted to convince his opponents through persuasion. It was also his conviction that one could hate the evil without hating the evil-doer. This he proved on several occasions, in his relations with the British. He said, 'If my love is sincere I must love the Englishman in spite of my distrust.' At another time, he said, 'I am fighting British imperialism, but I am not fighting the British. I am not fighting the Englishman or anybody. They are my friends but I will fight British imperialism.'

In the practice of non-violence, truth is the foundation and love is the weapon. Referring to the importance of love in the practice of non-violence, Gandhi writes, 'Love never claims. It ever gives. Love ever suffers, never resents, and never revenges itself.' Thus, for Gandhi, non-violence was a total philosophy of life, pervading the whole life of man and not applied merely to isolated acts.

Gandhi had tremendous faith in the goodness of his fellow men just as he had unshakable faith in God. He had abounding faith in human possibilities and strongly believed that human nature is never beyond redemption. He rightly believed that the masses are not always required for waging a non-violent struggle. According to him, 'One man can offer it just as well as millions.'

Satyagraha and fasting were usually criticized as forms of moral coercion. But Gandhi insisted that it was not coercion from any point of view—economic, psychological, political or moral. Fasting was prayer for Mahatma Gandhi. He said that fasting crucified the flesh and elevated the soul. 'A genuine fast', claimed Gandhi 'cleans the body, mind and soul. It crucifies the flesh and, to that extent, sets the soul free.' The call to fast, said Gandhi, came to him as a voice of God, after a great deal of mental and spiritual struggle. His fasting was meant to influence the people morally. Satyagraha and fasting were conscious self-suffering, and were meant to awaken the moral giant that lies dormant in every man. They were meant to quicken the conscience of the people. Satyagraha or fasting is an appeal to man's reason and his sense of decency and is not moral coercion. Gandhi had tremendous and almost child-like faith in the moral capacity of one's opponent.

The *satyagrahi*, in order to fight the non-violent warfare, has to prepare himself for it by self-discipline, civility and inner purity. Gandhi writes that a *satyagrahi* should adopt poverty, observe chastity, follow truth and cultivate fearlessness. The *satyagrahi* has to be bold and shed the last vestige of cowardice. Fearlessness, Gandhi says, come out of selflessness. When one renounces self, there is nothing to fear. In Gandhi's words, 'If you want to follow truth, fearlessness is absolutely necessary. Fearlessness is the first requisite of spirituality. Cowards can never be moral.' In order to develop fearlessness, the *satyagrahi* must cultivate an attitude of non-attachment towards the material things of life. One should be in the world but not out of it. Gandhi held that so 'many of the so-called comforts of life are not only indispensable but are positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind. Renunciation is the way to realization.' This non-attachment and renunciation will give the required inner purity and character to the *satyagrahi*. The *satyagrahi* has to be perfectly disciplined without which the mind cannot attain the requisite firmness.

In the non-violence struggle, one should not be in a hurry for results. It requires great patience and perseverance, because at times, non-violent methods take much longer than violent methods to produce results. The non-violent fighter knows no defeat because of his infinite faith in God. However, Gandhi did not equate patience and perseverance with lethargy and fatalism.

2.3.3 Gandhi and Economics

'When the history of economic thought in India in recent times comes to be written,' wrote Anjaria (1941-2) an economist, 'Gandhi's name will certainly occupy a place of honour in it.' However, he hastened to add, 'it does not matter in this context whether we call Gandhi an economist or not: that is partly, at any rate, a question of definition of terms.'

Indeed, Gandhi was much further off the mainstream of economics than other Indian nationalist economists, such as Ranade, had been. Railways have spread the bubonic plague and increased the frequency of famines in India; machinery is a 'grand yet awful invention'; a doctor or a lawyer should be paid the same wage as a labourer; the law of supply and demand is 'a devilish law'; tractors and chemical fertilizers will spell ruin for India'; tractors and chemical fertilizers will spell ruin for India. It is for voicing opinions such as these that Gandhi as an economist is remembered. Even a sympathetic reader may find it difficult to take such statements at their face value. This could help explain why, although Gandhi has come to be accepted worldwide as one of the outstanding political and moral thinkers of our time, his economic thought still attract little attention. Some of the methodological issues involved will be considered here.

Gandhi himself often likens his economic 'model' to Euclid's definition of a straight line but this is consistent with either interpretation. It could mean that like the straight line 'which cannot be drawn' the Gandhian model relates to an ideal economic order where people could well be motivated quite differently from those in any society that we know of. However, it could also mean that 'something like a straight line' can be drawn, and in economics as in geometry, the postulation method can help in achieving clarity in thought and in solving real-life problems, for 'we

must have a proper picture of what we want before we can have something approaching it'. Both versions contain elements of truth.

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Gandhi was not an academic but the charismatic leader of the Indian national movement. He was inspired by a vision of 'Swaraj' (self-government) which, for him, meant not just freedom from colonial rule but the achievement of self-reliance, and self-respect, by the villagers who make up most of India's population. His economics was a part of this vision, which ruled out industrialization on Western lines as the 'optimal' path of economic development for India.

Thus, Gandhi was trying to describe an economic ideal to strive for rather than simply an economic plan to implement. To that extent his economics was utopian. However, 'utopian' can also refer to something 'impractical' or even 'impossible'. Gandhi's economic thought was not 'utopian' in that sense. It was currently meant to apply to an actual society, that of rural India in particular. It would still apply only to a few selected aspects of that society while neglecting others but that is true of all economic models. The case for this 'pragmatic' view of Gandhian economics appears more plausible if we remember the context of his writings.

Most of them appeared in daily newspapers or weekly journals, *Young India* (in English), *Navajiban* (in Gujarati), and *Harijan* (in Hindi), and were addressed to a mass audience whose attention he tried to capture by making his points short and sharp. In this, he succeeded and as a journalist, especially during the 1920s and 1930s, he exercised considerable influence. Exaggeration was the price of successful journalism. It must be remembered too that Gandhi's writings were produced and published in the heat of political battle. This led to simplified, sometimes over-simplified, conclusions.

Yet another argument in favour of this interpretation is that Gandhi regarded his conclusions on economic policy as only provisional. Thus, in his preface to *Hind* Swaraj, he described the views expressed there as 'mine, yet not mine'. They were his only in the sense that he hoped to act according to them. If, however, his views proved to be wrong he would have no hesitation in rejecting them. Gandhi's American biographer, Louis Fischer, notes this provisional aspect of Gandhi's ideas; he was always 'thinking aloud: He did not attempt to express his ideas in a finished form. You heard not only his words but also his thoughts. You could, therefore, follow him as he moved to a conclusion'. In the same spirit he came to admit that some of the things he had earlier condemned, for example, railways, motorcars and machinery, could in certain circumstances confer benefits too, and that they should not be prohibited altogether. Appropriate restrictions on their use could perhaps provide adequate safeguards against misuse.

Writings on Gandhian economics have usually focused attention on the specific policies that he proposed. Opposition to modern manufacturing production based on the use of machinery; advocacy of village industries, in particular, the spinning wheel; boycott of foreign goods—it is with policies such as these that Gandhi's name is associated. In our argument proper understanding of his views requires a rather different emphasis. The structure of his arguments, the assumptions he made, and the principles of conduct that he appealed to, must be regarded as of central

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importance. It is these, we believe, that make his specific policy proposals comprehensible, not the other way round. We thus agree with Anjaria that 'Gandhism is not just a series of disjointed maxims of policy or a catalogue of urgent reforms and remedial measures' that 'What is called Gandhism is…. only a distinctive attitude to society and politics rather than an ideology; a particular ethical standpoint rather than fixed formulae or a definitive system.'

From this point of view what really differentiates Gandhi's approach to economic issues from the mainstream tradition is his extraordinary emphasis on the ethical aspect of economic behaviour. Indeed, he believed that economic and ethical questions were inseparable. Replying to the poet Tagore, who had reproached him for mixing these up, Gandhi wrote, 'I must confess that I do not draw a sharp or any distinction between economics and ethics' (*Young India*, 3 October 1921). They could, Gandhi said be considered separately, as indeed they usually were; but for conclusions to be relevant and valuable, they should not.

Ethical and economic criteria must be considered together for either to be valid. True economics never militates against the highest ethical standard just as all true ethics, to be worth its name, must at the same time 'be good economics'. Since for Gandhi ethics also constitutes the essence of religion, the same two-way relationship holds as between economics and religion, and even more generally between economics and Dharma. 'If dharma and economic interests cannot be reconciled either the conception of that dharma is false or the economic interest takes the form of unmitigated selfishness and does not aim at collective welfare.' According to Gandhi it is because standard economic analysis failed to take ethical considerations into account that economics itself had become largely irrelevant for either understanding behaviour or prescribing policy. Not only were the generally accepted principles of economics invalid for policy making, if they *were* acted upon they would make individuals and nations unhappy. 'Economists do not take men's conduct into account but estimate prosperity from the amount of wealth accumulated and so conclude that the happiness of nations depends on their wealth alone.' Accordingly, he likens the economics that disregards moral and sentimental considerations to 'wax-works that being life-like still lack the life of the living the flesh'.

For all his distrust of economic analysis, Gandhi never relinquished a belief in the vital importance of economic considerations for the life of individuals and nations, nor in the possibility that a less narrowly focused and more relevant economics could be developed. He never gave up entirely, never ceased to ask: 'Can we evolve a new kind of economics?'

These beliefs are an integral part of Gandhi's view of the nature of ethics. The relationship between economics and ethics worked both ways. While economic behaviour was laden with ethical concepts, ethics had to descend from the clouds and become 'good economics'. Ethics, Gandhi is saying, is not simply an exercise for philosophers. It must be relevant to the 'ordinary business of life' where one's options are limited by resource constraints. 'No person in this world has found it possible to maintain something which is a source of constant economic loss'. Trying

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to carry out ethically good policies by methods involving continuing economic loss was futile. Viable methods of financing projects had to be found. This helps explain why Gandhi, who worked all his life for the cause of protecting animals, and cows in particular, regarded schemes for conducting tanneries on sound economic lines as essential for the cause to succeed. That required exploring possibilities of profitable export, utilizing by-products, and 'putting bones, hides and intestines of cows to practical use'; and similar reasoning explains why Gandhi strongly opposed a proposal that cotton spinners should also be encouraged to weave. 'It can be clearly shown that this involves an economic disadvantage.' He continues, 'Whatever is basically harmful on economic grounds is also certainly harmful from the religious point of view. Untainted wealth can never be opposed to religion'.

On the whole we agree with Anjaria that 'the Gandhian system of economic thought cannot be adequately appraised merely in terms of current economic theory that rests on certain limited assumptions. It is a challenge to those assumptions themselves'. In that sense, Gandhi must be regarded as a dissident from the economic tradition. There are, however, a number of methodological positions that he held in common with that tradition. Among these, his adherence to the deductive method and to methodological individualism are especially noteworthy.

Gandhi was generally in favour of analytical reasoning based on the deductive method applied to a set of postulates. His writings contain numerous references to Euclid and Galileo whose approaches to problem solving he held out as models for the social sciences. While he criticized economic analysis for failing to take ethical considerations into account he was not against the method of abstraction as such. Some 'holist' critics of economics maintain that human behaviour constitutes a single 'organic' whole. Hence, they argue that even in principle, its economic aspect cannot be isolated from all the others. On this view human behaviour can only be observed or understood 'as a whole'. Because the method of abstraction does not apply, there cannot then be any such thing as 'economic analysis'. That was not Gandhi's view. He remained committed to the validity of analytical reasoning based on the method of abstraction. 'Euclid's straight line may not be capable of being drawn on a blackboard. But the impossibility of the task cannot be permitted to alter the definition'. The problem with the economic mode, as Gandhi saw it, was not that it abstracted from some aspects of reality but rather that the particular aspects it abstracted from were central to the phenomena under study. Ethical influences on economic behaviour could not properly be treated as disturbing factors that 'prevented economic laws from having free play'. It was not reasonable to abstract from them even as a first approximation. Nevertheless, if more appropriate assumptions were made valid conclusions could be reached using the deductive method.

Again, Gandhi's approach in ethics as in economics remains firmly rooted in methodological individualism. He opposed collectivist theories both of state and society. While he often chided his countrymen for failing to live up to the high moral norms of their own past, the norms themselves could not be derived from tradition, custom or religious text. 'It was good to swim in the waters of tradition but to sink in them was suicide' while 'to respect a tradition even when it becomes tyrannous

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spells not life but death and it should be discarded'. Thus, Hinduism was hemmed in by many old customs, some of which were praiseworthy but the rest were to be condemned. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata had logical and analytical truth but were not to be taken literally nor treated as historical record. Gandhi's belief in Hindu scriptures did not require him to accept every word and every verse as divinely inspires, and he declined to be bound by any interpretation, however learned it might be, if it was repugnant to reason or moral sense . Even the Vedas were not exempt. 'No matter what is credited with Vedic origin if it is repugnant to the moral sense it must be summarily rejected as contrary to the spirit of the Vedas and perhaps what is more as contrary to fundamental ethics'.

Gandhi had great respect for other religions, as he held for his own, and often quoted from the Bible or the Quran to make a point. Yet they too were subject to the same judgement, 'I reject any religious doctrine that does not appeal to reason and is in conflict with morality.' As Gandhi often used religious terminology (a 'saintly idiom' as it has been called) in his speeches and writings, the critical, individual and rational nature of his approach to religion has sometimes been missed. Since it was only individuals who reasoned who had moral sense and exercised moral choice, individual conscience remained for him the ultimate court of appeal. Nation and society were not conceptually 'prior' to the individual members of the aggregate. Rather, the morality of a nation depended on that of individuals. 'If the individuals who constitute a nation do not observe moral principles, how can the nation become moral?' Similarly, 'if the individual ceases to count, what is left of society?' Clearly, Gandhi did not subscribe to a deterministic view of human action, either of the historical or the sociological kind. For him, 'Ultimately, it is the individual who is the unit.'

Gandhi also shared with the mainstream economic tradition a consequentialist approach to choice. For him as for the economists the assessment of consequences of various alternative courses of action is always the proper basis for choosing between them. There is one important difference; Gandhi usually interprets consequences in broader terms than the economist is apt to do. For Gandhi, they include moral as well as strictly economic effects and effects on others as well as on oneself. Nevertheless, it is to consequences that he looks rather than to any one overriding moral principle in terms which every alternative can be assessed, for 'It is not possible to enunciate one grand principle and leave the rest to follow of itself.' A recurrent theme in Gandhi's writings is that life is not one straight road. 'There are so many complexities in it. It is not like a train that once started, keeps on running.' Nor can one climb the Himalayas in a straight line. As a pluralist, he believes that in any actual choice a number of different moral principles are usually involved and there could be conflict between them. '(But) one's life is not a single straight line; it is a bundle of duties very often conflicting. And one is called upon continually to make one's choice between one duty and another.' The choice is often far from clear. 'Relative dharma does not proceed on a straight path, like a railway track. It has on the contrary to make its way through a dense forest where there is not even a sense of direction.' Looking at consequences helps us in finding a direction.

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Consumption Behaviour: The Limitation of Wants

The concept of 'limitation of wants' is a typically Gandhian contribution to the theory welfare economics. This states that an individual's welfare is best achieved not, as economic theory suggests, by attempting to maximize the satisfaction of multiplicity of desires subject only to the prevailing budget constraint but rather by reflecting on his desires and trying to choose between them. The claim is supported by arguments bearing on the relationships between desire, satisfaction, happiness and welfare. While economic analysis often regards these more or less as synonyms, according to Gandhi they are quite distinct concepts.

First, not all kinds of happiness contribute to human welfare. That drink or drugs can make people happy for a while is not, for example, a relevant consideration for policy. Second, not all kinds of desire-satisfaction contribute to happiness. Primarily this is because an individual's desires for goods and services do not form a fixed set such that their satisfactions would make the happy: 'We notice that the mind is a restless bid; the more it gets the more it wants and still remains unsatisfied.'

Multiplying one's daily wants in this fashion merely makes a person a slave to an unending sequence of desires and there is no slavery equal to slavery to one's own desires. Such a process does not lead an individual to any sustainable steady state consumption path. Those who are in the mad rush to multiply wants, thinking that this will add to their real substance, are mistaken. On the contrary, self-indulgence and the ceaseless multiplication of wants hamper one's growth because they are erosive of contentment, self-respect and peace of mind. It is from these that one's long-run happiness can be found, not just from obtaining what one likes at the moment. What is true for an individual is true also for society. Indeed, individuals may be impelled towards unlimited wants not only by their own desires but also by the prevailing social ethos. In modern Western society, states Gandhi, the basis of culture or civilization is understood to be the multiplication of all one's wants.

If you have one room you will desire to have two rooms, three rooms and the more, the merrier. Similarly, you will want to have as much furniture as you can put in your house, and so on endlessly. The more you possess the better culture you represent or some such thing. Gandhi regarded such a culture as flawed.

Another reason why trying to maximize desire-satisfaction may not make an individual or a society happy is that the process of trying to satisfy a multitude of wants has its own costs. Such an attempt requires the extensive use of machinery, which could lead to pollution of the environment and a loss of creativity in work. Another usual characteristic is a 'mad desire to destroy and time, to increase animal appetites and go to the ends of the earth in search of their satisfaction'.

Typically, a country pursuing the quest will be 'made hideous by the smoke and the din of mill chimneys and factories' and its roadways 'traversed by rushing engines dragging numerous cars crowded with men mostly who know what they are after, who are often absentminded, and whose tempers do not improve by being uncomfortably packed like sardines in boxes'. Besides, in a country where everyone had a car, 'there would be very little room left for walking'.

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Such things, observes Gandhi, are held to be symbolic of material progress but 'they add not an atom to our happiness'. Deliberate restriction of material desires by individuals by means of 'the utmost effort' offers a more rational solution. Another argument in favour of limiting wants turns on the adverse moral consequences of economic growth. As we have seen, at the heart of the Gandhian approach to economic issues is his belief that ethical and economic considerations are inseparable. The objective must be to bring about improvements in both the economic and the moral well-being of individuals, and thereby of society. But material progress can itself affect moral standards. These 'externalities' must be taken into account in the overall reckoning and a balance struck. Sometimes they could be of a positive kind. This is likely to be the case when there is mass poverty. 'No one has ever suggested that grinding pauperism can lead to anything else than moral degradation.'

Millions of people in India live on only one meal a day. 'They say that before we can think or talk of their moral welfare we must satisfy their daily wants. With these, they say, material progress spells moral progress.' Gandhi agrees with 'them'; but, he argues, what is true of thirty millions is not necessarily true of the universe. Indeed, such a deduction would be 'ludicrously absurd' for 'hard cases make bad law'.

'The only statement', suggests Gandhi, 'that has to be examined is whether it can be laid down as a law of universal application that material advancement means moral progress.' His answer is that it cannot—both at the level of individuals and societies, there are too many examples to the contrary. In general, Gandhi believes that material affluence beyond a point not only does not imply but actively hinders moral progress. Gandhi does not discuss whether, or how, one could determine just where the point was located but he was convinced that it does exist. For this reason, when discussing comparative standards of living of different societies, Gandhi always asked questions about moral and economic aspects. Neither literacy nor wealth *per se*, without a moral backing, had any attraction for him as a 'social indicator'. To a correspondent who had pointed out Japan's achievements in terms of material progress and the level of literacy, Gandhi responded, 'And why are you so enamoured of the material progress of Japan? I do not know whether the material had gone side by side with the moral progress'. There are echoes here of Ruskin who had written in *Unto This Last:* 'It is impossible to conclude, of any given mass of acquired wealth, merely by the fact of its existence, whether it signifies good or evil to the nation in the midst of which it exists. Its real value depends on the moral sign attached to it just as sternly as that of mathematical quantity depends on the mathematical sign attached to it.'

The limitation of wants appeared to be a way of avoiding adverse effects of material progress.

Whichever of these various justifications of the doctrine of limitation of wants one takes as primary, they have one thing in common, and that is, such limitation is not intended as a glorification of austerity but rather as an exercise in the optimization of overall individual welfare. In taking up such a position Gandhi anticipated a basic theme of the recent literature against economic growth. Indeed, he was one of the

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first writers to argue explicitly and in a systematic way that non-economic aspects of welfare are important and that a single-minded pursuit of the maximum satisfaction of material wants might not lead to the best of all possible worlds. In developing this thesis Gandhi was influenced by Ruskin and Tolstoy but he had a far more positive and practical approach than his mentors.

From a practical point of view, the question of what wants should be limited to is important. Gandhi appears to give different answers at different times. In some of his early writings he appeals to the principle of what he calls satisfying one's 'natural wants'. Each person should be able to satisfy all natural wants and no more. These are conceived as minimal, or basic, needs. One 'should make do with the fewest possible articles… and in the smallest possible quantity… no more than what is absolutely necessary to pay the body its hire'. However, natural wants will vary from one individual to another depending on metabolism. If one person has a weak digestion and so requires only a quarter pound of flour for his bread and another needs a pound, the former's natural want will be correspondingly lower. Natural wants also vary with climate. 'Fiery whisky in the north of the British Isles may be a necessity. It renders an Indian unfit for work or society. Fur coats in Scotland are indispensable, they will be an intolerable burden in India.' Some natural wants, according to Gandhi, could only be specified at the village, rather than the individual, level. To this category belongs transport and sanitation. He wrote, 'The roads should be so scrupulously clean in this land of crore of barefooted pedestrians that nobody need hesitate in walking or even sleeping in the streets. The lanes should be macadamized and have gutters for letting out water. The temples and mosques should be kept so beautifully clean that the visitors should feel an air of tranquil holiness about them. The village should as far as possible, be full of shady trees and fruit trees in and around them. It should have a *dharamshala,* a school and a small dispensary. Washing and privy arrangement should be such as may not contaminate the air, water and roads of the village.'

Elsewhere, especially in his later writings, Gandhi appears to take a rather broader view of basic 'needs'. The proliferation of material wants is still rejected as a goal. One's aim should rather be their restriction consistent with comfort, which is less narrowly interpreted than natural want. Typical of this broader outlook are passages such as the following:

> 'If by abundance you mean everyone having plenty to eat and drink and to clothe himself with, enough to keep his mind trained and educated. I should be satisfied. But I should not like to pack more stuff in my belly than I can digest and more things than I can ever usefully use. But neither do I want poverty, penury, misery, dirt and dust in India.' And again, 'Everyone must have balanced diet, a decent house to live in facilities for the education of one's children and adequate medical relief'.

More than half a century after Gandhi's death, the bill of goods that he prescribed as a minimum is still not one that the average Indian household is in a position to consume. The actual consumption of both rural and urban poor falls far short of the limits to wants that Gandhi set. On the other hand, the affluent, even many of those not so affluent, are often engaged in a frantic display of luxury

consumption in a way that Gandhi had supposed to be peculiarly 'Western'. In this perspective the limitation of wants can be seen as a means of reducing economic inequality. This aspect of the doctrine comes out clearly in some of Gandhi's later writing, for example in his statement that while he did not want to taboo everything above and beyond the bare necessities, 'they must come after the essential needs of the poor are satisfied. First things must come first'. However, it remains somewhat peripheral to the doctrine itself.

Consumption Behaviour: Swadeshi

Swadeshi means indigenous or home-grown. The Swadeshi movement was a mass movement to encourage people, especially those living in cities, to develop the habit of consuming Indian rather than foreign products. They were also urged in particular to wear only *khaddar*, i.e., cloth made of yarn spun by villagers using the *charkha* or spinning wheel. The movement was undertaken by the Indian National Congress under Gandhi's leadership. During the 1930s, the movement become widespread in some parts of India.

Gandhi did not regard Swadeshi merely in terms of political expediency but sought to justify it by moral principles. The first relevant principle here is that of neighbourhood. One has a moral duty to help one's neighbours. While it is true that you have duties to all humankind, the duties you owe to different segments of humankind are not of equal importance. There is a hierarchy of duties based on the degree of proximity. Individuals' service to country and humanity consist in serving their neighbours. They cannot starve their neighbours and claim to serve distant cousins in the North Pole, for one must not serve one's distant neighbour at the expense of the nearest. This was the basic principle of all religions and or 'true and humane economics'.

The neighbourhood principle has a direct consequence for the interpretation of Swadeshi, namely that local products should be preferred. Inhabitants of Bengal should only consume cloth made in Bengal in preference to substitutes imported from more distant parts. This was so whether the substitute concerned came from Manchester or Japan or Bombay or Ahmedabad. 'If Bengal will live her natural and free life without exploiting the rest of India or the world outside, she must manufacture her cloth in her own villages as she grows her corn there.' For the same reason, by consuming cloth or *ghee* made in Calcutta rather than those made locally the people (of Porbandar) were being 'chained with fetters'.

Between countries, the neighbourhood principle translates as patriotism. It is sinful to eat American wheat while a neighbouring grain dealer starves for want of custom. An individual's preference-ordering over commodity-bundles should be guided by patriotism. 'The law of each country's progress demands on the part of its inhabitant's preference for their own products and manufactures'. For Indians, there is an obligation to use Indian-made things whenever they are obtainable, even though they may be inferior to foreign articles. For instance, India produces a sufficient quantity of leather. It is therefore one's duty to wear shoes made out of Indian leather, even if it is comparatively dearer and of an inferior quality, in preference to cheaper and superior quality foreign leather shoes. For the same reason products of

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Indian textile, sugar, or rice mills 'must be preferred to the corresponding foreign products'.

Comparisons of price or quality are not relevant for the kind of consumer's choice decision Gandhi is talking about; but patriotism is: 'We attend flag-hoisting ceremonies and are proud of our national flag. Let me tell you our pride has no meaning if you do not like things made in India and hanker after foreign ones.'

If a particular commodity is not made in India at all, the patriotism argument ceases to apply.

'I would regard it as a sin to import Australian wheat on the score of its better quality but I would not have the slightest hesitation is importing oatmeal from Scotland if an absolute necessity for it is made out because we do not grow oats in India.' (*Young India*, 15 November 1928)

For the same reason the argument did not apply to English lever watches, books or surgical instruments. Japanese lacquer work, Austrian Pins and pencils of Swiss watches.

While this argument applies to all home-grown products, Gandhi singles out the products of village industry for special attention. Within that category *Khaddar* claimed pride of place. Indeed, the Swadeshi movement came to be regarded primarily as a means of encouraging consumers to wear *khaddar*. Accordingly, people, especially towns-people, were asked to buy *khaddar* in preference to mill-made cloth and to boycott foreign cloth altogether. It was specifically the use of foreign cloth that Gandhi sought to prevent, not just British cloth and not all foreign goods, which he argued would be racial, parochial and wicked.

Gandhi's identification of Swadeshi with village industry, and with hand-spinning, was based on a two-fold argument: that the urban population of India owed a special moral duty towards the villages, and that this duty would be best discharged by providing a market for village products and above all hand-spun cloth. The first part of the argument is a logical consequence of the principles of neighbourhood (there are few town or cities in India that are not surrounded by villages) and patriotism (most Indians are villagers). Gandhi sought to support it further by introducing another moral principle, that of historical justice. Both economic and moral standards in the villages had declined through long neglect. City people as a whole were partly to blame. Reparation had to be made. 'We are guilty of a grievous wrong against the villagers and the only way in which we can expiate it is by encouraging them to revive their lost industries and arts by assuring them of a ready market.' We must, urged Gandhi, think of our household consumption requirements in terms of 'rural-mindedness', which was 'in consonance with the true economics of our country'. The second part of the argument had more to do with standard economic analysis.

Spinning was a solution for rural unemployment. 'The whole scheme of khadi rests upon the supposition that there are millions of poor people in India who have no work during at least four months in the year.' Around three-quarters of the Indian population, who were agriculturists tilling their own land, belonged to the category. Even in a normal year, because agricultural work was seasonal, they remained idle for a third of the year or more. This, Gandhi believed, was the principal cause of

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their endemic poverty. Their normal life was lived on the border-line of starvation. If there was crop failure or famine, the extent of involuntary unemployment became much greater and many of them died of hunger and disease. For the 'semi-starved' but partially employed millions, spinning provided a means of part-time employment as well as insurance against famine. Thus, Gandhi saw spinning as a supplementary industry for agriculture rather than as a means of employment for village artisans.

Why, one might ask, choose spinning, rather than some other subsidiary occupation for agriculturists? Gandhi's answer to this was strictly pragmatic. Spinning had long been practised by villagers in the past. It required only a very simple and low-cost implement and little technical knowledge or skill. It could be easily learnt, did not require too much attention, could be done at odd moments and, for these reasons, was suitable as part-time employment for masses of rural people. Neither cattle breeding nor weaving, which had been suggested as possible alternatives to spinning as a supplement to agriculture, enjoyed these advantages, even though they were more remunerative. Spinning was 'the easiest, the cheapest and the best'. Again, 'the test of Swadeshi was not the universality of the use of article which goes under the name of Swadeshi but the universality of participation in the production or manufacturing of such article.' Judged by this test, spinning had a potential unmatched by other contenders.

That cotton spinning was a specific remedy for agricultural unemployment also implied that it was not recommended for universal adoption. It was not, for example, meant for individuals who already had more remunerative employment, such as urban workers in textile mills. It could not work in a district or region which did not have large numbers of people with idle hours at their disposal. Gandhi neither contemplated nor advised the abandonment of a single, healthy, life-giving industrial activity for the sake of hand spinning. On one occasion, he found that a number of women had been spinning who were not without occupation or means of living. 'Perhaps they spin in response to our appeal and because they realize it is for the good of the country.' Nevertheless, Gandhi remained firm in his resolve that their spinning should stop, 'for the *charkha* movement had not been conceived with such people in mind but only for able-bodied people who were idle for want of work'. The operative principle was quite clear: if there were no crises of semi-unemployed people there would be no room for the spinning wheel.

Gandhi's pre-occupation with the need to find a subsidiary occupation for farmers can be properly understood only if certain other considerations are kept in mind. The first is his view that the possibility of bringing about improvements in agricultural production itself was very limited. As an extremely high percentage of cultivable land in Indian was already under cultivation, there was little scope for increasing the agricultural area. Also, if agriculture was to provide the sole means of livelihood, one acre was estimated to be the minimum viable area for supporting a household. In these circumstances, extension of cultivation was not a plausible means of bringing about economic development in India.

To a number of nationalist economists, including Gandhi's own political mentor, G. K. Gokhale, improving the productivity of land already under cultivation did appear to be a promising solution. Towards this end they advocated concerted efforts,

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especially by government, to expand irrigation facilities so as to make farmers less dependent on the vagaries of rainfall and also to encourage them to adopt higher-yielding seed and improved agricultural practices. Gandhi did not take up this line of argument, because of his belief that proposals for agricultural improvements were 'chimerical' and not immediately available. He opined, 'Till now I believed that improvement in agriculture was impossible unless we had the administration of the State in our own hands. My views on this are now undergoing modification. I feel that we can bring about improvements even under the present conditions so that the cultivator my make some measure of profit form the land even after paying his taxes…The time has come to pay attention to agriculture.'

However, Gandhi continued to oppose the 'industrialization' of agriculture by large scale use of mechanized techniques which were not only contrary to the kind of village society he wished to bring about, but would also mean 'trading' in soil-fertility for the sake of quick return'. This, he thought, would prove to be a disastrous short sighted policy resulting in virtual depletion of the soil. Without such innovation, however, it is doubtful whether agricultural productivity in India could be increased significantly.

The limitation of wants and Swadeshi both rest ultimately on the concept of ethical preferences. People should seek not simply to maximize satisfaction of self-interested desires subject to a budget constraint, but to achieve the long-run goals both of individual happiness and of helping others. The problem is that people's actual preferences may differ from their 'ethical preferences'. If Gandhian economics were taken as relating only to an ideal economic order, the difference would not much matter. Gandhi himself was much concerned about the difference between the actual preferences of urban Indians, especially in the matter of clothing, and what he thought their ethical preferences should be. He was not, however, entirely consistent in his analysis. In his more optimistic movements he appeared to believe that a 'true and national' taste for *khaddar* (an ethical preference) was already there in a latent form and hence that demand was likely to lag only briefly behind supply. The use of *khaddar* itself 'revolutionizes our tastes'. All that was necessary was to 'revive' the national taste for *khaddar* 'and you will find every village a busy hive'. More often he seemed unsure: '*Khaddar* has yet to become popular and universal' or even despondent: 'Khadi has not caught the fancy of the people'. After an initial spurt the demand for hand spun cloth failed to show any dramatic rise. Unsold stocks began to accumulate in parts of the country where efforts to increase production of hand spun cloth in the villages had been a success. Gandhi's conclusion was that khadi needed 'a great deal of propaganda'. After all, that was how all goods were sold. Textile mills 'had their own peculiar agencies and methods for advertising their wares'. In his presidential address to the Indian National Congress in November 1924, Gandhi criticized the proposition 'that supply follows demand'. Appropriate means of persuasion were necessary to encourage the consumption of *khaddar*.

Advertising campaigns were undertaken by the Congress and its agencies in favour of *khaddar*. Wearing it was made a prerequisite for membership of Congress. Exhibitions of village handicrafts were arranged to provide information to townspeople.

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Gandhi himself addressed mass meetings and wrote in the press in favour of *khaddar*. 'We', he declared, 'are the salesmen of Swaraj'. The urban middle classes were particularly targeted. The 'thinking portion' of the population had to give a lead; for '*Khaddar* which has to find a market must command preference among enlightened men'. That remained the favoured strategy, with 'the buying middle class at the one end and the manufacturing poor class at the other'. Some attempts were also made to increase efficiency in production and marketing and improve the quality of the product. Much to Gandhi's disappointment, none of these measures succeeded in bridging the gap between ethical preferences and market demand. At an early stage of his campaign for *khaddar* Gandhi wrote somewhat wistfully about Queen Elizabeth I, who had prohibited the import of soft cloth from Holland, who herself wore coarse cloth woven 'in her own dear England' and 'imposed that obligation upon the whole of that nation'. Gandhi did not however aspire to such an option for himself. Sales talk was permissible, force never was. 'We do not want to spread khadi through coercion. We want to do our work by changing people's sense of values and habits.' But this was not enough for his cause to succeed.

Technology, Industrialization and the Scale of Production

The central concern of Indian economic thought, since Ranade, had been the problem of industrialization. Different views were held on what constrained industrial development in India. For some it was economic drain. Others emphasized the lack of trained labour, credit facilities and entrepreneurial traditions. Yet others put the blame of the government for its failure to provide encouragement to Indian industry. All agreed, however, the industrial development was the long-run solution to poverty and famine. They agreed as well that the development of manufacturing industry on modern Western lines was desirable. Indeed, most Indian economic writing from the last decade of the 19th century onwards was concerned with how to speed up this process. Gandhi, on the other hand, did not regard industrialization as a goal that India should adopt. The overall vision which led Gandhi to his doctrines of the limitation of wants and Swadeshi also led him to oppose modern industrial development. The use of machinery and large scale production in urban centres were, he thought, to be avoided as far as possible.

According to him the three essential characteristics of machinery are the following: First, it displaces human or animal labour instead of supplementing it or merely increasing its efficiency. Second, unlike human labour there is no limit to its growth and expansion. Third, it appears to have a law of its own, which leads not only to labour being displaced but to it being displaced at an ever-increasing rate. This occurred not because such displacement was considered by the users of machinery to be socially or economically desirable, but as a consequence of the nature of technological progress per se.

Gandhi's opposition to modern, machine-based industrial development is a natural consequence of his characterization of machinery itself. 'I am against machines just because they deprive men of their employment and render them jobless. I oppose them not because they are machines, but because they create unemployment.' The answer to the question, discussed in classical political economy since the time

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of Ricardo, of whether machinery leads to unemployment, was, for Gandhi, self-evident. 'If one machine does the work of a hundred men, then where are we to employ those hundred men?' Now, one could argue that workers thrown out of work by the introduction of improved machinery would find employment elsewhere. Gandhi was perfectly aware of this argument. However, he rejected it, firstly because opportunities of employment were, in his view, fairly limited; and secondly, because the division of labour resulted in workers having very specific skill, which meant they could not easily be re-employed elsewhere in the economy .The tendency of machinery to throw workers out of their jobs was, Gandhi believed, a general one which operated everywhere, but its consequences were particularly grave for a country such as India with its huge population. The proliferation of mechanized industries in such a society would create large scale unemployment with horrendous social effects.

Gandhi's second main argument against the pursuit of industrialization by means of machine-based production was that it would concentrate production and distribution in the hands of the few. More specifically, it would lead to further encroachment of the cities on the villages, making rural people even more dependent on the cities than they already were. Gandhi's vision of village Swaraj could never be achieved through such a process. Because industrial production would be concentrated in a few urban centres, the economic as well as the political power of the urban elite would be strengthened at the expense of the masses of the villagers. Mass production in its usual sense, that is production by the fewest possible number through the aid of complicated machinery, could not serve the interests of the masses themselves. Gandhiji's solution was production by the masses through self-employment. He said, 'It is mass production in people's own homes. If you multiply unit production a million times would it not give you mass production on a tremendous scale? Distribution could be equalized only when production was localized, in other words when distribution was simultaneous with production. Furthermore, when production and consumption were both localized the pursuit of economic growth for its own sake, regardless of the consequences, would be avoided; there would be no temptation to speed up production "indefinitely and at and price".'

Gandhi's opposition to the use of machinery was neither total nor all inclusive. In a way, his objection was to industrialization in the sense in which it is usually understood rather than to the use of machinery as such. 'I am not against machinery as such but I am totally opposed to it when it masters us.' However, he also said, 'Every machine that helps every individual has a place'. His favourite example of a helpful machine was Singer's Sewing machine which supplemented human labour and increased its efficiency but did not dispense with the labour itself. Another was surgical instruments. Not only did he approve of such life-saving appliances but also of the complicated machinery used for making such appliances, for here such machinery was absolutely essential. As he said, 'We want to cultivate the hand process to perfection but where it is found to be absolutely necessary let us not hesitate to introduce machinery.' Yet another example is sanitation. Asked by a correspondent whether, because of his dislike of machinery, he opposed the adoption of flush toilets Gandhi replied, 'Where there is ample supply of water and moderns

sanitation can be introduced without any hardship on the poor, I have no objection to it, in fact it should be welcomed as a means of improving the health of the city concerned. At the moment it can only be introduced in towns.'

A more important exception is the case of public utilities which could not be undertaken by human labour. In such cases, Gandhi would approve of mechanized modern techniques. However, he would like them to be regarded as key industries to be owned and operated by the state in the public interest. Thus, such cases are to be treated as exceptional.

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Gandhi remained, however, totally committed to his opposition to extensive use of machinery for the production of basic necessities. He maintained this position to the end, strongly opposing the use of machinery for grinding corn, manufacturing cloth or ploughing the land. If Gandhi were prime minister of India he would stop all machine driven ploughs and flour mills and restrict the number of oil pressing factories. He might perhaps not destroy the existing textile mills bit certainly would not help them and in any case would not permit new ones to be set up. Ideal villages which are self-reliant with regard to food, which have not a single flour mill and in which the residents grow all the cotton they need and manufacture their own cloth, right up to the stage of stitching garments in their own homes, should, he stated, be awarded prizes and exempted from taxes.

Some have suggested that he was not really opposed to the use of machinery but only to its misuse. Gandhi himself complained in various writings that his opposition to machinery was misunderstood for he was not against machinery as such. Similarly, he observes that 'machine power can make a valuable contribution towards economic progress'. Nevertheless, the role that he ascribed to machinery in the process of industrial development was a very limited one. 'It is said that now India is going to be industrialized. But industrialization of my conception has to be carried out in the villages with the *Charkha* plying in every home and cloth being produced in every village.' Essentially this is a vision of self-employed villagers producing their subsistence, including food and clothing, by manual labour, using very simple tools and implements. This is very different from industrialization. He did, it is true, accept that some large scale private industry would continue, for example in the production of cotton textiles. Trusteeship would help lessen its ill effects.

Gandhi's ideas on machinery are closely linked to his concept of Swadeshi. Neither has had any significant effect on economic policy. Developing countries, India in particular, have not chosen to adopt village industries as an alternative to modern industrialization. Indirectly, however, Gandhi's ideas about technology have had some influence by providing a warning that mechanization on Western lines may not necessarily be the optimal solution for countries with a very different resource-endowment. Instead, countries with plentiful labour and relatively little capital might benefit by concentrating on light industries and on labour-intensive techniques for producing their products. In the sense his ideas may have played some part in encouraging the adoption of what has been called intermediate or 'appropriate' technology in highly populated but capital-poor developing counties.

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Trusteeship and Industrial Relations

Gandhi's theory of trusteeship was developed as an alternative to doctrines of socialism and communism (the two words are used more or less interchangeably in Gandhi's writings) which started becoming popular in India following the Russian Revolution of 1917. These doctrines, wrote Gandhi, had brought to the forefront the question of what 'our' attitude towards the wealthy should be. He took socialist doctrine to mean essentially that the property of the rich – princes, millionaires, big industrialists and landlords – should be confiscated and they should be made to earn their livelihood as workers. Gandhi disagreed. All that one could legitimately expect of the wealthy was to hold their riches 'in trust' and use them for the service of society as a whole. 'To insist upon more would be to kill the goose that laid the golden eggs'.

The rationale of trusteeship was that everything on earth belonged to and was from God. If an individual had more than his 'proportionate' share of wealth, or talent, he became a trustee of that part for the people as a whole. The rich should therefore use their talents to increase their wealth, for the sake of the nation. Trusteeship, thus, was a form of moral responsibility but it was quite different from either charity or benevolence and in a way it was an alternative to them. 'If the trusteeship idea catches philanthropy as we know it will disappear'.

Trusteeship is, by nature, voluntary. The wealthy should come to accept their role as trustees. In the long run trusteeship could also be institutionalized, leading to what Gandhi described as 'statutory trusteeship'. A trustee should be able to nominate his successor, for legal ownership would still be vested in the trustee and not in the state. However, the trustee's choice of successor would be subject to conditions which would serve both as a check on the individual's choice and as a signal of social approval. Thus, a proprietor who held his property as a trust could not pass it on to his children by inheritance unless the latter agreed to become trustees. If they were not prepared for this, the owner should nominate some other person.

The concept of trusteeship implied among other things that industrial relations should be built on cooperation rather than conflict. The mill owner should stop looking on labour simply as a means of earning profit, but rather as partners in a common enterprise. This implied in particular an obligation on the part of the employers not only to pay a living wage but also to ensure a clean working environment and provide facilities for cheap nutritious food, sanitation and elementary education for workers' children. But trusteeship implied obligations for workers, too. In the prevailing system of industrial relations, while the capitalists tried to obtain maximum work with minimum payment, the workers hit upon various tricks whereby they could get the maximum pay for minimum work. The result was that a rise in wages did not mean an improvement in efficiency. When a system of trusteeship came to prevail, the mill hand would stop nursing ill will towards his employer and come to regard the mill in which he worked as his own. Such an approach had economic as well as ethical merit for if it came to be accepted, strikes and lockouts would become infrequent, productivity would increase, and the costs of maintaining a 'heavy supervisory establishment' to keep workers in order, would no longer be required . Trusteeship could also lead in a natural way to profit-sharing and to workers' participation in management.

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In bringing about a change from the existing system of industrial relations, based on a conflict of interest, towards based on trusteeship, it was enlightened industrialists who had to take the lead. Gandhi himself did not regard capital to be the enemy of labour and in principle held their coordination to be 'perfectly possible'. However, as in most things in life, an ideal could only be realized approximately. He said, 'Absolute trusteeship is an abstraction like Euclid's definition of a point, and is equally unattainable. But if we strive for it, we shall go further in realizing a state of equality on earth than by any other method.' On being asked, towards the end of his life, if he knew of any industrialist who had fully lived up to the ideal of trusteeship, Gandhi replied, 'No, though some are striving in that direction.' While the success of this, as of any enterprise depended on voluntary participation rather than coercion, Gandhi believed some sanctions were legitimate if some industrialist simply refused to behave as trustees, even after being given every chance. Different kinds of sanction could be applied, depending on circumstances. One was to bring the force of public opinion on erring industrialists to mend their ways. This could be expressed by direct action from below, a form of what Gandhi called non-violent non-cooperation. If that too failed to persuade the owners of capital to act as trustees, depriving them of their possessions by the exercise of state power might ultimately become necessary, 'with or without compensation as the case demanded'. However, by and large, peaceful and rational conversion to the principle of trusteeship would remain the norm.

Gandhi put forward two main arguments in support of his belief that trusteeship was a better way of dealing with problems on inequality and exploitation than communism. The first argument was based on the unequal distribution of ability. According to Gandhi 'Although we are all born equal, that is to say, that we have a right to equal opportunities, nevertheless we have not all the same abilities'. Consequently, it was natural that some of us would be more fitted than others to acquire material gain. Entrepreneurial ability was scarce and, properly harnessed, could be socially valuable. If the rich were deprived of their wealth and made to earn their living as manual workers 'society will become poorer, for it will lose the gifts of a man who knows how to accumulate wealth'. Depriving society of the services of such capable people would not be in the interests of the country, especially if the country itself were poor and underdeveloped. Trusteeship, on the other hand, tries to preserve such abilities while utilizing them for the wider interests of society. Accordingly, Gandhi's advice to the eldest son of a prominent industrialist, who had been a friend and political ally, was that if he was already engaged in business he should remain so, but should use fair means and be a trustee. Second, Gandhi justified trusteeship by the principle of non-violence. The communist alternative of dispossessing the wealthy of the means of production by confiscating their property violated that principle. The soviet communist system, even though it had some good aims, such as the elimination of exploitation of the poor by the rich, was based on the use of force which was unethical, and because of this Gandhi had strong doubts about his final success.

Gandhi has been accused of double standards on this point, for as we have seen he too approved of state ownership of industry if private owners failed to

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accept a trustee role. However, as elsewhere, he was prepared to accept the lesser of two evils. Private industrialists, he thought, should be encouraged to cooperate with labour in a spirit of partnership and, given a chance, perhaps many would. If trusteeship did not work a minimum of state ownership would be necessary as a last resort but Gandhi, unlike the communists, did not regard this as either inevitable or good in itself. He had the greatest fear of the power of the state, which while apparently doing good by the minimization of exploitation can do the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality, which lies at the root of all progress. Elsewhere he described the state as representing violence in a concentrated and organized form, opining that 'the individual had a soul but the State is a soulless machine'. In his view, 'the violence of private enterprise is less injurious than the violence of the State'. Coercion by the state could only be a necessary evil and trusteeship remained the preferred alternative.

There was one form of state intervention with property which Gandhi did not regard as coercion, namely, high rates of wealth or inheritance taxes.

Riches have not yet been sufficiently taxed. In this, of all the countries in the world, possession of inordinate wealth by individuals should be held as a crime against Indian humanity. In England they have gone as far as 70 per cent of the earnings beyond a prescribed figure.

Gandhi fails, however, to recognize that the argument based on the scarcity of entrepreneurial talent, which he had used against communism, applied in some measure against such 'democratic socialist' methods as well.

Charity, Leisure and the Sanctity of Work

This section discusses Gandhi's views on charity. As you have seen, he rejected the view that individuals' economic behaviour either was, or should be, guided solely by self-interested preferences. One would therefore have expected him to be favourably disposed towards charity, which economists themselves regards as an exception to their rules; it is the classical example of non-self-interested behaviour. Gandhi's view of charity is more complex, however.

In an early piece of writing, Gandhi quotes in full a well-known passage from the New Testament of the Bible, which extols the virtue of charity. Gandhi's own writings show quite clearly that he had considerable doubt whether what was usually regarded as charitable action represented a virtue at all. He seems to have taken his cue from two particular statements in the biblical passage he referred to, which suggested that the practice of charity must itself satisfy some other norms in order to qualify as 'true charity'. 'And though I bestow all my goods to the poor and though I give my body to be burned, and have no charity it profits me nothing' and again, '…charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly....' Gandhi, too, did not approve of charity irrespective of consequences. Indeed, he took it for granted that charity need not be a good thing, that 'there is no reason to believe that charity per se is meritorious'. In order to judge whether a particular charitable action is good or bad one must look to its expected consequences for recipients, donors and society at large. The effects that Gandhi was most concerned with were those on the incentive to work. For this reason, the idea of

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giving free meals to a healthy person who had not worked for it in some honest way was particularly abhorrent to him. Giving free meals to the poor had long been an honoured Hindu custom. It was known as *Sadavrata*, which literally means 'the constant task'. Some European authors had written in praise of *Sadavrata*, saying that the Indians had developed a system of feeding the poor that was self-organized, providing an alternative to the work-house.

Gandhi world has none of this. The system, he maintained, had done no good to India. Indeed, it was an evil custom which had degraded the nation and encouraged idleness, hypocrisy and crime. If food were available without effort, those who were habitually lazy would remain idle and become poorer (CW 28: 7). Philanthropic businessmen in contemporary India who sought to acquire religious merit by the practice of *Sadavrata* were actually committing a grievous wrong.

During a visit to Calcutta, Gandhi came across hundreds of hungry people being provided with a free meal by a private philanthropist. The sight appeared to him as being 'neither ennobling nor honourable to those who had organized the meals for the hungry people of Calcutta from day to day'. Perhaps the donors did not know what they were doing but 'were ignorant of the irreparable harm they were doing to India by this misplaced benevolence'. Such misplaced charity according to Gandhi, added nothing to the wealth of the country, whether material or spiritual and only gave a false sense of merit to the donor. For the same reason, he exhorted Parsi millionaires of Bombay not to give all their money to the poor, for they wanted to keep those crore of people dependent on their *Sadavratas*.

Gandhi allowed an exception to this condemnation of *Sadavrata*. It was commended for the lame, the crippled and those who were disabled by disease, for such people could not work. Even in this case however, relieving hunger was not the only objective. Preserving dignity and self-respect was no less important. 'Even the disabled should not be fed with thousands of people watching them. There should be a proper place, private and quiet for feeding them.'

The able-bodied poor should have no 'free lunch'. 'By their efforts, by their own work, these people should earn their livelihood and get their clothing, and they must not be taught to depend on others for their necessaries.' Philanthropists who wanted to help could open institutions where meals would be given under clean, healthy surroundings to men and women who would work for them. The ideal work, believed Gandhi, would be spinning cotton but they should be free to choose any other work that was appropriate and feasible. But the rule should be 'No labour, No meal'. The same principle applied to beggars. They should be offered work and food but if they refused to work, they should not be given food.

Those who could not work because of physical disability should be taken to institutions financed by the state, rather than left to live by begging, which only encouraged fraud. The vast majority of street beggars were mere professionals idlers 'when they are not much worse', and those who have money to spare do an ill-service to those beggars and to the country by giving them money, food or clothing.

Gandhi's view on charity is in line with his consequentialist view of ethics. In this respect it differs from the Buddhist view which regards the act of alms—giving

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as conferring merit on the donor irrespective of consequences. It is also in keeping with Gandhi's ethical 'pluralism'. There are a number of different moral principles which could conflict: the principle of helping others justifies charity to beggars; the principle of self-reliance requires beggars to work. Gandhi's solution is a compromise between the two, an exercise which is impractical from an ethical viewpoint.

As was usual with Gandhi, his remarks on charity were meant to apply primarily to a specifically Indian context. They have, however, a more general aspect. Governments of Western countries are under increasing economic pressure to reform their existing schemes of welfare payments, proposals have recently come up, for example, to link the eligibility of the unemployed to receive a dole to their willingness to work if jobs are provided. Such proposals have been attributed to a narrow 'economic' outlook and criticized on moral grounds. Gandhi would probably have approved of them but for moral rather than strictly economic reasons.

Of some interest, too, are Gandhi's views on leisure. HIs position on the role of leisure is somewhat more complex. In a properly functioning economy, he states, everyone would be in a position to enjoy a sufficiency of leisure. Village Swaraj is described as a place where 'everybody is a toiler with ample leisure'. On the other hand, the principle of limitation of wants applies just as much to leisure as to the consumption of goods and services. Leisure is 'good and necessary' only up to a point. Beyond that it becomes an indulgence, which is contrary to religion and ethics. Too much leisure could erode the human facilities. Whether the leisure was voluntary or involuntary, as in the case of Indian agriculturists who were unemployed for a third of the year, did not, Gandhi believed, make a fundamental difference in this regard. He felt nothing but dread at the prospect of our being able to produce all that we want, including our foodstuffs, 'out of conjurer's hat' so that we could have eternal leisure.

This attitude comes out also in some of his writings on machinery, which was referred to in the previous section. Industrial civilization based on the use of machinery could enable greater output to be achieved with reduced working time, a prospect that Gandhi did not welcome. 'I know that socialists would introduce industrialization to the extent of reducing hours to one or two in a day but I do not want it.'

Underlying Gandhi's ideas on charity and on leisure, there is a common thread. This is the concept of the sanctity of labour and especially 'bread-labour'—a term Gandhi borrowed from Tolstoy. This implies that every individual should earn the basic necessities, such as food and clothing, by the performance of manual labour. Even those who earn their livelihood by mental labour should do some amount of manual labour.

For Gandhi, the distinction between manual and mental labour was not quite as rigidly drawn as it was for Tolstoy, for physical labour, too, provided opportunities for the exercise of intelligence. Intention and purpose were important and could help increase efficiency. Intelligent body labour was the highest form of social service, 'for what can be better than that a man should by his personal labour add to the useful wealth of his country'.

Analytically, the distinction between physical and mental labour was less fundamental for Gandhi than that between work and non-work. It was the sanctity of work as such that lay at the heart of Gandhi's argument.

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Gandhi's Quotes

The following are the famous quotes of Gandhi:

- A 'No' uttered from the deepest conviction is better than a 'Yes' merely uttered to please, or worse, to avoid trouble.
- A coward is incapable of exhibiting love; it is the prerogative of the brave.
- A man is but the product of his thoughts what he thinks, he becomes.
- A man who was completely innocent, offered himself as a sacrifice for the good of others, including his enemies, and became the ransom of the world. It was a perfect act.
- A nation's culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people.
- A policy is a temporary creed liable to be changed, but while it holds good it has got to be pursued with apostolic zeal.
- A principle is the expression of perfection, and as imperfect beings like us cannot practise perfection, we devise every moment limits of its compromise in practice.
- A religion that takes no account of practical affairs and does not help to solve them is no religion.
- A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history.
- A vow is a purely religious act which cannot be taken in a fit of passion. It can be taken only with a mind purified and composed and with God as witness.
- A weak man is just by accident. A strong but non-violent man is unjust by accident.
- Action expresses priorities.
- Action is no less necessary than thought to the instinctive tendencies of the human frame.
- All compromise is based on give and take, but there can be no give and take on fundamentals. Any compromise on mere fundamentals is a surrender. For it is all give and no take.
- All the religions of the world, while they may differ in other respects, unitedly proclaim that nothing lives in this world but Truth.
- Always aim at complete harmony of thought and word and deed. Always aim at purifying your thoughts and everything will be well.
- Among the many misdeeds of the British rule in India, history will look upon the act depriving a whole nation of arms as the blackest.
- An error does not become truth by reason of multiplied propagation, nor does truth become error because nobody sees it.

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- An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind. An ounce of practice is worth more than tons of preaching.
- A coward is incapable of exhibiting love; it is the prerogative of the brave.
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- An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind.
- An ounce of practice is worth more than tons of preaching.
- Fear has its use but cowardice has none.
- Fear of death makes us devoid both of valour and religion. For want of valour is want of religious faith.

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- First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win.
- For me every ruler is alien that defies public opinion.
- Freedom is never dear at any price. It is the breath of life. What would a man not pay for living?
- Freedom is not worth having if it does not connote freedom to err.
- Gentleness, self-sacrifice and generosity are the exclusive possession of no one race or religion.
- Glory lies in the attempt to reach one's goal and not in reaching it.
- God is, even though the whole world deny him. Truth stands, even if there be no public support. It is self-sustained.
- God sometimes does try to the uttermost those whom he wishes to bless.
- God, as Truth, has been for me a treasure beyond price. May He be so to every one of us.
- Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony.
- Healthy discontent is the prelude to progress.
- Honest disagreement is often a good sign of progress.
- I am prepared to die, but there is no cause for which I am prepared to kill.
- I believe in equality for everyone, except reporters and photographers.
- I believe in the fundamental truth of all great religions of the world.
- I believe that a man is the strongest soldier for daring to die unarmed.
- I claim that human mind or human society is not divided into watertight compartments called social, political and religious. All act and react upon one another.
- I claim to be a simple individual liable to err like any other fellow mortal. I own, however, that I have humility enough to confess my errors and to retrace my steps.
- I do all the evil I can before I learn to shun it? Is it not enough to know the evil to shun it? If not, we should be sincere enough to admit that we love evil too well to give it up.
- I do not want to foresee the future. I am concerned with taking care of the present. God has given me no control over the moment following.
- I have also seen children successfully surmounting the effects of an evil inheritance. That is due to purity being an inherent attribute of the soul.
- I have nothing new to teach the world. Truth and Non-violence are as old as the hills. All I have done is to try experiments in both on as vast a scale as I could.
- I have worshipped woman as the living embodiment of the spirit of service and sacrifice.

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- I know, to banish anger altogether from one's breast is a difficult task. It cannot be achieved through pure personal effort. It can be done only by God's grace.
- I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ.
- I look only to the good qualities of men. Not being faultless myself, I won't presume to probe into the faults of others.
- I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent.
- I reject any religious doctrine that does not appeal to reason and is in conflict with morality.
- I suppose leadership at one time meant muscles; but today it means getting along with people.
- I will far rather see the race of man extinct than that we should become less than beasts by making the noblest of God's creation, woman, the object of our lust.
- I would heartily welcome the union of East and West provided it is not based on brute force.
- If cooperation is a duty, I hold that non-cooperation also under certain conditions is equally a duty. If I had no sense of humour, I would long ago have committed suicide.
- If patience is worth anything, it must endure to the end of time. And a living faith will last in the midst of the blackest storm.
- If we are to teach real peace in this world, and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children.
- Imitation is the sincerest flattery.
- In a gentle way, you can shake the world. In matters of conscience, the law of the majority has no place.
- In prayer it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart.
- Increase of material comforts, it may be generally laid down, does not in any way whatsoever conduce to moral growth. Infinite striving to be the best is man's duty; it is its own reward. Everything else is in God's hands.
- Interdependence is and ought to be as much the ideal of man as self-sufficiency. Man is a social being.
- Intolerance betrays want of faith in one's cause.
- Intolerance is itself a form of violence and an obstacle to the growth of a true democratic spirit.
- Is it not enough to know the evil to shun it? If not, we should be sincere enough to admit that we love evil too well to give it up.

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- It has always been a mystery to me how men can feel themselves honoured by the humiliation of their fellow beings.
- It is any day better to stand erect with a broken and bandaged head then to crawl on one's belly, in order to be able to save one's head.
- It is better to be violent, if there is violence in our hearts, than to put on the cloak of nonviolence to cover impotence.
- It is easy enough to be friendly to one's friends. But to befriend the one who regards himself as your enemy is the quintessence of true religion. The other is mere business.
- It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver.
- It is my own firm belief that the strength of the soul grows in proportion as you subdue the flesh.
- It is the quality of our work which will please God and not the quantity.
- It is unwise to be too sure of one's own wisdom. It is healthy to be reminded that the strongest might weaken and the wisest might err.
- Just as a man would not cherish living in a body other than his own, so do nations not like to live under other nations, however noble and great the latter may be.
- Justice that love gives is a surrender, justice that law gives is a punishment.
- Let everyone try and find that as a result of daily prayer he adds something new to his life, something with which nothing can be compared.
- Let us all be brave enough to die the death of a martyr, but let no one lust for martyrdom.
- Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever.
- Man becomes great exactly in the degree in which he works for the welfare of his fellow-men.
- Man can never be a woman's equal in the spirit of selfless service with which nature has endowed her.
- Man falls from the pursuit of the ideal of plan living and high thinking the moment he wants to multiply his daily wants. Man's happiness really lies in contentment.
- Man lives freely only by his readiness to die, if need be, at the hands of his brother, never by killing him.
- Man should forget his anger before he lies down to sleep.
- Man's nature is not essentially evil. Brute nature has been known to yield to the influence of love. You must never despair of human nature.
- Measures must always in a progressive society be held superior to men, who are after all imperfect instruments, working for their fulfilment.
- Moral authority is never retained by any attempt to hold on to it. It comes without seeking and is retained without effort.

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- Morality is contraband in war.
- Morality is the basis of things and truth is the substance of all morality.
- Morality which depends upon the helplessness of a man or woman has not much to recommend it. Morality is rooted in the purity of our hearts.
- My life is my message.
- My religion is based on truth and non-violence. Truth is my God. Non-violence is the means of realizing Him. Nearly everything you do is of no importance, but it is important that you do it.
- No culture can live if it attempts to be exclusive.
- Nobody can hurt me without my permission.
- Non-cooperation with evil is as much a duty as is cooperation with good.
- Non-violence and truth are inseparable and presuppose one another.
- Non-violence is not a garment to be put on and off at will. Its seat is in the heart, and it must be an inseparable part of
- Non-violence is the article of faith.
- Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man.
- Non-violence requires a double faith, faith in God and also faith in man. Non-violence, which is the quality of the heart, cannot come by an appeal to the brain.
- Nonviolence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed.
- One's own religion is after all a matter between oneself and one's Maker and no one else's.
- Only he can take great resolves who has indomitable faith in God and has fear of God.
- Peace is its own reward.
- Poverty is the worst form of violence.
- Power is of two kinds. One is obtained by the fear of punishment and the other by acts of love. Power based on love is a thousand times more effective and permanent then the one derived from fear of punishment.
- Prayer is a confession of one's own unworthiness and weakness.
- Prayer is not an old woman's idle amusement. Properly understood and applied, it is the most potent instrument of action.
- Prayer is not asking. It is a longing of the soul. It is daily admission of one's weakness. It is better in prayer to have a heart without words than words without a heart.
- Prayer is the key of the morning and the bolt of the evening.
- Providence has its appointed hour for everything. We cannot command results, we can only strive.

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- Purity of personal life is the one indispensable condition for building up a sound education.
- Religion is a matter of the heart. No physical inconvenience can warrant abandonment of one's own religion.
- Religion is more than life. Remember that his own religion is the truest to every man even if it stands low in the scales of philosophical comparison.
- Rights that do not flow from duty well performed are not worth having.
- Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment, full effort is full victory.
- Self-respect knows no considerations.
- Service which is rendered without joy helps neither the servant nor the served. But all other pleasures and possessions pale into nothingness before service which is rendered in a spirit of joy.
- Spiritual relationship is far more precious than physical. Physical relationship divorced from spiritual is body without soul.
- Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.
- That service is the noblest which is rendered for its own sake.
- The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.
- The difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world's problem.
- The essence of all religions is one. Only their approaches are different.
- The good man is the friend of all living things.
- The greatness of a nation can be judged by the way its animals are treated.
- The human voice can never reach the distance that is covered by the still small voice of conscience.
- The law of sacrifice is uniform throughout the world. To be effective it demands the sacrifice of the bravest and the most spotless.
- The main purpose of life is to live rightly, think rightly, act rightly. The soul must languish when we give all our thought to the body.
- The moment there is suspicion about a person's motives, everything he does becomes tainted.
- The only tyrant I accept in this world is the still voice within.
- The pursuit of truth does not permit violence on one's opponent.
- The real ornament of woman is her character, her purity.
- The spirit of democracy is not a mechanical thing to be adjusted by abolition of forms. It requires change of heart.
- The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.
- There are people in the world so hungry, that God cannot appear to them except in the form of bread.

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- There is a higher court than courts of justice and that is the court of conscience. It supersedes all other courts.
- There is a sufficiency in the world for man's need but not for man's greed.
- There is an orderliness in the universe, there is an unalterable law governing everything and every being that exists or lives. It is no blind law; for no blind law can govern the conduct of living beings.
- There is more to life than increasing its speed.
- There is no principle worth the name if it is not wholly good.
- There is nothing that wastes the body like worry, and one who has any faith in God should be ashamed to worry about anything whatsoever.
- Those who know how to think need no teachers.
- Those who say religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion is.
- Though we may know Him by a thousand names, He is one and the same to us all.
- To believe in something, and not to live it, is dishonest.
- To deprive a man of his natural liberty and to deny to him the ordinary amenities of life is worse than starving the body; it is starvation of the soul, the dweller in the body.
- To give pleasure to a single heart by a single act is better than a thousand heads bowing in prayer.
- Truth is by nature self-evident. As soon as you remove the cobwebs of ignorance that surround it, it shines clear.
- Truth never damages a cause that is just.
- Truth stands, even if there be no public support. It is self-sustained.
- Unwearied ceaseless effort is the price that must be paid for turning faith into a rich infallible experience.
- Violent means will give violent freedom. That would be a menace to the world and to India herself.
- Violent men have not been known in history to die to a man. They die up to a point.
- We do not need to proselytise either by our speech or by our writing. We can only do so really with our lives. Let our lives be open books for all to study.
- We may have our private opinions but why should they be a bar to the meeting of hearts?
- We may never be strong enough to be entirely nonviolent in thought, word and deed. But we must keep nonviolence as our goal and make strong progress towards it.
- We must become the change we want to see in the world.

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- We should meet abuse by forbearance. Human nature is so constituted that if we take absolutely no notice of anger or abuse, the person indulging in it will soon weary of it and stop.
- We win justice quickest by rendering justice to the other party.
- What difference does it make to the dead, the orphans, and the homeless, whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or the holy name of liberty or democracy?
- What do I think of Western civilization? I think it would be a very good idea.
- What is true of the individual will be tomorrow true of the whole nation if individuals will but refuse to lose heart and hope.
- Whatever you do may seem insignificant to you, but it is most important that you do it.
- When I admire the wonders of a sunset or the beauty of the moon, my soul expands in the worship of the creator.
- When restraint and courtesy are added to strength, the latter becomes irresistible.
- Where love is, there God is also.
- Where there is love there is life.
- You can chain me, you can torture me, you can even destroy this body, but you will never imprison my mind.
- You must be the change you wish to see in the world.
- You must not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty.

2.3.4 Gandhi's Philosophy of Life—Sense of Human Unity

The purpose of human life is the realization of the benevolent law; and the duty of every individual is to mould his own life in accordance with it. Thus, he has to help in the historical task of promoting human freedom and unity. If we wish to break down the narrowness which circumscribes human life, our method of change also should be guided by a high sense of human brotherhood and of the dignity of man. While not co-operating with certain institutions, people should bear no ill-will against their adversaries. They should patiently try to convert their adversaries into willing partners in the establishment of a new order based upon a more comprehensive sense of human unity.

He believed that the mind of the modern man, who has inherited a vast accumulation of cultural and cognate achievements, would be far superior to the mind of the one who lived in the prehistoric times. Therefore, progress is the result of education rather than heredity. There has been an unbroken succession of thinkers and of prophets who have led mankind from higher to still higher aims and objectives. This phenomenon is by itself the proof of the operation of a higher law, which rules the destiny of mankind. In many of Gandhi's writings such a faith is clearly implied.

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Self-Discipline and Self-Purification

Gandhi personified in himself the high ideals of charity, purity, sacrifice and service. He had an ardent desire that India should establish a socialist society where the peasant and the worker will be provided with the means for full development and freedom of expression. As a staunch believer in *Ahimsa* and Truth, Gandhi strove hard to make the people realize the futility of resorting to violence. Moreover, his advice to the statesmen of various countries was to the effect that reliance on violence for solving international controversies ought to be avoided. He made the fear-ridden people fearless and they became bold enough to demand freedom for India. The prison houses and the gallows which used to frighten the people were transformed into holy shrines. He taught the virtue of 'self-discipline' and 'self-purification' to the people. He inculcated in them the importance of organized action for overcoming social, economic and political maladies. He introduced religious principles into politics and set about the task of spiritualizing politics with some success. He uplifted the downtrodden people and helped India transform itself into a self-respecting nation. Handling of public funds, he emphasized, was a trust which should never be betrayed. He himself would spend hours, if need be, accounting for the last pie. Gandhi's personal example and disciplined life tended to wean even the wicked away from graft and corruption. And he imparted to his followers a concern for the well-being of the downtrodden. The present Government of India has been striving hard to promote the well-being of the oppressed sections of the Indian society.

Factors which Inspired Gandhi's Views

Gandhi was influenced by the teachings of Lord Buddha, Lord Mahavir and also by several ancient Hindu philosophical monographs, such as the Upanishads, Patanjali's Yogasutra, Mahabharata of Ved Vyas and last but not least the Bhagawad Gita. From the Upanishads, Buddhism and Jainism, he learnt the concept of ahimsa. The Bhagawad Gita inspired him to become a Karmayogi, which means a person who is selflessly devoted to work. Self-realization and disinterested performance of one's duty were the principles which he learnt from the Gita. Gandhi was influenced by the teachings of Christianity and Islam as well. He was very impressed by the noble and simple life of Jesus Christ. He particularly liked one impressive sentence in the Bible that is 'Hate the sin, don't hate the sinner'. Christ's adherence to non-violence also deeply influenced him. Moreover, Gandhi learnt the value of *Satyagraha* from the Christian teachings. He points out that 'It was the New Testament, especially the Sermon on the Mount, which really awaken me to the rightness and value of *Satyagraha.'* Tolstoy's 'The Kingdom of god is within You' was another source of inspiration to Gandhi. He admits that Tolstoy is one of the three modern writers who have exerted the greatest spiritual influence on his life. From Ruskin, Gandhi learnt three basic principles: (i) the good of man is to be found in the good of all; (ii) the work of a barber is as good as that of a lawyer, both being the means to earn one's livelihood; (iii) the farmer, the labourer or any other individual who is doing physical labour must be given due importance. He learnt from Ruskin the principle of dignity of labour. From Henry David Thoreau, an American philosopher and anarchist, Gandhi learnt the 'concept of Civil Disobedience'. In other words, Gandhi learnt

many concepts from several sources—religious and philosophical—which were developed to suit Indian conditions.

Service for Humanity as the Core of His Philosophy

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Service for humanity is the core of his philosophy. He believes in the absolute oneness of God irrespective of the different names by which we call Him, and thus there is the essential unity among His living creations. Man's ultimate aim is the realization of God and all his endeavour—social, political and religious—must be guided to this end. He said, 'The immediate service of all human beings becomes a necessary part of the endeavour, simply because the only way to find God is to see Him in His creation and be one with it—I am a part and parcel of the whole and I cannot find Him apart from the rest of humanity.' For Gandhi, God lives in the temple of humanity and man becomes great exactly in the degree to which he works for the welfare of his fellow men.

True and Righteousness as the Highest Religion

Gandhi remarked, 'Life without religion, I hold, is life without principle, and life without principle is like a ship without a rudder.' Just as a ship without a rudder will never reach its destination, so will a man without religion never reach his destined goal. By religion Gandhi does not mean dogmas or rituals. There is no religion as something that transcends, 'which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and which ever purifies'. Gandhi emphasizes the moral basis of religion. He said, 'True religion and true morality are inseparably bound up with each other.' He believes in the universal religion, propounded by Swami Vivekananda in the Parliament of Religions. In the same strain Gandhi says, 'Even as a tree has a single trunk, but many branches and leaves, so there is one true and perfect religion, but it becomes many, as it passes through the human medium.' He advocates the study of other religions besides one's own, because it 'will give one a grasp of the rock bottom unity of all religions and afford a glimpse also of the universal and absolute truth which lies beyond the dust of creeds and faiths'. We should have an attitude of respect and reverence towards all religions. 'Study and appreciation of other religions need not cause a weakening of regard for one's own religion; it should mean extension of that regard to other religions'.

Social Order Visualized by Gandhi

What was the social order that Gandhi visualized? The answer is: A society would help each human being to realize the highest aim of his life in a co-operative endeavour to search after the truth. A co-operative approach implies love and fellow-feeling and excludes all thought of hatred and exploitation. Thus the social order has to be based on truth and non-violence, the other name of love. Exploitation in any form—social, political, economic or religious—has to disappear because it devastates the divine dignity of human beings. The economic and social structure of the society must depend on decentralized industry and agriculture. Everyone has to be independent for one's vital needs; for dependence brings helplessness, and helplessness engenders exploitation. And yet one has to be inter-dependent since a co-operative living demands it. To materialize this vision of a society, Gandhi evolved a scheme of

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education after many trials and experiments over a period of 40 years. His ideas revolutionized people's views on education in those times. In 1937 the All India National Education Conference was held in Wardha, which unanimously approved of his idea and appointed a committee of the leading educationalists with Dr Zakir Hussain as its Chairman to give shape to Gandhi's plan. The report of the committee embodies what is known as the Wardha Scheme of Basic National Education.

Meaning of Education

'By education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man—body, mind and spirit.' This is how Gandhi summed up his idea of true education. He further said, 'All-round implies a harmonious development. "Drawing out of best" recognizes a great potentiality coiled up in the child which can be realized and developed to its perfection through education. "Body, mind and spirit" is a vision of the whole man.' The first emphasis is on the body and the culmination point is the spirit. It is through practical work that one attains intellectual development. But intellectual attainment is neither the beginning nor the end of education. It is a mid-point. The individual has yet to blossom to perfection to bring forth all that is best in him. All development, all personal advancement is in the search of Truth, which is the realization of the spiritual essence that is in a human being. Thus, education cannot be confined to childhood and youth—it has to take into account the entire life of a human being; and that is the significance of the phrase 'best in child and man'. So education will not be complete till one realizes the Self—the perfection. Education is through life and for life. Education must take care of the child as a whole, that is, the human personality in all its aspects—physical, intellectual and spiritual. But what is the purpose of education? It should be the function of education to bring about a harmonious development of all the aspects of human personality so that it can grow to its highest stature and serve the society at its best.

2.3.5 Gandhi's Views on Education

Gandhi propounded his views on education in the following words:

1. **Education for a just social order:** 'The ultimate objective of the new education is not only a balanced and harmonious individual but also a balanced and harmonious society—a just social order in which there is no unnatural dividing line between the haves and the have-nots and everybody is assured of a living wage and right to freedom.'
2. **Meaning of education:** 'By education, I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man—body, mind and spirit.'
3. **Education through craft:** 'The uniqueness of this scheme is that education is to be given "through" village crafts. The end in view is not to be accomplished by merely adding a village craft to the current syllabus.'
4. **Self-supporting education:** 'Self-sufficiency is not a "prior" condition, but to me it is the acid test. This does not mean that basic education will be self-supporting from the very start. But taking the entire period of seven years, income and expenditure must balance each other. Otherwise, it would mean that even at the end of this training the basic education student will not be fit

for life. This is the negation of basic education. 'Nai Talim' (new education) without the self-support basic would be like a lifeless body.'

5. **Dignity of labour:** 'It is a crime to make education merely literary, and to unfit boys and girls for manual work in later life. Indeed I hold that as the large part of our time is devoted to labour for earning our bread, our children must from their infancy be taught dignity of such labour. Our children should not be so taught as to desist labour.'
6. **Religious education:** 'To me religion means Truth and *Ahimsa* or rather Truth alone, because Truth includes *Ahimsa, Ahimsa* being the necessary and indispensable means for its discovery. Therefore anything that promotes the practice of these virtues is a means for imparting religious education and the best way to do this, in my opinion, is for the teachers to rigorously practise these virtues in their own person. This very association with the boys, whether on the playground or in the class room, will then give the pupils a fine training in these fundamental virtues.'
7. **Spiritual training:** 'I made the children memorize and recite hymns, and read to them from books on moral training. But that was far from satisfying me. As I came into closer contact with them, I saw that it was through books that one could impart training of the spirit. Just as physical training was to be imparted through physical exercise, and intellectual through intellectual exercise, even so the training of the spirit was possible only through the exercise of the spirit. And the exercise of the spirit entirely depended on the life and character of the teacher. The teacher had always to be mindful of his Ps and Qs whether he was in the midst of his boys or not.'
8. **Education and character:** 'The end of all knowledge must be building up character. What is education without character and what is character without elementary personal purity?'
9. **The teacher:** 'Woe to the teacher who teaches one thing with the lips and carries another in the heart.'
10. **Medium of instruction:** 'Our language is the reflection of ourselves and if you tell me that our languages are too poor to express the best thought, then I say that the sooner we are wiped out of existence the better for us.'
11. **The foreign medium:** 'The foreign medium has caused a brain fag, put an undue strain upon the nerves of our children, made them crammers and imitators, unfitted them for original work and thought, and disabled them for filtrating their training to their family or the masses. The foreign medium has made our children practically foreigners in their own land.'
12. **Curriculum and spinning:** 'In any curriculum of the future, spinning must be a compulsory subject. Just as we cannot live without eating, so it is impossible for us to attain economic independence and banish pauperism from the ancient land without reviving home-spinning.'
13. **Freedom but under discipline:** 'The pupil must have initiative. They must cease to be mere imitators. They must learn to think and act for themselves

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and yet be thoroughly obedient and disciplined. The highest form of freedom carries with it the greatest measures of discipline and humility. Freedom that comes from discipline and humility cannot be denied; unbridled licence is a sign of vulgarity injurious alike to self and one's neighbours.'

14. **Co-education:** 'Before launching on such experiments, a teacher has to be both father and mother to his pupils and be prepared for all eventualities, and only the hardest penance can fit him to conduct them.'
15. **Textbooks:** 'I have, therefore, come to the conclusion that books are required more for the teachers than for the taught. And every teacher, if he is to do full justice to his pupils, will have to prepare the daily lesson from the material available to him. This too, he will have to suit to the special requirement of his class.'
16. **Women's education:** 'As for women's education, I am not sure whether it should be different from men's and when it should begin. But I am strongly of opinion that women should have the same facilities as men and even special facilities where necessary.'
17. **Handwriting:** 'Handwriting is an art. Every letter must be correctly drawn, as an artist would draw his figures. This can only be done if the boys and girls are first taught elementary drawing.'

Gandhi and Naturalism

To quote M. S. Patel, 'Gandhi has a strong claim to be ranked among the leading naturalistic educators of the world. He cannot however be called an extreme naturalist. Like Rousseau, he believes that natural and rural environments are important educative agencies but he does not hold with him that the child should be segregated from the baneful influence of man and society. His attempt at rescuing education from the four walls of the school room cannot be passed over in silence.'

Following are the important points of naturalism in the educational philosophy of new education:

(i) Gandhi agrees with Rousseau that the child is good by nature and this fact must be kept in mind while planning his education.

(ii) Like the naturalists he advocates freedom for the child. He says, 'If children are to find themselves, they must be allowed a sufficient degree of freedom, if they are to develop their powers to the fullest, they must be prepared to accept the appropriate discipline and training.'

(iii) He greatly stresses the importance of educating the child in natural surroundings. He expects 'the teachers to educate village children in their villages so as to draw out all their faculties through some handicraft'.

(iv) Like all naturalists he minimizes the importance of textbook. He said, 'I do not even remember having made much use of the books that were available. I do not find it at all necessary to load the boys with quantities of books. I have always felt that the true textbook for the pupil is the teacher. I remember very little that my teachers taught me from books,

but I have even now a clear recollection of the things they taught me independently of books. Children take in much more and with less labour through their ears than through their eyes. I do not remember having read any book from cover to cover with my boys.'

Gandhi and Idealism

In the words of Shri M. S. Patel, 'A study of his writings will lead to the conclusion that Gandhi is an idealist to the core. Idealism is ingrained deeply in his nature as can be seen from his upbringing and early education.'

The goal of life is self-realization, and this was to be achieved not by withdrawing from the worldly life but by serving his creatures. His *Dharma* consists training the spirit which takes place through purity in our daily lives.

The idealism of Gandhi is reflected in the following words: 'Long before I undertook the education of the youngsters at the Tolstoy Farm I had realized that the training of spirit was a thing by itself. To develop the spirit is to build character and to enable one to work towards knowledge of God and self-realization, and I held that this was an essential part of the training of the young, and that all training without culture of the spirit was of no use and might be even harmful.'

Like all other idealists, Gandhi believed in the harmonious development of personality, and advocated that different types of social culture and physical activities may be undertaken to achieve this end.

Gandhi and Pragmatism

According to Shri M.S. Patel, Gandhi's contribution to the pragmatic philosophy of education is unique. The introduction of a basic craft as the centre of education, the co-ordination and correlation of the content of the close relationship of education with actual life, the method of learning by doing, the individual initiative, the sense of total responsibility and emphasis on experiment as the means of discovering truth are some of the outstanding features of Gandhi's pragmatic philosophy of education.

Gandhi's educational philosophy is pragmatic due to the following reasons:

1. He had an experimental approach towards life. Gandhi believed that reality is that which can be verified. He himself calls his autobiography *My Experiments with Truth*.
2. Gandhi advocates, like a pragmatist, that a child should learn from the real experiments of life.
3. The project method of the pragmatist and the basic scheme of Gandhi have many common points. Like a project, a basic craft is to be a socialized activity involving participation in social relationships.

'The greatest achievement of Gandhi', according to Shri M. S. Patel, 'is that he, in his educational philosophy, gives due place to the dominant tendencies of naturalism, idealism and pragmatism which fuse into a unity, give rise to a theory of education which would suit the needs of the day and satisfy the loftiest aspirations of the human soul.'

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Principles of Basic Education

The principles of basic education are as follows:

1. Free and Compulsory Education for Seven Years

Education should be free and compulsory from the age of seven to fourteen years. Seven years' course will not only impart elementary education but also secondary education. At the age of fourteen the school should be able to produce intelligent citizens. They should acquire effective literacy and should develop proper control over their senses and should be mature for social appreciation and attitudes. The education should be both manual and intellectual.

2. Education to Centre on Some Craft

It should be productive, manual and should centre on some craft. It must have educative possibilities. Different subjects should be grouped around it, and craft as such is not to be taught. The whole education is to be imparted through it. Craft is not added to the number of literary subjects in basic education. A craft has got tremendous educational possibilities.

3. Self-Supporting Basis of the Plan

Gandhi was fully aware of the financial condition of our people. They could not spend a single penny on education of their children. It was the duty of the State to provide free and compulsory education to all the children of the State. He was fully aware that the government would never spend any amount to educate the teeming millions of India. He, therefore, wanted to make education self-sufficient. He could not wait till sufficient funds were made available by the State. He, therefore, suggested that education should be self-supporting. Hence, he introduced a manual productive craft, the sale of which would make education self-supporting.

4. The Medium of Instruction

Mother tongue, according to Gandhi, is not only to become the medium of instruction but also to occupy the first place in languages. All expression in a natural way is possible through the mother tongue. To force a foreign language means waste of energy, time and money. It is also non-psychological for those who are not of linguistic taste. Even graduates cannot express themselves fully in English. The result is that they can neither express themselves in English nor in their mother tongue. If they express themselves in their mother tongue, they will use many English words but they won't be able to use complete sentences in English or their mother tongue. In the basic system, national education is to be imparted through the mother tongue.

5. The Cult of Non-Violence

Gandhi had firm conviction in non-violence. So how could this scheme of education remain uninfluenced from non-violence? Gandhi says, 'We have to make this training school as a school for winning freedom and for the solution of all our ills of which the chief one is our communal troubles. For this purpose we shall have to concentrate on non-violence. Hitlers and Mussolinis accept violence as a fundamental principle.

Ours is non-violence, according to the Congress. All our problems have, therefore, to be solved non-violently. Our arithmetic, our science, our history, will have a non-violent approach and the problems in these subjects will be coloured by non-violence.'

According to Gandhi, 'Our Mathematics will always keep humanity at the centre of calculation in the evolution of power factors. History will not remain the record of kings and wars but a survey of humanity striving for a better world. Our Political Science and Economics will shift from competition and militarism to co-existence and protection. Our Engineering and Science will create things for human comforts. We will, thus, concentrate on village industries and not on city industries. We will have to review our village handicrafts if we want to keep all 7,00,000 of our villages alive and not only a fraction of them.' The social order of Gandhi's contemplation was to be free from economic power in the hands of a few for the exploitation of many. For this accomplishment, society's politics, economic and education must stand on non-violence, truth and justice.

6. The Ideal of Citizenship

The ideal of citizenship is an important feature of basic education. The spirit of citizenship should be filled in the child.

7. Relationship with Life

Education should be closely related to life. Wardha Scheme unifies knowledge and does not allow division of knowledge into watertight compartments. Everything is to be taught through the principle of correlation. There are three centres of correlation—craft, physical environment and social environment of the child. These three centres of correlation will achieve perfect integration of curriculum.

Self-Supporting Aspect

Gandhi observed, 'Self-sufficiency is not a prior condition but to me is the acid test. This does not mean that basic education will be self-supporting from the very start. But taking the entire period of seven years, income and expenditure must balance each other, otherwise it would mean that even at the end of this training the basic education student will not be fitted for life. This is the negation of basic education. "Nai Talim" without the self-supporting basis would be like a lifeless body.'

'When I used the word "self-supporting" I did not mean that all the capital expenditure would be defrayed from it, but at least the salary of the teacher would be found out of the proceeds of the articles made by our pupils. The economic aspect of the basic system of education is thus self-evident.'

'I would, therefore, begin the child's education by teaching it a useful handicraft and by enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training. Thus, every school can be made self-supporting, the condition being that the State takes over the manufactures of these schools.'

'I am very keen on finding the expenses of a teacher through the product of the manual labour of his pupils because I am convinced that there is no other way to carry education to crores of our children.'

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'Primary education thus conceived as a whole is bound to be self- supporting even though for the first or even the second year's course it may not be wholly so.'

'My "Nai Talim" is not dependent on money. The running expenses of this education should come from the educational process itself. Whatever the criticism may be, I know that the only education is that which is self-supporting.'

'If such an education is given, the direct result will be that it will be self-supporting. But the test of success is not its self-supporting character, but the whole man has been drawn out through the teaching of the handicraft in a scientific manner…. The self-supporting part should be the logical corollary of the fact that the pupil has learnt the use of every one of his faculties.'

'I can imagine a school entirely self-supporting. If it became, say, a spinning and weaving institution with perhaps a cotton field attached to it.'

'If every school introduced spinning, it would revolutionize our ideas of financing education. You can work at a school for six hours per day and give education to the pupils.'

'It is easy to see that every school can be made self-supporting without much effort and the nation can engage experienced teachers for its school.'

'Education under *Swaraj* will aim at making boys self-supporting from their youth. Any other profession may be taught to them, but spinning will be compulsory.'

'Surely if the State takes charge of the children between seven and fourteen, and trains their bodies and minds through productive labour, the public schools must be fraud and teachers idiots if they cannot become self-supporting.'

'But as a nation we are so backward in education that we cannot hope to fulfil our obligations to the nation in this respect in the given time during this generation, if the programme is to depend on money. I have, therefore, been bold, even at the risk of losing all reputation for constructive ability to suggest that education should be self-supporting.'

'Land, building and equipment are not intended to be covered by the proceeds of the pupil's labour.'

'We (Teachers) should be intellectual bankrupts if we cannot direct the energy of our children so as to get from them after a year's training, one *anna* worth of marketable labour per hour.'

Evaluation of the Scheme

The Wardha Scheme is imbued with Gandhi's cardinal creed of non-violence and the idea of a co-operative community. Shri Mahadev Desai explained, 'The idea of self-supporting education cannot be divorced from the ideological background of non-violence, and unless we bear in mind that the new scheme is intended to bring into being a new age, from which class and communal hatred are eliminated and exploitation is eschewed, we cannot make a success of it.' The self-supporting society has to eschew hatred and exploitation for its very existence and must sustain itself through love, non-violence and the spirit of co-operative living.

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It was only natural for this great man of our country to have the courage and conviction to launch such a revolutionary experiment. To quote the words of Dr Zakir Husain's Committee: 'Thus the new scheme which we are advocating will aim at giving the citizens of the future a keen sense of personal worth, dignity and efficiency and will strengthen in them the desire for self-improvement and social service in a co-operative community.'

The fact is that the underlying spirit of basic education has not been fully understood by many. Prof. Saiyidain in the foreword of the report of the Assessment Committee on Basic Education (1956) expressed the need for a careful reorientation of ideas, attitudes and techniques: 'It is therefore a matter of great surprise, though it is certainly one of disappointment that the full implications of basic approach have not yet been realized by many teachers and educational administrators.' Professor Mujeeb has rightly pointed out that: 'The opinions of great men do not in the least absolve us from the duty of thinking for ourselves. They are flashes of inspiration which reveal to us aspects of truth and reality that may have remained invisible without them. But this is all. We cannot live for them or even by them. We can only live for ourselves, and we should look only within ourselves for the light that guides and the win that creates.' Gandhi would never brook the idea of the dogmatic acceptance of his own scheme by the people. He himself was the relentless critic of his own philosophy: 'You should not accept anything out of your regard for me…. The scheme should be accepted after full and mature consideration so that it may not have to be given up after a little while.' Though Gandhi had a desire to teach all the subjects through handwork, he was nevertheless aware that every one of these subjects could not be so taught, and therefore 'we will teach as much of these subjects through the *takli* ([spindle]; or any other basic craft) as possible'. He would not dogmatically interpret basic education as education through craft. This is true to a certain extent, but that is not the whole truth. The roots of 'Nai Talim' go deeper. It is based on truth and non-violence in individual and collective life. Untruth and violence lead to bondage and can have no place in education. 'Craft is taught not for craft's sake but for opening up avenues of creative self-expression, practical work and learning by doing. Neither does it stand in the way of industrial progress, for the training in practical skill, observation and creative work will certainly be a better preparation for industrial training or engineering colleges.'

We must remember that Gandhi combined in himself the visionary and practical man. He was a man experimenting with truth. His thoughts evolved and grew with time. He realized with experience: 'It has become clear that the scope of basic education has to be extended. It should include the education of everybody at every stage of life. Education has to be as broad as life itself. It has to be adjusted and reoriented with the needs of time and the temper of a new society.'

Originality of Gandhi

M. S. Patel, in the book *True Educational Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi*, rightly says that 'his (Gandhi's) educational philosophy is original in the sense that he arrived at it through personal experience without drawing on the accumulated experience of others. It may not be original in the sense that the likes of it was never

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preached by anybody in the past; but it should be noted that its presentation and adaptation on a nation-wide scale are undoubtedly novel and original.' In the words of Acharya Vinoba Bhave, 'It may not be a new thing but it has been presented in a new light.' Gandhi himself says: 'I do know that the aim in the Middle ages or any age was never to develop the whole man through crafts. The idea is original.'

Gandhi and other Educators

The precursors to Gandhi's philosophy of education may belong to one of the two types, viz., (i) those who exercised direct formative influences on his philosophy, and (ii) a host of others who had reached similar or identical conclusions before, though Gandhi may have reached his conclusions independently of what they had taught. Among those who had exercised direct formative influence on his philosophy are Raichandbhai of Gujarat, Ruskin and Tolstoy. Those who had reached similar conclusions are Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Dewey and Karl Marx. Rousseau had advocated manual work just to eliminate prejudice against it. Pestalozzi recommended it for sense training and tried to show that industrial and intellectual training could go side by side. But Gandhi was bold enough to make craft as nucleus of the whole instruction and not an extra or additional subject. There is close resemblance between the theories of Gandhi and Froebel in so far as both lay particular emphasis on activity and constructive work in school life. Gandhi gave the constructive work of Froebel a concrete shape and a local habitation, though quite independently of him. Gandhi differs from Dewey in that he does not mean to supplement literary training with manual training, but makes manual training the means of literary and intellectual training. Karl Marx maintained that education should be related with productive process. But Gandhi does not attach a school to a factory or workshop; to him the school itself is the workshop where work is an essential instrument of learning.

Basic education is the result of Gandhi's experiments and experience spread over a long time. It will have far-reaching consequences and will have its way into distant lands. In short, his new scheme of education is 'new', 'epoch-making,' 'original' and 'revolutionary'.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

7. What was the greatest contribution of Mahatma Gandhi to political theory and politics?
8. What differentiates Gandhi's approach to economic issues from the mainstream tradition?
9. What was Gandhi's idea of true education?
10. What was Gandhi's belief as an idealist?
11. State one reason why Gandhi's educational philosophy is pragmatic?

2.4 SUMMARY

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- Tagore was born in 1861 in a family which was famous for its progressive and enlightened views.
- In 1901, Tagore established a school at Bolpur, which was 93 miles from Calcutta. In 1921 this became the famous Visva Bharati, an international university seeking to bring about an understanding between eastern and western cultures.
- In 1909, Tagore's world famous work *Gitanjali* was published.
- An English edition of *Gitanjali* was published in 1912 and an introduction to it was written by the renowned Irish poet W. B. Yeats who regarded this as 'work of supreme culture'.
- The then British Government made Tagore the 'Knight' in 1915, but in 1919 he renounced it as a protest against the massacre of innocent people in Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar.
- Tagore observed, 'I have great faith in, humanity. Like the sun it can be clouded, but never extinguished. I admit that at this time when the human races have met together as never before, the basic elements appear predominant.'
- Tagore is of the view that education is nothing short of the highest purpose of human being —the fullest growth and freedom of soul.
- Tagore says that there is a close and inseparable connection between the faculties of mind and the body.
- Tagore believed that in his ashram every pupil should be taught to master some form of handwork or the other. To learn a particular type of handwork is not the main objective. The fact is that through the exercise of the limbs the mind is also strengthened.
- Gurudeva believed that education should cover every aspect of our life— economic, intellectual, aesthetic, social and spiritual; and our educational institutions should be in the very heart of society, connected with it by the living bonds of varied cooperation.
- Regarding education and freedom Tagore said, 'I never said to them: Don't do this, or don't do that. I never prevented them from climbing trees or going about where they liked.'
- Tagore pleads in his essay 'Abaran' to let fresh air and free light into our mind and our life, and to uphold and honour the supremacy of this simple and the natural.
- Tagore pointed out the great significance of the school atmosphere in the life of children whose mind, like the tree, has the power to gather food and nourishment from its surroundings.
- Rabindranath was a great educational practitioner.

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- The object of Sriniketan is to bring back life in its completeness into the villages making them self-reliant and self-respectful, acquaint them with the cultural traditions of their own country, and make them competent so that they can use the modern resources for the improvement of their physical, intellectual and economic condition.
- In the words of Calcutta University Syndicate, 'Through him (Tagore) India has given her message to mankind and his unique achievements in the field of literature, philosophy, education and art have won imperishable fame for himself and have raised the status of India in the estimation of the world.'
- As a naturalist philosopher, Tagore surpasses Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Froebel. Foster Watson observes in Encyclopaedia and Dictionary of Education, 'Tagore substantially adopts Rousseau's ideal of return to nature, but included human nature, as well as external nature, basing both upon a primal sympathy.'
- M. K. Gandhi (Mohandas Karam Chand Gandhi) was born on 2 October 1869, at Porbander in Kathiawad.
- Gandhi's educational philosophy took shape through his educational experience at the Tolstoy Farm at Transvaal in South Africa.
- Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) came on to the Indian political scene at a crucial period of the Indian national movement.
- Under the leadership of Gandhi, the Congress decided to launch the non-cooperation movement in 1920.
- M. K. Gandhi was a man of action, a realist and a pragmatist.
- Gandhi believed in the essential goodness of man. According to him, left unto himself, man can develop his spiritual and moral personality. Man alone is capable of achieving wonders in the world.
- Satyagraha and fasting were usually criticized as forms of moral coercion. But Gandhi insisted that it was not coercion from any point of view—economic, psychological, political or moral.
- Writings on Gandhian economics have usually focused attention on the specific policies that he proposed.
- From this point of view what really differentiates Gandhi's approach to economic issues from the mainstream tradition is his extraordinary emphasis on the ethical aspect of economic behaviour.
- Gandhi was generally in favour of analytical reasoning based on the deductive method applied to a set of postulates.
- Gandhi's view of charity is in line with his consequentialist view of ethics.
- For Gandhi, the distinction between manual and mental labour was not quite as rigidly drawn as it was for Tolstoy, for physical labour, too, provided opportunities for the exercise of intelligence.
- The purpose of human life is the realization of the benevolent law; and the duty of every individual is to mould his own life in accordance with it.

- Gandhi believed that the mind of the modern man, who has inherited a vast accumulation of cultural and cognate achievements, would be far superior to the mind of the one who lived in the prehistoric times.
- Service for humanity is the core of his philosophy. Gandhi believes in the absolute oneness of God irrespective of the different names by which we call Him, and thus there is the essential unity among his living creations.
- Like Rousseau, Gandhi believes that natural and rural environments are important educative agencies but he does not hold with him that the child should be segregated from the baneful influence of man and society.
- In the words of Shri M. S. Patel, 'A study of his writings will lead to the conclusion that Gandhi is an idealist to the core. Idealism is ingrained deeply in his nature as can be seen from his upbringing and early education.'
- The ideal of citizenship is an important feature of basic education. The spirit of citizenship should be filled in the child.
- The Wardha Scheme is imbued with Gandhi's cardinal creed of non-violence and the idea of a co-operative community.
- The precursors to Gandhi's philosophy of education may belong to one of the two types, viz., (i) those who exercised direct formative influences on his philosophy, and (ii) a host of others who had reached similar or identical conclusions before, though Gandhi may have reached his conclusions independently of what they had taught.

2.5 KEY TERMS

- **Humanism:** It is a rationalist outlook or system of thought attaching prime importance to human rather than divine or supernatural matters.
- **Gandhism:** It is a body of ideas of that describes the inspiration, vision and the life and works of Mohandas Gandhi.
- **Diarchy:** It is a form of government having two joint rulers.
- **Exonerate:** It means to absolve from blame for a fault or wrongdoing, especially after due consideration of the case.
- **Emancipate:** It means to set free from legal, social or political restrictions.
- **Swaraj:** It refers to self-government or the independence for India.

2.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Rabindranath Tagore wrote *Gitanjali*. It was published in 1909.
2. Tagore is of the view that education is nothing short of the highest purpose of human being —the fullest growth and freedom of soul.
3. Tagore realized that teaching of religion can never be imparted in the form of lessons, it is there where there is religion in living.

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4. The school was established in 1901 at Bolpur, which is located at a distance of about one hundred miles from Calcutta.
5. The three main objectives of the school are as follows:
   (i) To give spiritual training to the students
   (ii) To help the children cultivate a of love of Nature, and have sympathy for all living creatures
   (iii) To impart knowledge to children in their mother tongue
6. The object of Sriniketan is to bring back life in its completeness into the villages, making them self-reliant and self-respectful, acquaint them with the cultural traditions of their own country, and make them competent so that they can use the modern resources for the improvement of their physical, intellectual and economic condition.
7. The greatest contribution of Mahatma Gandhi to political theory and politics was the spiritualization of politics.
8. Gandhi's extraordinary emphasis on the ethical aspect of economic behaviour differentiates Gandhi's approach to economic issues from the mainstream tradition.
9. Gandhi summed up his idea of true education by stating, 'By education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man—body, mind and spirit…. education cannot be confined to childhood and youth—it has to take into account the entire life of a human being; and that is the significance of the phrase "best in child and man."'
10. Like all other idealists, Gandhi believed in the harmonious development of personality, and advocated that different types of social culture and physical activities may be undertaken to achieve this end.
11. Gandhi's educational philosophy is pragmatic as he had an experimental approach towards life. Gandhi believed that reality is that which can be verified. He himself named his autobiography as *My Experiments with Truth.*

2.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Briefly discuss Rabindranath Tagore's philosophy of Humanism.
2. Write a short note on Visva Bharati and list the various institutions there.
3. Why was the Khilafat Movement started?
4. Who influenced the thoughts and ideas of Gandhi and how?
5. State the arguments given by Gandhi against the pursuit of industrialization.
6. What is the common link between Gandhi's ideas on charity and on leisure?
7. Write a brief note on the Wardha Scheme.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Describe the main objectives and characteristics of Tagore's school at Shantiniketan.
2. Explain the aims and objectives of Sriniketan.
3. Write a detailed note on the concept of Gandhian economics.
4. Discuss Gandhi's theory of trusteeship.
5. What is education according to Gandhi? What are his views on education? Discuss in detail.
6. Examine the concepts of idealism and naturalism in Gandhi's educational philosophy.
7. List and explain Gandhi's principles of basic education.

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2.8 FURTHER READING

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UNIT 3 ROUSSEAU AND FROEBEL

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Structure

3.0 Introduction
3.1 Unit Objectives
3.2 Jean-Jacques Rousseau
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  3.2.2 Rousseau and Education
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3.7 Questions and Exercises
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3.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, you studied about the works and philosophies of two renowned thinkers, Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi.

This unit will introduce you to the life and thoughts of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the great French philosopher of the 18th century and Friedrich Wilhelm August Froebel (Fröbel), the German educationalist who is best known as the inventor of the 'kindergarten system'.

Rousseau was a major Genevan philosopher, writer and composer of romanticism. His political philosophy greatly influenced both the French and the American Revolutions. He has had immense impact on the overall development of modern political, sociological and educational thought. Rousseau's most important work is *The Social Contract*, which outlines the basis for a legitimate political order within a framework of classical republicanism. Published in 1762, it became one of the most influential works of political philosophy in the Western tradition. The treatise begins with the dramatic opening lines, 'Man was born free, and he is everywhere in chains. One man thinks himself the master of others, but remains more of a slave than they.'

According to Froebel, 'the purpose of education is to encourage and guide man as a conscious, thinking and perceiving being in such a way that he becomes a pure and perfect representation of that divine inner law through his own personal choice; education must show him the ways and meanings of attaining that goal' (Friedrich Froebel, *Die Menschenerziehung*, 1826, pp. 2).

3.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Describe the life and works of Jean-Jacques Rousseau
- Discuss the critique of civil society given by Rousseau
- Explain Rousseau's views on methods of teaching and curriculum
- Discuss F. W. August Froebel's philosophy of education and list the main principles of his philosophy
- Assess Froebel's educational principles
- Define Froebel's 'Kindergarten' and explain its objective, merits and limitations
- Analyse Froebel's influence on modern education

3.2 JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

Jean-Jacques Rousseau is considered as the greatest thinker that France has ever produced. Not only in France but also in the entire history of political theory, he was the most exciting and most provocative. By the very magic of his style, no other political thinker could come anywhere near him. He was a genius and a keen moralist who was ruthless in his criticism of the 18th century French society. He was one of the most controversial thinkers, as is evident from the conflicting, contradictory and often diametrically opposite interpretations that existed of the nature and importance of his ideas. He was a philosopher, writer and composer of the 18th century Romanticism. He was born in Geneva, Switzerland on 28th June 1712. At that time, Geneva was a city-state and a Protestant associate of the Swiss Confederacy.

Rousseau was proud that his middle-class family, had a right to vote in the city. Throughout his life, he described himself as the citizen of Geneva. Isaac Rousseau, Rousseau's father was a watch maker, well-educated and a lover of music. Rousseau wrote that a Genevan watchmaker, is a man who can be introduced anywhere; a Persian watchmaker is only fit to talk about watches. Rousseau's mother, Suzanne Bernard Rousseau, who was the daughter of a Calvinist preacher, died of puerperal fever after nine days of Rousseau's birth. His paternal aunt Suzanne and his father brought up both Rousseau and his elder brother, Francois. Rousseau's father went to Nyon in the territory of Bern from Geneva, taking Rousseau's aunt with him. J. J. Rousseau was staying with his maternal uncle. His uncle Abraham Bernard, took him to Hamlet, outside Geneva, with his own son for two years. Here, the children studied the subjects mathematics and drawing for their study. During that period, Rousseau was deeply influenced by religious services. His parents were Protestant but Rousseau got converted to Catholicism under the influence of Madame de Warens (Françoise-Louise de Warens). Subsequently, he became her lover. His life was not smooth and he led the life of a vagabond. In his book, *Confessions*, he says that it was only after many years that he began to educate himself. He went to

Paris when he was 30. There he met Diderot and became his friend. Rousseau's writing on music featured in *Encyclopedia* which was written by Diderot.

In 1743, he became the Secretary to the French Ambassador in Venice. He came in contact with Therese le Vasseur in 1745 and had five children with her who were abandoned in an orphanage. Rousseau married Vasseur much later. His eccentric, egoistic and overbearing personality made him sever his friendships with his former friends Hume and Voltaire. Thus, he was a controversial person and his life was very complex. However, he rose to fame with his prize winning essay 'Discourse on the Sciences and Arts'. In this essay, he rejected progress based on the Arts and Sciences, as they did not elevate the moral standards of human beings. He traced the rise of inequality and the consequent fall of the human individual. He wrote a novel namely *La Nouvelle Heloise* in 1761. In this novel, the themes of his early essays reappeared, and his preference for nature and simple pleasures of country life became evident. It is only after his death that his *Confessions* was published. He accomplished many things during his lifetime which include mastery in and writing on music, politics and education. His fame primarily rested on his writings. He composed some operas as well. Rousseau remained mainstay of the Paris opera for years to come. He also wrote a dictionary of music and devised a new system of music notion. He was persecuted for religious reasons. He wrote *The Social Contract*, his most famous book and *Emile* in Paris. He died in 1778.

3.2.1 Revolt against Reason

The two most famous accounts of the state of nature prior to Rousseau's are those of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. He was also influenced by the modern natural law tradition, which attempted to answer the challenge of scepticism through a systematic approach to human nature.

More than most men, Rousseau projected the contradiction and maladjustments of his own nature upon the society about him and sought an anodyne for his own painful sensitivity. In his essay, 'First Discourse' he said that moral had been corrupted with the advancement of arts and sciences.' Against intelligence, the growth of knowledge, and the progress of science, which the enlightenment believes to be the only hope of civilization, he expressed amiable and benevolent sentiments, goodwill and reverence. Rousseau criticized the idea of enlightenment since his early period. In his prize winning essay 'Discourse on the Sciences and Arts', he depicted the drawbacks of science and arts, including its impact on morality. According to him, science had brought moral degradation among men. He criticized the idea that science has brought progress. He termed it as an illusion. It was not progress and in fact was regression. The advancement of science and modern civilization made individual life unhappy. It had made him less virtuous. Rousseau advocated for a simple society. He says virtue can be prevalent only in a simple society. In his criticism of modern advanced society, he alleged that man has been growing corrupted day by day. With the advancement of the civilization man became corrupt. Rousseau advocated that the abundance in the world brought more evil than good. According to him, luxury is the fertile source of corruption. It not only impact upon man negatively but also undermines the nations. He cited the example of Athens. Luxury, wealth, science

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and elegance brought vices, which led to downfall in the long run. He also cited the example of Rome. As long as Rome was simple and devoid of luxury, it had respect all over the empire but when it embraced luxury and wealth, it began to decline.

Rousseau severely criticized the advancement of art and science. He argued that the minds of the human beings have been corrupted in proportion to the advancement of the arts and science through the ages. To Rousseau, the much-vaunted politeness, the glory of civilized refinement was a uniform perfidious veil' under which he saw 'jealousy, suspicion, fear, wildness, fraud and hate'. Science brought intelligence and knowledge brought revolution. The supporter of enlightenment eulogized it. But Rousseau, against this notion, preferred to amiable and benevolent sentiments, reverence and goodwill. He preferred sentiments and conscience to reason. He argued intelligence was dangerous because it undermined reverence. He termed science as destructive because it undermined faith. Reason was bad to him because it undermined morality. For Rousseau, morality is nothing other than the ability to see oneself through the eyes of others and act appropriately. This is a fascinating description of morality. Learning to live with others is the essence of morality. Humans have the capacity to act morally but it is not natural in the sense of being fully fixed in all humans since birth. It is the capacity that has to be developed, educated and nurtured.

Critique of Civil Society

Rousseau maintains that liberty in the state of nature was a great boon. However, with increasing population and depletion of the treasures of nature, it was no longer possible for man to enjoy natural liberty as before. Thus, in the changed circumstances, natural liberty was threatened when the forces of nature no longer sustains them, they have to consolidate their own force to save themselves. They, therefore, create a civil society to maintain their freedom. According to Rousseau, vanity among human beings and difference in property and possessions led to inequality. The rich became richer and poor became poorer. Laws were enacted to protect property rights. Civil society degenerated into a state of war, extreme inequality, ostentation, cunningness, ambition and enslavement. Through laws and other political devices, the rich were able to corner power and dominate, while the poor descended into slavery. Civilized man was born a slave and died the same.

In the State of nature, the man was a 'noble savage'. He lived in isolation and had limited desires. According to Rousseau, it was neither a condition of plenty nor scarcity. There was no conflict for cooperative living. Individuals had no language or knowledge. They had no idea of any art or science. Rousseau argued in this type of situation, man was neither happy nor unhappy. He had no conception of just and unjust, vice and virtue. He was not guided by reason, but guided by self-love or the instinct of self-preservation. This state of nature was not perennial. Gradually, individual discovered the utility and usefulness of labour. Man began to collaborate and created a provisional order. It led to a patriarchal stage when man began to build shelter for themselves and families stayed together. He began to use language and reason. The division of labour came into being. It led him from the subsistence economy to an economy of productive development. Individuals learned metallurgy

and agriculture. It gave him iron and corn and made him civilized. However, it ruined humanity and morality. The growth of agriculture and division of labour created the idea of property. Rousseau famously stated that 'the first man who after fencing of a piece of land, took it upon himself to say "this belongs to me" and found people simple minded enough to believe was the true founder of civil society.' Man's talents and skills created inequality among the people. The longing for possession and wealth led to enslavement of some people and led to conflict and competition. It is this conflict, which led a demand for a system of law to ensure order and peace. Especially the rich demanded it to save their possession and wealth. Thus, the social contract envisioned by rich was to maintain their status and position. As a result of this demand and social contract, the civil society and law originated. It was a bane to the poor and boon to the rich. It destroyed natural liberty.

According to Rousseau, the emergence of civil society degenerated human society. He argued the natural man lost his ferocity, once he began to live in society. As a result, he became weak. He lost natural independence as his desires increased and comforts became a necessity. He became dependent, which created problems in human relationship as they became vain and contemptuous. Their vanity brought various social ills. Vanity overpowered man and guided his actions which degenerated individual mind and the society. Rousseau also severely criticized enlightenment which believes in human progress of reason through science and technology. In his book *Emile*, Rousseau stated that though God has made all things good it was man who meddled with them and made them evil.

In his 'Discourse on the Origins of Inequality (The Second Discourse)', he developed his views expressed earlier in his prize winning essay 'Discourses on the Sciences and Arts'. In this work, he narrated the fall of man. He highlighted how the nature got twisted, warped and corrupted with the emergence of civil society. The civil society was necessitated by the rise of the institution of private property and the need to defend it by institutionalizing social inequality through law. Thus, Rousseau underlined the difference of 'natural man' and 'civilized man'. He appreciated the natural man and criticized severely the civilized man who was created as a result of the emergence of civil society.

General Will

Creation of popular sovereignty by vesting in it the general will is a unique contribution of Rousseau, which led the foundation of modern democracy. The concept of general will is the central theme of Rousseau's doctrine. It is distinguished from the other types of human will. According to Rousseau, the general will is always right. Many later thinkers have used the distinction between actual will and real will in order to explicate Rousseau's distinction between particular will and general will. The existence of these two types of will is a source of conflict within the minds of men. Actual will is motivated by his immediate, selfish interest whereas real will is motivated by his ultimate collective interest. Actual will is concerned with his ordinary self, whereas, real will is concerned with his better self. The satisfaction of his desire is the aim of his actual will but real will induces him to acts of reason. The characteristic of actual will can be termed as transient, unstable and inconsistent whereas real will is stable,

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constant, consistent and determinant. The actual will is detrimental to human freedom. Thus, to attain freedom, the individuals should follow the direction of the real will. Real freedom is reflected by the real will. The real will is concerned with the interest of the community and subordinates self-interest. The problem is that an individual at times may not be able to discriminate between actual will and real will. This problem can be eliminated by the transition from the 'particular' to 'general' will. The general will is the harmonization of the interest of each with those of all. However, it is not a 'compromise' or the lowest common factor. It is an expression of the highest in every man. It reflects the true spirit of citizenship. Unlike particular will, the general will always guides an individual through a proper way.

Rousseau believed a unified collective view would emerge for two reasons. First of all, he envisaged a relatively simple society of farmers and artisans with no rich or poor (though he railed against property, he never advocated its abolition), a situation that is the duty of the sovereign to maintain. All are equal and consequently there would be few conflicts and what is good for society would be relatively simple, a situation in which it would be easy to inculcate love of the community. According to Rousseau, the general will would be the source of all laws. The human being would be truly free if he followed the dictates of the law. Civil liberty, for Rousseau, meant freedom from the assault of others, from following the arbitrary will of another person, and obedience to one's notion of liberty. Of course, if one had to be free then one had to obey one's own will which means that one's will, and the laws of a state would have to be in harmony. The Free State would be a consensual and participatory democracy. He categorically said that the general will could emerge only in an assembly of equal law makers. It could not be alienated. The 'executive will' could not be the 'general will'. Only the legislative will, which was sovereign, could be the general will. For Rousseau it was the direct democracy that embodied the legislative will. The individual participated in the articulation of the general will, for citizenship was the highest that one could aspire for. The general will could not be the will of the majority. In fact, it did not represent the will of all; it was the difference between the sum of judgements about the common good and the more aggregate of personal fancies and individual desires. It would always aim and promote the general interest and will of its members.

According to Rousseau, submission to the general will creates freedom. He spoke of a total surrender but not to a third party. Unlike Hobbes, he vested sovereign power in the political community. According to Rousseau sovereignty was inalienable and indivisible. But it was not vested in a man or a group of men. The people cannot give away, or transfer, to any person or body their ultimate right of self-government, of deciding their own destiny. Thus, he expounded the concept of popular sovereignty. Rousseau's concept of inalienable and indivisible sovereignty does not permit the people to transfer their legislative function, the supreme authority of the state to the organs of government. So far as the judicial and executive functions are concerned, they have to be exercised by special organs of the government, however, they are completely subordinate to the sovereign people. Sovereign power cannot be represented. Rousseau maintains that representative assemblies ignore the interest of the community and often concerned with their particular interest. This is the

reason why he advocated direct democracy. Sovereignty originated with the people and stayed with them. For Rousseau, government and sovereign were different. According to him government was the agent of the general will which is vested in the community. Sovereign to Rousseau was the people constituted as a political community through social contract.

It would be pertinent to mention here that Rousseau, in his book *The Discourse on Political Economy*, first coined the term general will. He points out in the book that general will tends always to the preservation and welfare of the whole end of every part, and is the source of the laws, constitute for all the members of the state in relation to one another and to it, the rule of what is just and unjust. It is an outcome of the moral attitude in the heart of citizens to act justly. Here individual scarifies his private interest and embrace the public interest. The general will is emerged from all and applied to all. It comprises rational will of all the members of the community. Rousseau points out that if someone refuses to obey the general will he can be compelled to do so. He famously advocated that man can be forced to be free. When a man is being compelled to obey the general will it essentially means that he is being asked to follow his own best interest because it is by obeying the general will he can express his moral freedom. Obedience to the general will is not the corrosion of their liberty because obedience to the general will essentially implies obedience to part of their own selves.

In a nutshell, Rousseau advocated of a policy that would aim for the general rather than the particular interest of its members. The freedom that the noble savage enjoyed in the state of nature would be possible under the right kind of society governed by the 'general will'. Society and the individual, in his theory were complementary.

3.2.2 Rousseau and Education

Rousseau was greatly influenced by three factors viz., the state of time, extremely varied experience of his life and his impulsive and emotional nature. His philosophy is usually designated by the term 'Naturalism'. The keynote of his philosophy is to have a 'State of Nature', 'Natural Man' and 'Natural Civilization'. He contends that all the ills and miseries of civilisation are due to a departure from a 'State of Nature'. 'Return of Nature' was his method to cure the world of ills and miseries. In the opening sentence of *Emile*, Rousseau reveals the tilt of his philosophy. 'Everything is good as it comes from the hands of the Author of *Nature*; but everything degenerates in the hands of man.' Again Rousseau has observed, 'Civilised man is born, lives and dies in a state of slavery. At his birth he is stitched in swaddling clothes; at his death he is nailed in his coffin and as long as he preserves the human form he is fettered out by institutions. Leave him alone.'

Life, according to Rousseau, was genuine. 'Reason', he said 'should be the guiding principle in producing both the Natural civilization and Natural man.' This ideal of the state of 'Nature' was, 'a simple farming community or state without evils.'

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Three Sources of Education

According to Rousseau, following were the three sources:

1. **Education of nature:** 'The constitutional exertion of our organs and faculties is the education of nature.'
2. **Education given by men:** 'The uses we are taught to make of that exertion, constitute the education given to us by men.'
3. **Education from circumstances:** 'And in the acquisitions made by our own experience, on the objects that surround us, consists of our education from circumstances.'

Man-making education*:* Rousseau has observed, … 'It matters little to me, whether any pupil be designed for the army, the bar, or the pulpit. Nature has destined us to the offices of human life … To live in the profession I would teach him. When I have done with him it is true, he will be neither a lawyer, a soldier, nor a divine. Let him first be a man, he will on occasion as soon become any thing else, that a man ought to be, as any other person whatever. Fortune may remove him from one rank to another as she pleases, he will be always sound in his place.'

Education by Nature will restore unsophisticated man, whose sole function is to be a man. In the natural order of things, all men being equal, their common vocation is manhood; and whoever is well trained for that, cannot fail to perform any vocation connected with it.

Natural and Negative Education

The approach of Rousseau in the field of education is out and out naturalistic. He had no faith in the established order of the society. When he talks of negative education, he believes that the child should be subject to a natural order and free from a social order. Negative education means to allow the child to move freely in nature, so that he is able to perfect the organs of his body, which are the instruments of acquiring knowledge. This free movement will not mean teaching virtue or truth, but protecting the heart of the child from the evil ways of the society.

The negative education of Rousseau has the following implications:

1. **To lose time wisely:** Rousseau considered that childhood is a period when the child should know how to lose his time wisely. It is not a period when time is to be saved for an intensive study of books. The child should run, jump, play all day long, thus developing his organs which will enable him to acquire knowledge when the right occasion comes for it.
2. **No place for book learning:** Rousseau does not believe in imparting education with the help of books. He holds that reading is a curse and books have no place in the education of the child. He advocates that the child should think for himself and learn with his own efforts.
3. **No formal lessons:** Rousseau is also against any formal teaching in the class. He believes that verbal lessons are useless burden on the memory of the child and a sheer waste from the educational standpoint. The child is not able to interpret and assimilate on the basis of cause and effect theory, hence it is easily forgotten.

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4. **No habit formation:** Rousseau also does not believe in any habit formation at this stage. 'The only habit a child is to form is not to form any habit at all.' He believes that everybody is a slave to his habits and the same may be true about the child. He was against all social habits. He, however, favours natural habits and holds that the child should be left to have natural habits.
5. **Non-moral education:** The child is the purest thing in nature and therefore there is no place for any moral teaching. Morality is something which is beyond the understanding power of children. The reason behind this assumption is that morality and reasoning do not go together. The child, therefore, should be left to learn from the lessons of nature. If he commits a mistake, he will suffer and learn in a natural way. A burnt child dreads the fire.
6. **Back to nature:** The state of nature in which man lived long ago was a blissful state. Modern civilisation is the main cause of the misery of mankind. The alternative before mankind is back to nature. The customary procedures of the civilised society should be done away with and the natural state may be accepted again.

Rousseau's Views on Methods of Teaching

Rousseau's views on the methods of teaching are as follows:

1. **Individual instruction:** Rousseau emphasised the due importance of individual instruction. He believed that the individuality of the child should be recognised by the educator and duly respected by him. He was right when he said that children are children before they become men.
2. **The principle of learning by doing:** He lays stress on the principle of learning by doing. He says, teach by doing whenever you can and only fall back on words when doing is out of question. He believes that the child should take part in various activities and learn in a natural way. When the child wants to do something with his own hands, his urge for creative activity must be satisfied.
3. **Direct experiences of the child:** Rousseau would like *Emile* to learn from his own experiences and not from books. Knowledge acquired from books is second-hand and easily forgotten. Personal knowledge directly acquired, from various learning situations, is something permanent, which the child will not forget. This will constitute the permanent nature of his character.
4. **The heuristic method:** Rousseau also advocates the heuristic method of teaching. He would like to place the child in the position of an original discoverer. The child will learn science with self-made and self-invented apparatus. The same method is to be applied to other subjects of the curriculum.
5. **Example is better than precept:** For imparting moral education Rousseau believes in the principle that example is better than precept. There is no use lecturing on morality to him, he should have an example of moral behaviour and opportunities may be provided to him to practise virtue.

6. **Social knowledge by social participation:** The child in his period of adolescence will get knowledge about social relations by actually visiting places and coming in contact with the members of the community.

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Freedom of Child—Discipline by Natural Consequences

He believes in the freedom of the child. It is only in a free atmosphere that the child will be able to develop his inborn and innate capacities. He does not believe in punishing the child so as to correct his future behaviour. The reason behind this assumption according to Rousseau is very simple, the child is not able to link up the punishment administered and the mischief done by him. Children, therefore, should be left alone to experience the consequences of the mischief done by them. Nature, according to Rousseau, is a great teacher. If children commit mistakes and violate the principles of nature, they naturally invite the retribution of nature. This conception in the field of education is known as 'discipline by natural consequences'.

Second, in the field of normal education, Rousseau starts with the assumption that the nature of child is essentially good, hence he should have freedom in his actions. First he believes that the child will not commit any immoral act, and second even if he commits any, he will learn morality by the natural consequences of the action done.

Art of Observing Children

'I wish some discreet person would give us a treatise on the art of observing children. An art which would be of immense value to us but of which fathers and schoolmasters have not as yet learnt the very first rudiment (*Emile*, p. 185)'.

'The highest function of the teacher consists not so much in imparting knowledge as on stimulating the pupil in its love and pursuit.'

'To know how to suggest is the art of the teaching.'

Tender Regard for Children

'The age of cheerfulness and gaiety is spent in the midst of tears, punishments, threats and slavery. We torment the poor creatures, for their future good: and perceive not that death is at hand, and ready to seize them amidst all this sorrowful preparation for life. Who can tell how many children have fallen victims to the extravagant sagacity of their parents and guardians? Happy to escape such cruelty, the only advantage the poor sufferers reaped from the evils they endured, being to die without regretting a life of misery.'

'Man, be humane! It is the first, the chief of moral duties, to exercise humanity to everything, of what age or condition soever, that is relative to man. What ! Is wisdom void of humanity? Have a tender regard for children.'

Reasoning on the Part of the Child in Place of Authority of the Teacher

'Direct the attention of your pupil to the phenomena of nature, and you will soon awaken his curiosity, but to keep that curiosity alive, you must be in no haste to satisfy it. Put questions to him adapted to his capacity, and leave him to resolve them. Let him take nothing on trust from his preceptor, but on his own comprehension

and conviction, he should not learn, but invent the sciences. If ever you substitute authority in the place of argument, he will reason no longer, he will be ever afterwards handed like a shuttlecock between the opinions of other.'

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Objects and not Words

'… Talk not to children in a language they do not comprehend, make use of no pompous descriptions, no flowers of speech, no tropes and figures, no poetry, taste and sentiment are at present quite out of question. Simplicity, gravity, and precision are all that are yet required; the time will come but too soon when we must assume a different style.'

Hatred for Books

'I hate books; they only teach people to talk about what they do not understand … Since we must have books, there is one already, which in my opinion, affords a complete treatise on natural education. This book shall be the first *Emile* shall read. In this, indeed, will, for a long time, consist his whole literacy, and it will always hold a distinguished place among others. It will afford us the text, to which all our conversations on the objects of natural science will serve only as a comment. It will serve as our guide during our progress to a State of reason; and will even afterwards give us constant pleasure, unless our taste be totally vitiated. You ask impatiently, what is the title of this wonderful books? Is it Aristotle, Pliny, or Buffon? No. It is Robinson Crusoe. This romance, beginning with his shipwreck on the island, and ending with the arrival of the vessel that brought him away, would, if cleared of its rubbish, afford *Emile*, during the period we are now talking of, at once both instruction and amusements. I would have him indeed personate the hero of the tale, and be entirely taken up with his castle, his groats, and his plantations, he should make himself minutely acquainted, not from books, but circumstances with everything requisite for a man in such a situation … I would have him when at a loss about the measures necessary to be taken for his provision or security upon this or the other occasion examine the conduct of his hero; he should see if he omitted nothing, or if anything better could be substituted in the room of what was actually done, and on the discovery of any mistake in Robinson, should amend it in a similar case himself; for I doubt not but he will form a project of going to make a like settlement.'

True Balance between the Exercises of the Body and Mind

' … The great secret of education is to make the exercises of the body and the mind serve as a relaxation to each other.'

No religious education: '… Let us beware of divulging the truth to those who are incapable of understanding it; for this is the way to substitute error in the room of it. It were better to have no idea of God at all, than to entertain those which are mean, fantastical, injurious, and unworthy of a divine object, it is a less crime to be ignorant of, than insult him.'

Nature and society: Rousseau's idea that civilised society makes the child corrupt seems to be one-sided and over-stated. However, one is inclined to agree with him when he argues that human nature, plastic though it is becomes noble and

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lovable if it is allowed to develop in its own way. This idea seems to be working behind all educational reforms of the present times.

Education of women: Rousseau thinks that a woman is especially made for man's delight and if this principle is accepted, she ought to make herself pleasing in his eyes and not provoke him to anger. Her strength is in her charm. 'But the woman who is both virtuous, wise, and charming, she who, in a word, combines love and esteem, can send them at her bidding to the end of the world, to war, to glory, and to death at her behest. This is a fine kingdom and worth the winning.' For developing such qualities Rousseau advocates that a woman must be trained carefully but strictly, her taste followed rather than thwarted.

The feminine arts like needle work should be taught to her. She should learn all the details of house keeping, cooking, cleaning, calculating the price of the food and maintaining accounts accurately. She should be prepared to manage her own house. She must be taught to love cleanliness.

She must be devoted to the service of God and to doing good. Instead of long sermons about piety, the parents should preach by their examples which would be engraved on her heart.

Her education should be given in such a way that she remains chaste and good till her dying day.

Rousseau's Views on Curriculum

As given in *Emile,* Rousseau recommends curriculum in accordance with the stage of the child.

Curriculum at the first stage (from one to five years) would be such as it develops physical strength. The child should be allowed to wander freely in the countryside. His play-things should be very simple such as branches with fruits and flowers and no expensive toys. 'Let him not be pampered! Let him not be subdued'.

Curriculum at the second stage (between five to twelve years) should lead to the development of senses. Rousseau thinks that if senses are not trained properly, independent reasoning and judgement are impossible. *Emile* is to be given the greatest freedom of physical movement, simple diet and light clothing. There will be no verbal lessons for him. He will not be instructed in language, history and geography. *Emile* is to learn from his own experience. No moral instruction is to be given. 'Exercise the body, the organs, the senses and powers but keep the soul lying fallow as long as you can. Training for senses means learning to judge, foresee and reason through them. It is more than the mere use of them. All learning must come by play method. There is no need for the child to learn anything by heart.' For *Emile* there is no curriculum. He has to learn by activity and experience.

Curriculum at the third stage of pre-adolescence (twelve to fifteen years) should be built around curiosity which should create an urge for knowledge. Rousseau states that this is the period for developing intellect. *Emile* is introduced to studies that reveal nature, astronomy, science and the arts and crafts. Rousseau emphasises the learning of manual and industrial arts partly to make *Emile* independent and partly to overcome his prejudice held against manual work. Rousseau wanted that

the boy must be taken from one worshop to another and he must try his hand at every trade. In this way Rousseau wanted to teach him industrial exchange, banking and transportation. Rousseau does not recommend the study of books. The only book he recommends is *Robinson Crusoe,* a study of life according to nature.

In the fourth stage of the adolescence period (fifteen to twenty years of age), training of heart should receive attention. In the earlier stages, the boy was an individual working for self-perfection and self-development. Now he has to be social and adapt himself to the conduct and interest of others. The study of society, politics, economics, history and religion are the appropriate studies for the youth to understand complex social relationships. *Emile* must be given moral education about his relations with his fellow men and moral qualities such as benevolence, kindness, service and sympathy. Rousseau recommends that moral education should be given through activities and occupations and not through lectures on ethics. History will be utilised as a means of moral instruction. Travel is recommended for knowing the world and the institutions of the neighbouring countries. At this stage the youth undergoes a new birth on account of the appearance of sex impulse. Sex instruction is to consist of direct moral exhortation on chastity and an explanation of the mysteries of creation in the world of plants, animals and men in a dispassionate manner.

Education of Sophy: Rousseau maintained that women were the makers of men. They were, 'the chaste guardians of our morals, and the sweet security of our place.' Their education was to be different from men. Rousseau believed that 'Woman is made specially to please man.' She has, therefore, to be taught to be soft and sweet and learn to suffer and bear the wrongs of her husband without complaint. The duty of women towards man is 'to train him in childhood, to tend him in womanhood, and to counsel him throughout his life.' Rousseau, therefore, advocated that her studies should be practical. Intellectual interests, he believed, destroyed her nature. He stated, 'I would a hundred times prefer a simple girl, rudely brought up to a girl of learning.'

Emile

This is Rousseau's main treatise on education. R. S. Brumbaugh and Nathaniel M. Lawrence would like to treat the theme of book the *Emile* as, 'A certain man, discovering late in life that his own life has been corrupted by the variety and ignorance of society, so that it has been inauthentic and has contributed little to human progress, determines to rectify this past by creating another self, free of his own vices, who will be the sort of example and parent the tutor wishes he himself had been. He will thus carry into the future the author's ideal self rather than his actual unsatisfactory self. The central theme more specifically, is the story of Jean Jacques who dissatisfied with the way he himself was trained and his own natural development misdirected, sets about creating in his adopted son and pupil, *Emile*, the ideal person that Jean Jacques himself might have been, had every social and educational influence in his past been the opposite of what it was. In this combination of the motifs of a pygmalion myth and the past recaptured, the father can in a sense relive his own life, give concrete realization to the better possible person he might have been, and bequeath to the future a son who transmits the father's ideal rather than his sad example.'

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The *Emile* is a treatise on education cast into the form of a novel in which there are three characters; Emile, who may be regarded as 'Rousseau' while a boy, and his tutor, who is obviously Rousseau, as a man and Sophie, who is destined to be the mate of Emile. *Emile* has been described by Lord Morley as 'One of the seminal books in the history of literature, and of such books the worth resides less in the parts than in the whole. It touched the deeper things of character. It filled parents with a sense of the dignity. It cleared away the accumulation of clogging prejudices and obscure inveterate usage, which made education one of the dark formalistic arts. It admitted floods of light and air into the tightly closed nurseries and school rooms. It effected the substitution of growth for mechanism …It was the charter of youthful deliverance.'

Book I deals with the infant, Book II with childhood; Book III with the preadolescent between the ages of twelve and fifteen; Book IV with adolescence; and Book V with the education of girls.

Parliament of Paris criticised *Emile* very severely. It was ordered to be burnt publicly. Orders for the arrest of Rousseau were issued and he had to fly away from France to Switzerland. The reading of *Emile* was forbidden by the Archbishop of Paris. The book was condemned on account of 'containing an abominable doctrine, ready to subvert natural law and to destroy the foundations of the Christian religion … tending to trouble the peace of States, to cause subjects to revolts against their sovereigns; as containing a large number of prepositions false, scandalous, full of hate against the Church, derogatory to the respect of holy scriptures. …erroneous, impious, blasphemous and heretical.'

Emile had a great effect on thought and action of education in the eigthteenth century. It was immediately translated into several languages as it aroused a deep interest in the problems of childhood and youth. In the words of William Boyd 'Society women began to nurse their own babies, mothers and fathers attempted to bring up their children as Emiles and Sophies, some more enthusiastic than the rest kept diaries in which they recorded their observations of their little ones, many of the nobles installed workshops in their homes to give their sons a training in some craft, writers produced a new literature for the young. . . . . There was general agreement that no form of education could be regarded as satisfactory which did not account of the nature of the child.'

Limitations of Rousseau's Philosophy

No habit formation: Rousseau does not believe in forming habits of any kind by the child. Habits have been called as second nature and a set of good habits is also essential for good character.

No place for books: Rousseau was against any learning from books and totally condemned them. They however are very valuable media of education. They lead to confirmation and registration of ideas in the mind of the child and hence cannot be easily ignored. Perhaps he rejected the use of books in the educational process because they were not written keeping in view the nature of the child.

Faulty conception of discipline: His doctrine of discipline by natural consequences is also doubtful. The child at his tender age without foresight, without

reason and without developing his correct understanding cannot correct his behaviour. He requires mature and wise guidance of the parents and the teacher. If the child is left to his own judgement and wisdom, he might receive a blow, which may harm his entire personality.

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Evaluation of Rousseau

Herbert Spencer in England and Pestalozzi and Froebel on the continent, received much of their inspiration from the revolutionary work of Rousseau. Rousseau considered education to be the moving force in a revolution that would eliminate oppression and bring about freedom for mankind.

'Return to Nature' was the theme of his two educational novels, *The New Heloise* published in 1761, and *Emile* published in 1762.

His *Social Contract, The New Heloise* and *Emile* were among the most brilliant, provocative, incendiary and widely read of the popular writings of the century.

Charles W. Coulter and Richard S. write:

'It is singular that this depraved, neurotic, immoral Frenchman should have exercised the influence in politics and education that he did.'

Opportunistic, unreliable, unscrupulous though he was in his private life, his writings had such an influence on the temper of his time that they must be considered as a turning point in education.

At times a gigolo, kept by a woman of rank, at other times a liar, a thief, and the unacknowledged father of several illegitimate children by his non-confession, he had the flash of genius that seemed to attract friends and followers despite his personal shortcomings.

Rousseau was the arch enemy of child neglect. His *Emile* made Europe child conscious as no writing had done for centuries and became an inspiring source of the eighteenth century reforms.

Coulter, Charles W. and Rimanoczy, Richard S. describe the impact of Rousseau as, 'It will never be known whether or not this Frenchman was deeply sincere concerning his educational theory, but sincere or not his theory swept Europe and left its mark on the future of education. If Rousseau was not an educator, he was at least a gadfly who made Europe more child-conscious and the formal European Educational system more self-conscious.'

'Rousseau's character and personality were so complex that they affect different people in different ways, and even the same person may feel inclined to change the emphasis of his judgement according to his mood at the moment,' remark S. J. Curtis and M. E. A. Boultwood.

'In spite of the defects of much of his work—its sentimentality, its lack of historical sense, its crude-psychology, its exaggeration, and eccentricities—his essential ideas have exerted a tremendous influence on education, and have not yet wholly spent their force. There is still much to be learned about him that can be learned from no other teacher'.

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Sir Henry Main writes in *Ancient Law*: 'We have never seen in our own generations-indeed the world has not seen more than once or twice in all the course of history—a literature which has exercised such prodigious influence over the minds of men, over every cast and shade of intellect, as that which emanated from Rousseau between 1740–1762.'

Robert R. Rusk observes: 'Rousseau nevertheless stands to modern education as Plato to ancient education; the heading of almost every chapter in *The Schools of Tomorrow* is a quotation from Rousseau.'

P. P. Graves observes in *A Student's History* of *Education:* 'Disregarding the weak and offensive personality of the author, and forgetting the inconsistencies and the contradictions of the work itself, the Emile has always been accounted a work of great richness, power and underlying wisdom and each of its defects is more than balanced by a corresponding merit.'

In *History of Western Education*: William Boyd makes these observations: 'In spite of an element of paradox and extravagance that occasionally disfigured it, the *Emile* was by far the most considerable book written on education in the eighteenth century. Judged by effects on thought and action indeed perhaps the most considerable book ever written on education.'

Basic Ideas of Rousseau's Philosophy in His Own Words

The basic ideas are as follows:

1. *Philosophy of Rousseau:* 'God makes all things good.'
2. *Functions of education:* 'Plants are fashioned by cultivation, man by education.'
3. *Aims of education:* 'Teach him to live rather than to avoid death'', 'the attainment of fullest natural growth.'
4. *Sources of education:* 'Education comes to us from nature, from men or from things.'
5. *Child centred education:* 'Begin by making a more careful study of your scholars.'' Love childhood, indulge in sports, its pleasures, its delightful instinct.'
6. *Education through doing:* 'Teach by doing whenever you can, and fall back upon words when doing is out of question.'
7. *Teaching through things:* 'Never substitute the symbol for the thing unless it is impossible to show the thing itself.'
8. *Very little of books:* 'I hate books. They only teach us to talk about things we know nothing about,' 'words, words, words..... To conceal their deficiencies teachers choose the dead languages.'
9. *Sense training:* 'Since everything that comes into the human mind enters through the gates of senses, man's first reason is a reason of sense experience.'
10. *Play-way in education:* 'Work or play are all one to him, his games are his work, he knows no differences.'

11. *Heuristic method:* 'Let him not be taught science, let him discover it,'
12. *Role of the teacher:* 'Study the subject you have to act upon.'
13. *Discipline:* 'Leave him (child) alone. Childhood has ways of seeing, thinking, and feeling, peculiar to himself, nothing can be more foolish than to substitute our ways for them.'
14. *Vocational education:* 'It is clear and useful (the art of carpenter), it may be carried on at home; it gives enough exercises; it calls for skill and industry, and while fashioning articles for everyday use, there is scope for elegance and taste.' 'To live in the trade I want to teach him.'
15. *Physical education:* 'All wickedness comes from weakness. The child is only naughty, because he is weak; make him strong and he will be good.'
16. *Women education:* 'Women's education must, therefore, be planned in relation to man. Women is especially made for man's delight.'
17. *Education through rural or natural environment*: 'Cities are the graves of human species.'

Contribution of Rousseau

It is sometimes observed that Rousseau 'a vagabond without family bonds or social status, with no literary training, has influenced the philosophy of education, its meaning, aims, method, curriculum and organisation more than Montaigne, with all his wisdom or Comenius with all his philanthropy or Locke with all his reason and truth.' His chief contribution may be summarised as follows:

1. His emphasis on the 'discovery' and 'recognition' of childhood traits has brought about revolutionary change in the thinking of educators.
2. His stress on the 'concrete' led to 'learning by doing'.
3. Rousseau anticipated modern heuristic method when he declared the child as a 'discoverer'.
4. Showed the way to the teacher that he must study the child thoroughly.
5. Rousseau propounded the new gospel of faith in nature in place of the old laws.
6. Rousseau showed the value of motivation of creating problems and of utilising the senses and activities of the child.
7. Present day emphasis on vocational education finds its root in Rousseau.
8. His conceptions of freedom, growth, interest and activity are noteworthy in educational theory and practice.
9. It is due to Rousseau that the need of sense training and physical activities in the earlier development of the child have been recognised in the modern system of education.
10. Rousseau has shown to the world the value of craft.
11. Rousseau with his stress on facts and enquiry into nature's laws has given us the basis for scientific tendency in modern education.

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Concluding Remarks

We may conclude in the words of R. H. Quick, 'Rousseau did in the world of ideas what the French Revolutionists afterwards did in the world of politics; he made a clean sweep and endeavoured to start afresh.'

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Under whose influence did Rousseau convert to Catholicism?
2. What thought did Rousseau depict in his essay 'Discourse on the Sciences and Arts'?
3. Name the three factors that influenced Rousseau.
4. State Rousseau's view on curriculum.
5. Give two chief contributions of Rousseau.

3.3 FRIEDRICH WILHELM AUGUST FROEBEL

Friedrich August Froebel was born on 21 April 1782, in the village of Oberweisback in South Germany. He was neglected in his youth and the memories of his early sufferings made him, in later life, more eager in promoting the happiness of children. He lost his mother when he was only of nine months. His father got remarried and was not very affectionate towards him. The unfair treatment of his step- mother made his childhood all the more miserable. Deprived of parental affection, the poor chap was left at the mercy of God. Froebel grew moody and subjective. He naturally turned towards the natural phenomena—hills, trees, flowers and clouds etc., for companionship. His father, who was a clergyman, influenced him indirectly. Since Froebel's own childhood was neglected, he developed an intensive sympathy for children and spent his life promoting their happiness.

Education

Froebel did not receive much education at school where he was considered a dunce. At the age of fifteen he was appointed as an apprentice to a forester. Froebel spent two years with him. Thus the neglected child came into intimate contact with nature. He spent a good deal of his time all alone in the forest and perhaps it was here that he received his real education and his love for nature grew. Two factors influenced him very much. The religious influence of his father and the contact with nature cultivated in him a spirit of mysticism and idealism. He discovered the uniformity and unity of nature's laws. The new idea developed in him a love for the study of natural sciences. So he joined the University of Jena where he was profoundly influenced by the idealistic philosophy of Fitche and Schelling. Unfortunately, he could study for about two years only. The varsity doors were closed for him on account of his bad financial position. Again for four years he remained on 'career-

wanderings'. He, wandered from place to place, picking up professions of different nature and failing miserably in them, one after the other.

Turning Point in Froebel's Life

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At Frankfurt, Froebel began to study architecture. There he developed some intimacy with Dr Gruner who was the director of a model school. The director discovered that Froebel could become an excellent teacher and he persuaded him to join his school. This marked a turning point in his life. Froebel was greatly satisfied and he found his 'long missed life element' and was 'inexpressibly happy'. He declared, 'from the first I found something I had always longed for, but always missed, as if my life had at last discovered its native element, I felt as happy as a fish in the water or a bird in the air.'

After spending three years at Frankfurt, Froebel paid a visit to Pestalozzi's institute at Yverdun. There, Froebel learnt in detail the principle and method of Pestalozzi. Froebel disagreed with some of the ideas of Pestalozzi and he found the following defects in the school founded by him:

1. The school lacked organization.
2. There was no unity in the whole work.
3. The subjects of study lacked integration.
4. In the early education of children, co-operation of mothers was not forthcoming.

However, it must be admitted that this contact with Pestalozzi prepared him for his own educational reforms.

His desire for knowledge, of natural sciences took him in 1811 to universities and he studied and spent some time at Gottingen University and then at Berlin University. Two years later, he left his studies and joined the army against the aggression of Napoleon. Froebel spent about three years in military and this service gave him an understanding of the true spirit of discipline and united action. After leaving the army he was appointed as a curator in a Berlin museum. But he had no liking for this profession as he was interested in education.

Publication of *The Education of Man*

Froebel established a small school in 1816 at Grie Sheim. Later on this was transferred to Keihan. Froebel incorporated his principle of elementary education. After passing through many vicissitudes, this became a successful institution in ten years. Instead of 'impression', 'expression' through play and art work was his chief consideration at this place. In 1826, Froebel published his famous book *The Education of Man* in this he says, 'The true method of education consists in considering the mind of the child as a whole in which all the parts work together to produce harmonious unity.' After this he started many schools in Germany. The government suspected the revolutionary ideas of Froebel and an enquiry was conducted. The inspector gave a favourable report. 'I found here a closely united family of some sixty members held together in mutual confidence and every member seeking the good of the whole—The aim of institution is by no means knowledge and science merely, but free self-active development of the mind from within.'

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But due to some financial difficulties, Froebel shifted his work to Switzerland in 1830. The Swiss government appreciated his work and sent their teachers for training to him. He then moved to Burgdorf. There he became a superintendent of an orphanage. He continued his work of training teachers. There he realised that due to non-availability of education in the pre-school age, the school suffered and did not get good raw material—the educand.

Froebel returned to Germany in 1836 and founded his first kindergarten in 1849 in the village of Blankendurg. He married his kindergartener in 1849. He spent all his time in the founding and devising of his apparatus for kindergartens.

However, his views were not accepted by the German government which forbade him from establishing any school. This was a great shock for the good teacher and he could not survive for long. Froebel died in 1852, in poverty, misery and agony. His grave is marked by a slab with a cube, a cylinder and a sphere on it.

Main Principles of his Philosophy

Froebel's philosophy is the outcome of the great influence of German philosophers like Fitche, Kant and Schelling on him. The following are the main principles of his philosophy:

1. **The law of unity:** According to Froebel there is one eternal law—the law of unity—that governs all things, men and nature. He said, 'In everything there works and stirs "one" life because after all, one God has given life.' God is the one ground of all things: God is the all comprehending, the all sustaining, God is the essential nature, the meaning of the world.' All things, animate or inanimate, originate from God. Man and nature are one. They are simply the different forms of the unity which is God. There is unity in diversity and diversity in unity. Each of these is an individuality and also a unity. 'All things have come from the Divine Unity (God) and have their origin in the Divine Unity. All things live and have their beings in and through the Divine Unity.' The unity is three-fold:
   (*i*) Unity of Substance: There is only one substance from which all things come.
   (*ii*) Unity of Origin: There is one source, that is God, from whom all things come.
   (*iii*) Unity of Purpose: All things strive towards perfection, i.e., God.
2. **The principle of development:** This principle is based upon the first. We are marching towards the same unity. The movement is continuous and upward. Everything is, therefore, changing, growing, and marching towards the same unity. Froebel, maintained that mind evolves from within. All the child is ever to be and to become, can be attained only through development from within. By 'Development', he meant an increase in bulk or quantity, increase in complexity or structure, an improvement in power, skill and variety in the performance of natural functions.
3. **The principle of self-activity:** It is only through self-activity that real growth and development is possible. Forced activity is artificial and unnatural. An

acute observer can know what the child is or what he is to become. All this lies in the child and can be attained through development from within.

4. **Development through social institutions:** According to Froebel the school is a miniature society. He remarked, 'No community can progress while the individual remains behind.' He believed that the individual is not detached from the life of the society.

Meaning of Education

Education consists in leading man as a thinking, intellectual being growing into self-consciousness, to a pure and unsullied, conscious and free representation of the inner law of Divine unity, and in teaching him means thereto.

3.3.1 Froebel's Philosophy of Education

Froebel derives a new conception of childhood. Childhood is not merely preparation for adulthood, it is a value in itself and possesses its own creativity. It participates in the divine whole with the same rights of its own as adulthood, and therefore it can claim the same respect on the part of the educator. The adult has no right to feel himself superior and to interfere with the natural conditions of childhood; rather, he must combine guidance with the capacity of patience and understanding. Here Froebel falls into line with Rousseau and Herbart.

Inner relatedness of all education: The second postulate which Froebel derives from his idea of unity is that of the inner relatedness of all education. This means that the educator ought to lead the child through such situations as will help him to relate his experiences organically to each other. Only thus can the child realize his own personal unity and the unity inherent in the diversity of life.

Totality of educational endeavour: In order to realise the divine character of the universe and his part in it, man needs his senses and emotions as well as reasons. They all are windows of the soul. Hence Froebel emphasises the totality of educational endeavour. This can be most clearly illustrated by a paragraph in *The Education of Man*, a paragraph devoted to religious education. The right development of religious feelings—note here Froebel's nearness to Pestalozzi—depends on the 'living soul-unity' between parents and child, 'that clear oneness of mind, which sees life as an unbroken whole in all its operations and phenomena.' Only through this first instinctive feeling of a loving communion of men can the child ascend to a later realisation of a metaphysical Unity of the Universe. Without such an instinctive experience he will always live in two different worlds opposed to each other, one 'material', the other 'spiritual'. Nor can he ever understand what the concept of the 'fatherhood of God' means in the history of mankind.

Concept of play: The finest expression of Froebel's idea of harmony in diversity is probably to be found in his concept of play. For Froebel also, play is not merely a means of distraction; it is the most important phase in the spontaneous development of the child, because it allows him to exercise harmoniously all his physical, emotional and intellectual qualities. Play combines attention with relaxation, purpose with independence, and rule with freedom. Play is as ethical for the child as devotion to his work is for the adult.

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Education of the pre-school child: One might rightly ask why Froebel, with his comprehensive training in so many fields of knowledge and his philosophical interests, finally concentrated his efforts particularly on the education of the pre-school child. There are two reasons for it. One is psychological. Froebel reveals an astounding insight into the importance of the early experiences of childhood for the future development of the personality. This anticipation of modern analytical psychology, which he shares with Pestalozzi and Herbart, led him naturally to emphasise the importance of pre-school education. The other reason is of sociological nature. Froebel lived in the period of the Napoleonic wars, with all their destructive influences, after which followed the early period of capitalism and a series of social revolutions. He saw that in all these crises, nobody was as imperilled as the children. Therefore he went beyond Pestalozzi, who considered the reform of the elementary school as basic for the reconstruction of mankind, and fought for the establishment of kindergarten.

Froebel's Educational Principles

The educational principles of Froebel's are as follows:

1. Froebel maintains that the aim of education is not to make the mind of the child a jumble of words. He writes, 'The essential business of school is not so much to communicate a variety and multiplicity of facts as to give prominence to the ever living unity that is in all things.' Again be writes, 'Human education requires the knowledge and appreciation of religion, nature and language in their intimate living reciprocity and mutual interaction. Without the knowledge and appreciation of the intimate unity of the three, the school and we ourselves are lost in the fallacies of bottomless, self-provoking diversity.' So the aim of education is to enable the child to realise the unity in diversity.
2. The chief means of education is the child's own activity. Play is an essential factor in the growth of the child. The free and unfettered natural development of the child takes place through play.
3. Education should be in comformity with child's nature and needs.
4. The child should be educated in a free atmosphere. Freedom means obedience to self-imposed law.
5. The teacher is like a gardener who carefully nurses and protects children in order to secure their full and free development along most desirable lines. The educator by his efforts assists the educand who is developing according to the law of his nature to attain levels that would be denied to him.
6. Froebel stressed the social aspect of education also. He believed that all social institutions like the home, the school, the Church and the State, etc. are the agencies of development of the individual wherein he is to realise the unity in diversity.
7. He devised songs, gestures and construction as the chief means of stimulating the imagination of the child.

The functions of education, according to Froebel, may be summed up as 'Education should lead and guide man to clearness, concerning himself and in himself to peace with nature, and to unity with God. It should lift him to knowledge of himself, to mankind to a knowledge of God and of nature, and to the pure and holy life.'

Meaning of Kindergarten

In the form of kindergarten, Froebel has made an important contribution to the theory and practice of education. He realised the paramount importance of childhood and opened the first kindergarten, an institution for children of age four to six, at Blankenberg in 1837. Kindergarten is a German word which implies a children's garden. Froebel conceived the school as a garden, the teacher as the gardener and the students as tender plants. The teacher like the gardener is to look after the little human plants and water them to grow to beauty and perfection. Froebel discovered much similarity between a child and a plant. He believed that the process of growth and development of the plant and the child is the same. The plant grows from within according to the seed that is within, in the same way the child grows from within. He unfolds his tendencies and impulses from within.

Object of Kindergarten

In the words of Froebel the object of a kindergarten is 'to give the children employment in agreement with their whole nature, to strengthen their bodies, to exercise their senses, to engage their awakening mind and through their senses to make them acquainted with nature and their fellow creatures. It is specially to guide aright the heart and the affections, and to lead them to the original ground *of all life*, to unity with themselves.'

Main Features of Kindergarten

The main features of Kindergarten are as follows:

1. **Self activity:** Froebel believed that the child was not to indulge in an activity that was suggested by parents or teachers. He stressed that the child should be given full freedom to carry out his own impulses and decisions. The growth of the child is directed by his inner force. Education, said Froebel, should provide for 'free self activity and self-determination on the part of man—the being created for freedom in the image of God.' He regarded self-activity as a process by which the individual realises his own nature and builds up his own world and then unites and harmonises the two. An inspector reported about this self-activity. 'Self-activity of the mind is the first law of this institution, the kind of instruction given here does not make the young mind a strong box into which, as early as possible kinds of coins of the most different values and coinage, such as are now current in world that are stuffed, but slowly, continuously, gradually and always inwardly that is according to a connection found in nature of the human mind; the instruction steadily goes on without any ticks, from the simple to the complex, from the concrete to the abstract, so well adapted to the child and his needs that he goes as easily to his learning as to his play.'

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The following points should be noted regarding activity:

(*i*) It should not be vague.

(*ii*) It should be a sublimated or controlled activity.

(*iii*) Social atmosphere is essential in order to secure meaningful activities.

(*iv*) Self-activity may take the form either of work or of play.

2. **Play:** According to Froebel, 'Play is the purest, most spiritual activity of man at this stage ..... It gives, therefore, joy, freedom, contentment, inner rest and peace with the world. It holds the source of all that is good.' Froebel recognised that play needs to be organised and controlled on definite materials so that it may not degenerate into aimless play 'instead of preparing for those tasks of life for which it is destined.' There should be rational conscious guidance. Consequently, Froebel has given seven gifts to children to play with.

3. **Songs, gestures and construction:** Froebel saw an organic relationship between songs, gestures and construction. He regarded these as three co-ordinate forms of expression in the child. What is to be learnt by the pupil is first expressed in a song, then it is dramatised or expressed in gesture or movement and lastly illustrated through some constructive work such as paper or clay. Thus, a balanced development of the mind, the speech organs and the hands is aimed at. These three activities provide exercise to the senses, limbs and muscles of the child.

   Selection of songs: He has given songs in his book *Mother and Nursery Songs.* These are fifty play songs. The idea of the introduction of songs is to enable the child to use his senses, limbs and muscles and also to familiarise him with the surroundings. The child begins to use language through these songs. Each song is accompanied by a game such as 'Hide and Seek'. The selection of the song is determined by the teacher in accordance with the development of the child. There are three parts in a song. These are as follows:

   (*i*) A motto for the guidance of the mother or teacher

   (*ii*) A verse accompanied by music

   (*iii*) A picture illustrating the song

   The song for drill is:

   Let us have a drill to-day,

   March along grand array,

   And whoever steps the best

   Shall be captain over the rest,

   And lead us on our way.

4. **Gifts and occupations:** We have already stressed the place of activity and play. To provide activities, Froebel devised suitable materials known as gifts. The gifts suggest some form of activity and occupations are the activities suggested by gifts. These have been carefully graded. They possess all the

novelty of play things. The order of the gift is devised in such a way that it leads the child from the activities and thought of one stage to another.

First gift: The first gift consists of six coloured balls contained in a box. The balls are of different colours. The child is to roll them about in play. The occupation consists in rolling them. The balls are intended to give the students an idea of colour, materials, motion and direction. The rhymes accompanying the rolling of the ball are as follows:

Oh, see the pretty ball

So round so soft and small

The ball is round and rolls each way,

The ball is nice for baby's play.

Second gift: It consists of a sphere, a cube and a cylinder made of hard wood. These are contained in a box. The child plays with them and notices the difference between the stability of the cube and the mobility of the sphere. He learns that the cylinder is both movable and stable and it harmonises the qualities of both.

Third gift: It is a big wooden cube, subdivided into eight wooden cubes. The child can have an elementary idea of addition and subtraction through these.

These gifts are to be effective basis of education.

5. **The place of the teacher:** The teacher is not to remain passive. He has to suggest the idea of occupation when gifts are offered to children. He is also required to demonstrate certain activities to them. He also sings a song with a view to help the child to form appropriate ideas.
6. **Discipline:** A teacher has important responsibilities to perform. He has to sympathetically inculcate values like love, sympathy, humility, co-operation and obedience to elders. He has to avoid external restraint and bodily punishment. The child should be made to realise that discipline depends upon his love for order, goodwill and mutual understanding. Froebel stressed that women should be trained for educating children at this stage.
7. **Curriculum:** The divisions of the curriculum are as follows:
   (*i*) Manual work
   (*ii*) Religion and religious instruction
   (*iii*) Natural science and mathematics
   (*iv*) Language
   (*v*) Arts and objects of arts

Merits of Froebel's Kindergarten

The merits of Froebel's Kindergarten are as follows:

1. Froebel laid emphasis on pre-school or nursery education.
2. He stressed the importance of play in early education.

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3. He broadened the concept and scope of the school as an essential social institution. He regarded school as a miniature society where children get training in important things of life. They learn the virtues of co-operation, sympathy, fellow-feeling and responsibility etc.
4. Froebel stressed the necessity of the study of child's nature, his instincts and impulses.
5. The gifts and occupations of the kindergarten give a new method of teaching.
6. The inclusion of productive work in the school makes children productive workers.
7. There is sufficient scope for activity in a kindergarten.
8. Various gifts provide sensory training.
9. The inclusion of nature study in the curriculum helps to develop love for nature and the earth in the mind of the students.

Limitations

The limitation are as follows:

1. Froebel expects too much of the child. It is not possible for the child to be able to understand abstract ideas of organic unity while playing with gifts.
2. In the kindergarten, too much stress has been laid on the development from within. The importance of the environment has not been fully recognised.
3. Songs as given by him are out of date. These cannot be used in every school.
4. The gifts of Froebel are formal in nature. The order of presentation of gifts is arbitrary. They do not serve much of a purpose in sense training.
5. The kindergarten of Froebel does not provide for the study of the individual child.
6. There is little correlation in the teaching of various subjects.
7. It is not possible to accept his excessive emphasis on play in education as it is likely to distract the child from serious learning.

Froebel's Influence on Modern Education

Froebel invited us to live for our children and love them. The schools for young children are no more jails and the children are no more passive learners. There is no doubt that all the tendencies in the modern educational thought and practice find their roots in Froebel's conceptions. He helped to make the society conscious of education for very young children. The chief field in which he influenced the modern education are as under:

1. **Emphasis on pre-primary or pre-basic education:** The present educator fully recognises the importance of education in the early years. Today we find a large number of schools catering to the needs of such children. Froebel had also realised that until the education of nursery years was reformed, nothing solid and worthy could be achieved.

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2. **New conception of school:** Highes says, 'His kindergarten school was a little world where responsibility was shared by all, individual rights respected by all, brotherly sympathy developed and voluntary co-operation practised by all.' His school was a society in miniature.

   The present tendency in education is to regard school as a society in miniature. Dewey also regarded the school as a social institution. The present school is being regarded as a co-operative institution.

3. **Respect for the child's individuality:** Froebel lived for children, worked for children and died for children. He had profound love and sympathy for children.

4. **Stress on the study of the child:** Froebel stressed the need for the study of the nature of the child, his instincts and impulses. Modern education is very careful to see that adequate scope is provided for the free play of the impulses and instincts of children.

5. **Education through play:** Froebel believed that play is the highest phase of self-development. He introduced play way in the activities of the school. Today we find that the principle of play way has been accepted by every educator. We teach children through songs, movements, gestures, dramatisation, hand-work etc.

6. **Sense training:** Froebel introduced gifts for the training of the senses of children; with the help of these gifts he wanted to give the idea of shape, form, colour, size and number. In every modern school, those activities are introduced that help in the training of senses. Audio-visual aids form an integral part of the present system of education.

7. **Activity in education:** Froebel was the first educator to make self-activity the basis of education. 'Learning by doing' is the slogan of the day. The present school has become a place of activity and joy for children. We provide activities to students so that they may satisfy their instincts of construction, manipulation, curiosity and acquisition.

8. **Nature study in education:** For Froebel, nature study was a means of bringing the child nearer to God. He advocated a syllabus of nature study to enable the child to understand the world in which he lived and to develop habits of careful observation. This idea has taken such a stronghold to-day that we do not regard any school worthy of its name if it does not provide for nature study.

9. **Women teachers at the nursery stage:** It will not be wrong to say that it is due to the influence of Froebel that we find a trend to entrust the education at the pre-primary or pre-basic stage to women teachers who are considered to be more suited for this task of instruction at this stage.

10. **Role of the teacher:** The teacher plays the role of a gardener who looks after the tender plants. He provides an environment of life and freedom. He plans his work very carefully and demonstrates the play-way activity. He always keeps in mind the chief objectives which the gifts and songs should serve.

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Play-way Activities Based on Gifts and Educational Objectives: Some Examples

Educational Objective	*Components of the Gift*	*Activity*
1. Enabling the child to learn the concept of colour, form, motion, direction and muscular sensitivity.	Six coloured balls of different colours	Children are required to roll these balls.
2. Enabling the students to learn the concept of stability and mobility and to differentiate between these two.	One sphere. One cube. One cylinder—made of hard wood.	Children are required to observe the stability and mobility of each article while playing.
3. Enabling the students to learn the concepts of addition and subtraction.	One large cube divided into eight smaller equal cubes contained in a box.	Children are required to build a number of forms. e.g., benches, doors, etc.
4. Enabling children to develop concepts of designs or patterns.	A large cube divided into eight oblong prisms. Each has a length twice its breadth and breadth twice its thickness.	Children are occupied in the building of a variety of patterns by using these prisms.
5. Enabling the children to develop the concepts of form and number through gifts 3, 4 and 5.	Gift 5 consists of a large cube divided into twenty-seven small cubes. Three of these are subdivided diagonally into halves; three further sub-divided into halves; three further subdivided into quarters.	Children are occupied in developing a variety of forms using gifts 3, 4 and 5.
6. Enabling the children to develop the concept of numbers.	Large cubes divided into eighteen wholes and nine small oblong bricks (Like gift 4).	Children are directed to develop designs using the material of the gift.
7. Enabling the children to acquire the concept of mosaic and geometrical forms.	A set of triangular and square tablets of fine wood in two different colours.	Children are directed to prepare geometrical forms and mosaic work.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

6. List any two defects that Froebel found in the school founded by Pestalozzi.
7. Which German philosophers influenced Froebel?
8. State the eternal law that Froebel believed in.
9. What according to Froebel is the relationship between songs, gestures and construction?
10. Give two merits of Froebel's 'Kindergarten'.

3.4 SUMMARY

NOTES

- Jean Jacques Rousseau is considered as the greatest thinker that France has ever produced.
- Rousseau was born in Geneva, Switzerland on 28 June 1712.
- Rousseau's parents were protestant but he got converted to Catholicism under the influence of Madame de Warens (Françoise-Louise de Warens).
- Rousseau rose to fame with his prize winning essay 'Discourse on the Sciences and Arts'.
- Rousseau criticized the idea that science has brought progress. He termed it as an illusion.
- For Rousseau, morality is nothing other than the ability to see oneself through the eyes of others and act appropriately.
- According to Rousseau, men create a civil society to maintain their freedom.
- The creation of popular sovereignty by vesting it in the general will is a unique contribution of Rousseau which led the foundation of modern democracy.
- The actual will is detrimental to human freedom. Thus, to attain freedom, the individuals should follow the direction of the real will. Real freedom is reflected by the real will.
- Rousseau, in his book *The Discourse on Political Economy,* first coined the term General Will.
- The general will is emerged from all and applied to all. It comprises rational will of all the members of the community.
- Rousseau was greatly influenced by three factors viz., the state of time, extremely varied experience of his life and his impulsive and emotional nature. His philosophy is usually designated by the term 'Naturalism'.
- Life according to Rousseau was genuine. 'Reason', he said 'should be the guiding principle in producing both the Natural civilisation and Natural man.'
- Rousseau considered that childhood is a period when the child should know how to lose his time wisely. It is not a period when time is to be saved for an intensive study of books.
- Rousseau believes in freedom of the child. It is only in a free atmosphere that the child will be able to develop his inborn and innate capacities.
- As given in *Emile*, Rousseau recommends curriculum in accordance with the stage of the child.
- Rousseau with his stress on facts and enquiry into nature's laws has given us the basis for scientific tendency in modern education.
- Friedrich August Froebel was born on 21 April 1782, in the village of Oberweisback in South Germany.

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- Froebel was neglected in his youth and the memories of his early sufferings made him in later life more eager in promoting the happiness of children.
- The religious influence of Froebel father and the contact with nature cultivated in him a spirit of mysticism and idealism. He discovered the uniformity and unity of nature's laws.
- Froebel established a small school in 1816 at Grie Sheim. Later on this was transferred to Keihan.
- Froebel's philosophy is the outcome of the great influence of German philosophers like Fitche, Kant and Schelling on him.
- According to Froebel there is one eternal law—the law of unity—that governs all things, men and nature.
- Froebel derives a new conception of childhood. Childhood is not merely preparation for adulthood, it is a value in itself and possesses its own creativity.
- Childhood participates in the divine whole with the same rights of its own as adulthood, and therefore it can claim the same respect on the part of the educator.
- Froebel maintains that the aim of education is not to make the mind of the child a jumble of words.
- Froebel writes, 'The essential business of school is not so much to communicate a variety and multiplicity of facts as to give prominence to the ever living unity that is in all things.'
- In the form of kindergarten, Froebel has made an important contribution to the theory and practice of education.
- Froebel realised the paramount importance of childhood and opened the first kindergarten, an institution for children of age four to six, at Blankenberg in 1837.
- Froebel saw an organic relationship between songs, gestures and construction. He regarded these as three co-ordinate forms of expression in the child.
- Froebel laid emphasis on pre-school or nursery education.
- Froebel broadened the concept and scope of the school as an essential social institution. He regarded school as a miniature society where children get training in important things of life.

3.5 KEY TERMS

- **Noble savage:** It is a mythic conception of people belonging to non-European cultures as having innate natural simplicity and virtue uncorrupted by European civilization.
- **General will:** It is the collective will of a community that is the embodiment or expression of its common interest.

- **Naturalism:** It is the philosophical belief that everything arises from natural properties and causes, and supernatural or spiritual explanations are excluded or discounted.
- **Heuristic method:** It is any approach to problem solving, learning, or discovery that employs a practical method not guaranteed to be optimal or perfect, but sufficient for the immediate goals.
- **Curriculum:** It refers to the subjects comprising a course of study in a school or college.

3.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Rousseau got converted to Catholicism under the influence of Madame de Warens (Françoise-Louise de Warens).
2. In his essay 'Discourse on the Sciences and Arts', Rousseau depicted the drawbacks of science and arts, including their impact on morality. According to him, science had brought moral degradation among men.
3. Rousseau was greatly influenced by three factors viz., the state of time, extremely varied experience of his life and his impulsive and emotional nature.
4. As given in *Emile,* Rousseau recommends curriculum in accordance with the stage of the child.
5. Two chief contributions of Rousseau are as follows:
   (a) His emphasis on the 'discovery' and 'recognition' of childhood traits has brought about revolutionary change in the thinking of educators.
   (b) His stress on the 'concrete' led to 'learning by doing'.
6. Froebel found the following defects in the school founded by Pestalozzi:
   (a) The school lacked organisation.
   (b) There was no unity in the whole work.
7. Froebel's philosophy is the outcome of the great influence of German philosophers like Fitche, Kant and Schelling.
8. According to Froebel there is one eternal law—the law of unity—that governs all things, men and nature.
9. Froebel saw an organic relationship between songs, gestures and construction. He regarded these as three co-ordinate forms of expression in the child.
10. Two merits of Froebel's 'Kindergarten' are as follows:
    (a) Froebel laid emphasis on pre-school or nursery education.
    (b) He stressed the importance of play in early education.

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3.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on the life of Rousseau.
2. What, according to Rousseau, were the drawbacks of the emergence of civil society?
3. Briefly discuss the contribution of Rousseau to political philosophy.
4. State the limitations of Rousseau's philosophy.
5. Write a note on Rousseau's contribution towards education.
6. List Froebel's educational principles.
7. In what way did Froebel influence modern education?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Describe Rousseau's notion of sovereignty.
2. Examine Rousseau's views on democracy.
3. 'Rousseau stated that liberty in the state of nature was a boon.' Elaborate on this statement.
4. What are Rousseau's views on methods of teaching and curriculum? Discuss in detail.
5. Analyse the main principles of Froebel's philosophy.
6. What is the meaning of education? Write a note on Froebel's philosophy of education.
7. Write a detailed note on Froebel's 'Kindergarten' and state its features.
8. Describe the merits and demerits of Kindergarten.

3.8 FURTHER READING

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UNIT 4 DEWEY AND MONTESSORI

NOTES

Structure

4.0 Introduction
4.1 Unit Objectives
4.2 John Dewey
  4.2.1 Dewey's Views on Various Aspects of Education
  4.2.2 Dewey's Contribution to Educational Thought and Practice
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  4.3.1 Educational Principles Underlying her Philosophy
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4.4 Summary
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4.6 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
4.7 Questions and Exercises
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4.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit you studied about the life and works of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and F. W. August Froebel and their contribution to the field of education.

Similarly, this unit focuses on another two prominent figures who made a significant impact in the lives of young students and transformed the education system as a whole. This unit will discuss in detail the impact John Dewey (1859-1952), an American psychologist and educator, and Madam Maria Montessori (1870 –1952), an Italian physician and educator, best known for the philosophy of education named the Montessori Method, made on education.

4.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Discuss John Dewey's philosophy and his views on education
- Describe the main characteristics and principles of school curriculum as given by Dewey
- Assess and evaluate Dewey's contribution to educational thought and practice
- Examine the limitations of Dewey's philosophy
- Discuss the educational principles underlying Madam Maria Montessori's philosophy
- Explain the functions of a teacher as given by Montessori and analyse the merits of the Montessori Method
- Compare and contrast Froebel and his Kindergarten with Montessori and her Method.

4.2 JOHN DEWEY

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John Dewey was born in 1859. After graduating from the University of Vermont in 1879, he started his career as a schoolteacher and had the actual experience of teaching in a classroom. His philosophy is not simply speculative but based on the actual experiences in school. In April 1882, he wrote his first article entitled, 'The Metaphysical Assumption of Materialism' in *Journal of Speculative Philosopy*.

After leaving his job as a schoolteacher, Dewey joined Johns Hopkins University and obtained his Ph. D. in Philosophy in 1884. Thereafter, he worked as a Professor of Philosophy at the Universities of Minnesota, Michigan and Chicago.

It was at Chicago in 1896 that Dewey founded the ideal University Laboratory School. This school served for him as a scientific laboratory in obtaining knowledge of facts and laws still unknown to the educationists of the world. It was here that he tested, modified and clarified his theories after practical experience of school situations.

He was invited by the University of Peking to deliver a lecture on philosophy and education, and later on the government of Turkey asked him to draw-up a report on the reorganization of national schools in Turkey.

Dewey's Philosophy

Dewey's philosophy and programme has been variously termed as 'Experimentalism', 'Functionalism', 'Instrumentalism', 'Operationalism', 'Progressivism', 'Practicalism' and above all 'Pragmatism'. All these indicate his emphasis on the dynamic and ever changing character of life. Dewey tests every hypothesis or belief or principle by the way it works or by its consequences. He does not believe in the existence of any absolute values or ultimate moral principles which are at once 'unassailable and unimprovable'. He said that there are no fixed beliefs. He also insisted that the intellect was subordinate to practical ends. 'Utility' was the touchstone of every value. Pragmatism teaches that which is useful, what works in a practical situation is true; what does not work is false. Truth, thus, becomes not a 'fixed', 'eternal' thing, but something that is subject to change. According to pragmatism what is true today may be false tomorrow.

Five values stressed by Dewey are as follows:

1. Aesthetic taste or capacity
2. Conscientiousness
3. Efficiency
4. Scientific spirit
5. Sociability and social efficiency

Experience and Experimental Method

Dewey explains that where there is experience, there is a living being. In the orthodox view, experience is regarded primarily as a knowledge affair, but to eyes not looking through ancient spectacles, it assuredly appears as an affair of the intercourse of

living being with its physical and social environment. To learn from experience is to make a backward and forward connection between what we do to things and what we enjoy or suffer from things.

'The new philosophy of education is an experimental philosophy. All experiences cannot be educative .... The traditional education gave pupils experiences but not of the right type .... The business of the educator is to set a kind of experience which while being agreeable promotes having desirable future experiences. The central problem of an educator based upon experience is to select the kind of present experiences that live fruitfully and creatively in subsequent experiences. The continuity of experience is the philosophy of Educative Experience. It is held that education is a development within, by, and for Experience .... Education by, of, and for Experience .... Thus a full integrated personality exists only when successive experiences are integrated.' Experimental methods has the following merits:

1. Experimental method is the foe of every belief that permits habits and wants to dominate invention and discovery, and readymade system to override verifiable fact. Constant revision is the work of experimental inquiry.
2. Experimental method is fatal to dogmatism because it shows that all ideas, conceptions, theories, however extensive and self-consistent and aesthetically attractive they maybe, are to be entertained provisionally until they have been tested by acting upon them.
3. Experimental method is not just messing around nor doing a little of this and a little of that in the hope that things will improve. Just as in the physical sciences, it implies a coherent body of ideas, a theory, that gives direction to effort.

Selectivity in experience: Mere activity is not experience. A stream of meaningful experiences have to be provided. That kind of present experience should be selected and emphasised which lives fruitfully and creatively in the course of future experiences.

Education in growth: Dewey is a protagonist of the conception of education as growth and direction. Life is growing and education is the process of this ever-increasing growth. What is of enormous significance for Dewey is the present life and its possibilities. He criticises the conception of education as a 'preparation' for the realization of some remote future goal. It is essential that the immediate situation should be interpreted in such a meaningful way that it may provide the maximum stimulus for the responsive cooperation of pupils and the utilization of their energies.

Education, a moral process: According to Dewey, 'Discipline, culture, social efficiency, personal refinement, improvement of character are but phases of the growth of capacity nobly to share in such a balanced experience. And education is not a mere means to such a life. To maintain capacity for such education is the essence of morals.'

4.2.1 Dewey's Views on Various Aspects of Education

Dewey thinks that education is a continuous process of adjustment, having as its aim at every stage an added capacity of growth.

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Two sides of the educative process—psychological and social: According to Dewey, the educative process has two sides—one psychological and the other sociological, and neither can be subordinated to the other or neglected without evil results following.

Social view of education: Prof. Dewey states the social function of education in *The School and Society,* 'What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, that must the community want for all of its children. Any other ideal for our schools is narrow and unlovely; acted upon, it destroys our democracy. All that society has accomplished for itself is put through the agency of the school, at the disposal of its future members.'

Education proceeds by the participation of the individual in the social consciousness of the race: Dewey believes that all education proceeds by the participation of the individual in the social consciousness of the race. This process begins unconsciously almost at birth and is continually shaping the individual's powers, saturating his consciousness, forming his habits, training his ideas, and arousing his feelings and emotions. Through this unconscious education the individual gradually comes to share in the intellectual and moral resources which humanity has succeeded in getting together. He becomes an inheritor of the funded capital of civilization. The most formal and technical education in the world cannot safely depart from this general process. It can only organise it or differentiate it in some particular direction. Dewey believes that true education comes through the stimulation of the child's powers by the demands of the social situation in which he finds himself.

School: A Social Institution

'I believe that the school is primarily a social institution. Education being a social process, the school is simply that form of community life in which all those agencies are concentrated that will be most effective in bringing the child to share in the inherited resources of the race, and to use his own powers for social ends.' 'I believe that the school must represent present life—life as real and vital to the child as that which he carries on in the home, in the neighbourhood, or on the playground.'

The moral training given by the school community: According to Dewey, there cannot be two sets of ethical principles, one for life in the school, and the other for life outside the school. As conduct is one, so also the principles of conduct are one. The tendency to discuss the morals of the school as if the school were an institution by itself is highly unfortunate. The moral responsibility of the school, and of those who conduct it, is to society. The school is fundamentally an institution erected by society to do a certain specific work, to exercise a certain specific function in maintaining the life and advancing the welfare of society. The educational system which does not recognise that this fact entails upon it an ethical responsibility is derelict and a defaulter.

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Functions of the School

The first office of the school is to provide a simplified environment. It should select the features which are fairly fundamental and capable of being responded to by the young. Then it should establish a progressive order, using the factors first acquired as means of gaining insight into what is more complicated.

In the second place, it should be the business of the school environment to eliminate, so far as possible, the unworthy features of the existing environment. It should establish a purified medium of action. Selection should aim not only at simplifying but at weeding out what is undesirable. The school has the duty of omitting trivial things from the environment which it supplies, and thereby doing what it can to counteract their influence in the ordinary social environment. By selecting the best for its exclusive use, it should strive to reinforce the power of this best. As a society becomes more enlightened, it realises that it is responsible not to transmit and conserve the whole of its existing achievement, but only such as make for a better future society. The school is its chief agency for the accomplishment of this end.

In the third place, it is the office of the school environment to balance the various elements in the social environment, and to see to it that each individual gets an opportunity to escape from the limitations of the social group in which he was born, and to come into living contact with a broader environment.

Laboratory School

Dewey's philosophy grew out of his experiments to establish an ideal school—the University Laboratory School, founded in 1896. Dewey wanted that the training of scholars in the school should be such as to enable them for a complete living in the social world of today. Dewey posed the following problems and attempted to find their solution:

1. How to bring the school life into closer relation with the home and surrounding life?
2. How to introduce subject-matter in history, science and arts to give a positive value and real significance in the child's life?
3. How to correlate instruction in different subjects with everyday experience and occupation?
4. How to cater to individual powers and needs?

Manual Occupations in the School

Dewey found the answer to the above mentioned problems in the introduction of the following occupations in the school:

l. Shop-work with wood and tools
2. Cooking work
3. Work with textiles (sewing and weaving)

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A central place was given to occupations and other subjects were treated incidentally as ancillary to practical activities. In the Laboratory School, 'Science is required in the study of the fibres, of geographical features, the conditions under which raw materials are grown, the great centres of manufacture and distribution, the physics involved in the machinery of production.' 'You can concentrate the history of all mankind in the evolution of flax cotton and wool fibres into clothing. The children can get a good deal of chemistry in connection with cooking, of number work and geometrical principles in carpentry, and a good deal of geography in connection with their theoretical work in weaving and spinning. And history comes in with the origin and growth of various inventions and their effects on social life.'

Child as the Core of the Educative Process

Dewey observes, 'Education must begin with a psychological insight into the child's capacities, interests, and habits . . . . These powers, interests, and habits must be continually interpreted, we must know what they mean. They must be translated into terms of their social equivalents—into terms of what they are capable of in the way of social service.' (*My Pedagogic Creed*).

Observation of Child's Interests

Dewey tells us that only through the continual and sympathetic observation of childhood's interests can the teacher enter into the child's life and see what it is ready for, and upon what material it could work most readily and fruitfully.

'The more a teacher is aware of the past experience of student, of their hopes, desires, chief interests, the better will he understand the forces at work that need to be directed and utilised for the formation of reflective habits.' (*How We Think*).

School Curriculum

Development of social insight and interest: The task of educating so many children at so many different educational levels with such a variety of abilities, needs and goods requires a completely different approach. With this increase in a diversified school population, Dewey advocates that broader curricular programmes are needed and emphasis should be placed on the total development of the person as being equally important as the intellectual and the academic. Such a curriculum acknowledges that the social responsibilities of education must present situations where problems are relevant to the issues of living together, and where observation and information are calculated to develop social insight and interest.

According to Dewey social life cannot be cut into pieces of knowledge. Departmentalization of the curriculum and the systematic succession of studies have to be replaced by an elastic programme of activities.

The subject-matter of geography, arithmetic and grammar should come out of school situations in answer to social needs.

The curriculum must grow out of child's interests, experiences, impulses and needs. The curriculum must be child-centred. He stressed that the school subjects

should be woven around the child's activities. Lessons should begin with social topics such as food, shelter, modes of communication, speech, reading, drawing, modelling. While laying stress on the needs of the children, Dewey also took into account the needs of the community in which the children live.

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Following are the main characteristics and principles of the curriculum:

1. Curriculum should reflect the social life and social activities. It should have utility.
2. It must follow the principle of progressive organisation of knowledge consisting of educative experiences and problems of the learners.
3. The new experiences and problems should grow out of the old ones.
4. The experiences should be flexible and changeble in accordance with the child's interests and should be graded.
5. *Methods of Teaching:* Dewey said, 'All learning must come as a by-product of actions and for its own sake'. This reveals his concepts of observation and direct experience. According to him, a child learns through participation in various activities. He advocated 'learning by doing' and 'learning by living'. He recommended the project method which is based on problems, activities, experiments and interests of the learners.

   Dewey has explained the project method of teaching in his books: *How We Think* and *Interest and Effort in Education* as, 'The processes by which the mind of the individual comes into relation with the objective world. Interest and self-activity are the characteristic features'. It is a method which deals with the intellectual processes that are antecedent to induction and deduction.

   Dewey briefly recommended the following methods of instruction:

   (*i*) Learning by doing

   (*ii*) Learning by integration and correlation

   (*iii*) Learning through productive and creative activities
6. *Concept of Discipline:* Dewey held that the natural impulses of the child ought to be directed and disciplined through the cooperative activities of the school. 'Out of doing things that are to produce results, and out of doing in a social and cooperative way, there is born a discipline of its own kind and type'. Dewey believed that the child's activities—intellectual, social, moral and physical—are disciplinary in their effect if they are carried out in cooperation with others.
7. *The role of the teacher:* The teacher is engaged not simply in the training of individuals, but in the formation of proper social life.

   Every teacher should realise the dignity of his calling; that he is a social servant set apart for the maintenance of proper social order and the securing of the right social growth.

   In this way the teacher always is the 'prophet of the true God' and the usherer in of the true kingdom of God. He also said, 'The teacher is a guide and director; he steers the boat, but the energy that propels it must

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come from those who are learning. The more a teacher is aware of the past experiences of students, of their hopes, desires, chief interests, the better will he understand the forces at work that need to be directed and utilised for the formation of reflective habits'.

8. *Concept of Democracy and Democratic Values in Education:* Dewey states that democracy is the political and moral philosophy of education. 'If education is equivalent to genuine living, then democracy is the moral foundation of education. The essence of education is the extension of shared areas of meaningful action and this is also the essence of democracy.'

The school as the 'democratic society in miniature' should provide for the participation of the students in the activities of the school on the one hand and on the other hand it should realise the significance of the experiences, needs and interests of the child as a personality.

Democracy postulates full freedom of enquiry into social and political problems and solving them. Likewise the schools should promote a spirit of enquiry in educational thinking. Discussion should be freely permitted.

The schools should become guardians of academic freedom. Intellectual or moral freedom is the basis of political freedom.

The schools should become living examples of the practices of freedom of enquiry, experimentation and intelligent communication.

Excessive heavy routines and rules are not conducive to self and social disciplines.

Dewey advocates that the teacher should be provided opportunities to 'participate in the formation of the controlling aims, methods and materials of the school of which he is a part'.

To sum up, Dewey wants that education should reflect democratic principles and practices in matters of school organisation, selection of activities and experiences and other matters.

Dewey's Concept of Discipline

Dewey would like to develop discipline by engaging the pupils in performing their part of work faithfully. This implies the solicitation of the active co-operation of the pupils in the work of the school in terms of the participation of the learners in educational activities that are pregnant with relevant aim capable of immediate realisation and full of deep significance.

4.2.2 Dewey's Contribution to Educational Thought and Practice

Dewey's contribution to educational thought and practice is discussed as follows:

1. Dewey's social theory of education coupled with the logic of experimental method has been very influential in the development of modern education practices.

2. The greatest change has been in the recognition of the worth of the experiences of the child. The child is no longer regarded as a passive subject meant for the imposition of external information but is considered an active living being whose interests have to be stimulated by participation in socially significant experiences. This kind of participation, if intelligently and devotedly engaged in, is a kind of moral experience. Thus instead of the old emphasis on mechanical memorising of subject-matter, it is essential to stress the meaningful dimensions of the process of learning.
3. Dewey has been one of the significant leaders who have tried to introduce a more human touch in the processes of education.
4. He has been a powerful influence in interpreting the school as a community for the realisation of the significance of the immediate experiences and present opportunities of the child if he is to be a contributor to the march of the social process.
5. His insistence on activities of diverse kinds in schools is also another aspect of his social theory of education.
6. The pragmatic method of instrumentalistic experimentation reacts against all kinds of mysticism, transcendentalism and absolutism.
7. The supreme contribtution of Dewey to the philosophy of education is the theory of scientific democratic humanism.
8. Dewey is quite right in pleading for the wide use of the experimental methods of science in education.

Limitations of Dewey's Philosophy

The very richness of Dewey's educational writings may lead to some confusion. For all his systematic exposition of ideas, he is not the author of a system. Only broad outlines can be made out and even then the variety of Dewey's thought is such that opposing ideas can be hauled out of context and made to give a scrambled picture.

Dewey's writings lend themselves to ambiguity. There is another problem in Dewey's educational philosophy. His writings coincide with the rise of so-called 'progressive education.' Thus in the popular mind, and often in the professional mind, the name of John Dewey and that of progressive education 'have been far too firmly linked.'

It is very difficult to verify scientific objectivity and to reconcile it with democracy which in practice means numerical majority. Dewey's neglect of religious education may result in the destruction of the roots of humanistic values and social ethics.

Evaluation of Dewey's Contribution to Educational Thought and Practices

Dewey is one of those significant figures whose ideas have influenced not only the thought of people but also powerfully moulded practice. Prof. V. P. Verma thinks, 'The strength of Dewey lies in his immense grasp of the realities of life. He does not

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soar in the transcendental regions of the motionless spiritual being but his both feet are firmly planted in the pressing situations of the day.'

The same author thinks, 'The quest for the three goals—scientific method, humanistic ethics and democratic theory—represents the great contribution of Dewey to educational theory'.

In his book *American Ideas and Education*, Fredrik Mayor observes, 'In Dewey the voice of the pioneer, the stirring energies of the reformer, the patient method of the scientist and the faith of the teacher are united in a search for a new education through which man can survive in a chaotic age.'

Whitehead rates Dewey's services to American Civilisation analogous to those of Bacon, Descartes, Locke and Comte to the modern world.

Rusk thinks, 'In education we cannot but be grateful to Dewey for his great services in challenging the old "static storage ideas of knowledge" and in bringing education more into accord with the actualities of the present day life.'

Irwin Edman regards John Dewey as 'one of the makers of American Tradition'.

To quote Irwin Edman 'Dewey brought … a reviving aproach to education as function of society, learning as an experience in growth and experience … like the acquiring of one's native speech—a mutual communication, a cooperation. At the school level this view helped transform the rigidities of the old fashioned martinet type of discipline and the tradition of learning by rote. At a more advanced level it was the source of that wide dissemination of the conception of "general education" and the new social studies which have so extensively affected the colleges and universities of this country. The breakdown of the violation of school from society, of book learning from vital experience, of the individual fiom his environment—the extent to which schools and colleges have removed these separations is a measure of the direct impact of refreshing reconstruction of Dewey's thinking.' (In the introduction to *John Dewey, 1955*)

J. S. Brubacher, in *Fiftyfourth Year Book of the National Societies for the Study of Education,* states about Dewey: 'Except for the emergence of John Dewey and the persistent challenge of his pragmatism to every phase of contemporary education, it is unlikely that educational philosophy would have had anywhere near the rise to prominence it has had in this century. His writings were not only the inspiration for others who wrote in the same vein but, much more important for richness and breadth in professional literature, he provoked opponents of his view to make explicit a variety of philosophical defenses of traditional or conservative educational practices which had only been implicit hitherto.'

F. G. Garforth writes in *John Dewey, Selected Educational Writings*, 'Whatever criticism may be levelled at him, whether as philosopher or educationist, the stature of the man is something that cannot be denied; nor can the present-day student of education disregard his immense and civilising influence on the practice of education both in his own country and throughout the world. Moreover, despite his greatness he remained essentially a simple man, patient, humble, and courageous,

displaying in his life and character that integrity which even his critics must admit to belong to his thought.'

Prof. Ulich states in *History of Educational Thought,* 'Through placing the ideas of action and interest in the character of his educational philosophy, Dewey has decisively challenged the handling of the method and subject-matter in American schools.'

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Again he writes, 'Dewey is one of the most astute, if not the most astute, among the modern philosophers who try to explain the quality and purpose of human life from an immanent and sociological point of view. His work offers one of the most helpful means of understanding the functioning of the human mind within a society of men who want to communicate with one another and to preserve themselves. Dewey's work encourages an experimental and scientific attitude; it prevents us from fixing our minds on things and ideas only because we happen to find them in the storehouse of tradition; it shows what men can achieve if they rely on their reason and courage instead of clinging to their prejudice; it teaches tolerance and respect for man without unduly edifying him—in short, it is a great corrective of false ideologies as well as a guide towards active, manly virtue.'

Rush thinks, 'In education we cannot but be grateful to Dewey for his great services in challenging the old 'static cold storage ideal of knowledge' and in bringing education more into accord with the actualities of present-day life. The general principle underlying the developments in his philosophy and his applications of these in education appears to be that both philosophy and education should reflect the main currents of contemporary thought and incorporates the techniques that have so signally contributed to modern industrial and social progress.'

Joe Park observes in *Philosophy of Education*: 'As a pragmatist, Dewey rejected the authoritarian and classical approach to education, which he thought stressed the ability to talk about things rather than the ability to do things. He built his philosophy on a biological base, pointing out that man is an organism living in an environment, an environment which helps to shape man, but which, in turn, can be modified by man. Dewey thought things were to be understood through their origin and function. To him the only reality for man was experience; the business of education was to improve the quality of experience that human beings had. This he hoped to accomplish by carefully defining the nature of experience and establishing criteria for judging its value.'

Dewey's Philosophy as a Programme of Action

'Dewey's philosophy is a programme of action. His philosophy looks for desired as well as desirable practical consequences and will never be contented with bare logical consistency or theoretical comprehensiveness', wrote Sing-Nan-Fen in *Essays for John Dewey* published in 1950. 'His philosophy is problem-oriented and his problems are problems of this world, not philosophical problems as such, nor problems about another problem. Furthermore, as a philosopher, Dewey is not only a problem-formulator, but also a problem solver.' This is why, as a philosopher, Dewey was very much interested in education both in theory and in practice.

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A Great Teacher and an Encyclopaedia Reader

Charles W. Coultor and Richerd S. Rimanoczy describe his contributions, 'John Dewey, a great teacher, an encyclopaedia reader, thoroughly familiar with the American as well as the European background of pedagogy, dedicated himself to sparking a revolution in the theory and practice of education, not only in America but throughout the world.'

'The newness of Deweyism lies mainly in the regrouping, reorganising, and integrating of selected previously postulated ideas and methods (particularly of Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Froebel) into an educational system to meet the social and economic needs of 20th century America.'

Left his Mark all Over the World

Robert S. Brumbaugh and Nathanul M. Lawrence in their book, *Philosophers on Education*, evaluate the work of Dewey as, 'Dewey is the one philosopher in whom philosophy and educational theory are virtually indistinguishable. No philosopher has written so extensively on education. In civilised countries between the two wars he left his mark everywhere, not only in the western hemisphere, but in Turkey, China, and Japan as well. Even in Russia, Dewey was well received until the time of his vindication of Trotsky against Stalin. Plato alone competes with Dewey for having shaped contemporary civilisation educationally; and Plato's influence comes by way of a series of modifications beginning with Aristotle.'

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. List the five values stressed by Dewey in his philosophy.
2. State one merit of the Experimental method.
3. According to Dewey, what are the two sides of the educative process?
4. What, according to Dewey, is the first function of the school?
5. What occupations were introduced by Dewey in the school?
6. State one characteristic of school curriculum.

4.3 MADAM MARIA MONTESSORI

Maria Montessori, the originator of the Montessori Method, was born in 1870 in Italy. She was a doctor who later on became one of the prominent educationists of the world. Her first desire was to become an actress and for this purpose she actually joined a drama school. However, very shortly she realised that her mission in life was a different one and she decided to become a doctor. But the doors of the medical colleges were practically closed for women in those days. To get admission was a big problem before her. She tried a trick and was successful in getting admission.

She signed herself 'M. Montessori' when she applied for admission. The authorities could never think that a lady could apply so. They admitted her thinking her to be a man. She became the first Italian woman to get the degree of doctor of medicine.

For seven years from 1900 to 1907, she worked as a Professor of Anthropology in the University of Rome. There, she got the opportunity to come into contact with children. There was a ward of mentally deficient children in the hospital attached to the medical college. She was asked to supervise these children. She took a keen interest in the study of such children and in their education. She discovered the following points:

1. The mental deficiency results from the dullness of the senses.
2. Sense training was the best method to achieve marvellous results in their education.
3. If the same method of sense training is employed to educate normal children, far better results could be achieved.

In 1907 she received an offer from the Director of Roman Association for Good Buildings to supervise some schools in tenements. Children between the ages of three and seven whose parents were mostly out at work and who were neglected and made all sorts of nuisance in their absence attended such schools. The first of these new schools was opened in 1907 by her and was named the 'Children's House'. Here, she developed a novel method of educating children through a process of sense training. Like a true scientist, she observed the real facts of child development.

She was appointed as the inspectress of infant schools by the government of Italy in 1922. She began to impart training to teachers in the new method discovered by her, along with her job. Teachers from other countries of Europe, including England, received training.

Mussolini came to power in Italy and he was a Fascist dictator. He wanted to educate children for war. Montessori who was an ardent supporter of child's freedom, could not work under such a regime. So she was obliged to run away from there and proceeded to Holland where she founded a school.

She came to India in 1939 and remained here up to 1946. She spent her time in propagating her new method and training teachers for small children according to her method in Madras. She also spent some time in India in 1950–51. She returned to Holland in 1951 and breathed her last there in 1952.

The Idea that Inspired Her

'Child is a body which grows and a soul which develops—these two forms physical and psychic, have one eternal front, life itself.' It follows then that, 'we must neither mar nor stifle the mysterious powers which lie within these two forms of growth, but we must await from them the manifestations which we know will succeed one another.'

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4.3.1 Educational Principles Underlying her Philosophy

The educational principles underlying her philosophy are as follows:

1. **Development from within:** Like Froebel, she believes that education of a child is from within. 'If any educational act is to be efficacious, it will be only that which tends to help towards the complete unfolding of the child's individuality. The child has a body which grows and a soul which develops.' She is of the opinion that education must help in the complete unfolding of the child's individuality. Suitable environment should be provided so that the child may grow and develop the potentialities that he has within him.
2. **The doctrine of freedom or liberty:** This doctrine is the outcome of the concept of education as development. Her belief is that there should be no hindrance or interference in the way of a child's growth and development. She believes that the freedom is the birth right of every individual and she advocates the spontaneous development of the child through full liberty. She does not believe in putting restraints as she says that these may 'mar or stifle the innate powers of the child.' She says, 'The school must permit the free, natural manifestations of the child if he is to be studied in a scientific manner.'
3. **No material rewards and punishments:** According to her, these incentives are unnatural or forced and the development that comes with their help will also be unnatural. She writes, 'The jockey offers a piece of sugar to his horse that he may respond to the signs given by the reins, and yet neither of these runs so superbly as the free horse of the plains.'
4. **Principles of individual development:** In the words of John Adams, Dr. Montessori 'has rung the knell of class teaching.' She believes that every child is peculiar to himself and he progresses at his own speed and rate and collective methods of teaching crush his individuality. She treats each child as a separate individual and recommends that he should be helped and guided in a manner that helps him in his proper growth and development. The teacher is concerned with his mental as well as his physiological development.
5. **Principle of self-education or auto-education:** Montessori has shifted the emphasis from teaching to learning. She believes that self- education or auto-education is the only true education. She advocates that the child should remain undisturbed by adult interference. She has devised the didactic apparatus which attracts the attention of the children, keeps them busy spontaneously, leads them to learn the powers of movements, reading, writing and arithmetic, etc.
6. **Principle of sense training:** Montessori asserts that our senses are the gateways of knowledge and therefore on their training and development depends the acquisition of knowledge throughout life. She pointed out that the senses are very active between the ages of three and seven and that a lot of learning takes place during this period. She advocates that the sensory training is the key to intellectual development.

7. **Principle of motor efficiency or muscular training:** She has also attached importance to muscular training as a part of the early education of children. She believes that muscular training facilitates other activities like writing, drawing, speaking etc. She takes muscular activity as purely physiological in character. She stresses that running, walking etc. all depend on muscular training.
8. **The teacher as the directress:** She replaces the word 'teacher' by the word 'directress' as she thinks that the function of the teacher is to direct and not to teach. Her motto should be, 'I must diminish to let you grow.'
9. **No place for fairy tales:** She would like to banish 'fairy stories from the curriculum of young children since these tend to confuse children and to hinder them in the process of adjusting themselves to the real world.'

The principles advocated by Dr Montessori have revolutionized our traditional notions about education. She has shown a deep insight and feeling. She is a thinker of a high order. The present educators must work towards completion of the ways and principles she has advocated.

Functions of a Teacher

'The educator', says Montessori, must be one inspired by a deep 'worship of life'.

Teacher as gardener: She thinks that a teacher should care for the child like a gardener who cares for the plant so that the natural growth of the child is properly guided and aided in the process of unfolding itself.

Knowledge of each child: The teacher should have an intimate knowledge of the mind and character of each individual. He should keep the physiological records of each child's development: his weight, height and other measurements.

The directress and not the teacher: Dr Montessori has replaced the word 'teacher' by the word 'directress' and she thinks that the primary duty of the person in authority is to direct and not to teach. She insists that the directress should have an extensive knowledge of psychology and laboratory technique.

Doctor-cum-scientist-cum-missionary: In the words of Montessori, the directress should be partly doctor, partly scientist and completely religious. Like a doctor she should avoid scolding or suppressing the patient and should tend to him to restore his health. Like a scientist she should wait patiently for the results and should conduct experiments with her material. Like a religious lady she should be there to serve the child.

Faith in the personality of the child: She should allow the child to grow according to his own inner law. Her business is to provide for suitable environments. She should provide children with suitable opportunities to think for themselves.

Moral qualities: 'Virtues and not words are the main qualifications of the directress.' She must acquire moral alertness, patience, love and humility. She must banish anger which is a great sin and which prevents from understanding the child. The soul of the child, which is pure and very sensitive, requires her most delicate care. Her motto should be 'I must diminish to let you grow.'

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Children's House

'Children's House' is the name given to a school by Dr Montessori. This house provides all the requirements of a good 'family house'. As a matter of fact, it has all the qualities of a school, a workshop and a home. There are many rooms in the children's house. The main room of the building is a study room. Smaller rooms—common room, lunch room, rest rooms, room for mutual work, a gymnasium, a lavatory or a children's bathroom—are attached to this main room. The rooms are well equipped according to the needs of the children and spirit of the Montessori method. The tables, chairs, etc. are specially made for children. They facilitate movement from one place to another. Sofas of different shapes and long row cupboards are also provided. The children keep their didactic apparatus in the cupboard and their things in a little drawer. The black-boards are fixed in the walls on which the children draw or paste pictures of different kinds, according to their own interests. The students are provided with flowers, toys, pictures, indoor games, etc. The lunch room contains low tables, chairs, spoons, knives, tumblers, etc.

The children are provided with their own little shelf in the bathroom where they keep their soap and towel for washing. There is a small garden also which is looked after by the students themselves. Shelters are provided in the garden so that they can enjoy the open air, can play and work there, may take rest or sleep. They may have their lunch there if they so please.

Paedometer to measure height and also the weighing machine are also there in the children's house to keep a record of the heights and weights of the students.

There are three types of exercises that are provided in the children's school.

- Exercise in practical life
- Sense training exercise
- Didactic exercise for teaching language and arithmetic

1. **Exercise in practical life:** According to Dr Montessori these exercises are called 'exercises in practical life' because in the children's house real everyday life is carried on in which all house work is entrusted to the little ones, who execute with devotion and accuracy their domestic duties, becoming singularly calm and dignified. The students are required to sweep their rooms, dust and clean the furniture and arrange it as they like. They learn dressing and undressing and washing themselves. They are expected to hang up their clothes tidily. They lay their tables. The children take turns in various household duties and learn by imitation to conquer their difficulties in the process. 'Enthusiasm and delight, fellow feeling and mutual aid are characteristics of the children learning the jobs.' The students learn how to wash their hands. They learn how to use wash stands with small pitchers and basins. Children learn how to use their own soap and towels. They learn how to comb their hair, cut their nails and brush their teeth.

The main purpose is to give children training in self-reliance and liberty and also to be independent.

Motor education: These practical life exercises are considered to be very helpful for motor education. Muscular education is imparted in connection with the movements of walking, sitting and holding objects. The care of child's own body, managing the household affairs, gardening and manual work and rhythmetic movements provide motor education. Children also learn how to walk in straight lines and to balance themselves properly.

2. **Sensory education:** Through didactic apparatus Madam Montessori, like Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Froebel stresses that the senses are the gateways of knowledge. She attaches more importance to sensory training than even to reasoning and thinking. Various materials are employed to develop sensory training. The following will explain the method of sensory training.

Table 4.1 *Method of Sensory Training*

Purpose	*Apparatus*
1. For perception of size	1. Series of wooden cylinders varying in height only, in diameter only or in both dimensions; blocks varying regularly in size and rods of regularly varying lengths.
2. For perception of colour	2. Pink cubes, brown prisms, green and alternately red and blue rods and coloured tablets, etc.
3. For perception of form	3. Geometrical insets in metal, wood, a8 chest of drawers containing plan itself, etc.
4. For discrimination in 'weight'.	4. Tablets of wood similar in size but different in weight.
5. For discrimination in 'touch'.	5. Rectangular tables with rough and smooth surface etc.
6. For discrimination in 'sound'.	6. Cylindrical boxes containing different substances.

The Method to be Employed has three stages:

(*i*) Association of the sensory percept with the name, 'This is red'.

(*ii*) Recognition of the object, 'Give me the red one.'

(*iii*) Recalling the name of the object, 'What is this?'

3. **Didactic apparatus for teaching language and arithmetic:** Madam Montessori is of the opinion that muscular skill in children is very easily developed and, therefore, the teaching of writing should precede the teaching of reading, According to her, writing is a purely a mechanical activity and reading partly intellectual.

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- *Teaching of writing:* There are three factors involved in writing these are as follows:
  - o Movements which help in reproducing the forms of letters
  - o Manipulation of the pen
  - o The phonetic analysis of words in writing to dictation

  The letters of the alphabet are cut in sand paper and pasted on card-boards. The students are asked to pass their fingers on them. The students learn to establish the visual muscular images of the letters. At the same time, the phonetic sounds are also taught in three stages—association, recognition and recall. There are certain exercises through which the students are taught the handling of the pen.
- *Teaching of reading:* Montessori is not in favour of reading the sentence aloud. The child is handed over a card on which the names of the familiar objects are written and pasted. The child is asked to translate the writing slowly into sounds and then he is asked to read faster. After some practice the child learns the correct pronunciation of the word. Then the child is asked to attach the cards with the objects lying there.
- *Teaching of numbers:* A 'long stair' is used to teaching of numbers. It consists of a set of rods varying in length from 1 to 10 decimeters. It is divided into parts painted red and blue alternately. The child learns first to arrange the rods of size and then he counts the red and blue divisions and names the rods as one, two, three, etc. The signs of the numbers are cut in sand paper and the same procedure of three stages—association, recognition and recall is followed.

Discipline in Children's House

Discipline comes by an indirect route, by developing activity in spontaneous work. Every individual is expected to learn how to control himself by his own efforts and through calm, silent activity which is directed towards no external aim but is meant to keep alive that inner flame on which our life depends. Montessori writes, 'In truth, the "good" are those who move forward towards the goodness which has been built up by their own efforts.' Such discipline can never be attained by way of commands, by sermons, by any of the disciplinary methods universally known.

Directress of the 'Children's House': She moves about slowly and silently. She supervises in such a way as anyone who needs her is aware of her presence at once. Whilst those who do not need her do not notice her existence.

4.3.2 Merits and Demerits of Montessori Method

Madam Montessori's profound love and affection, keen sensitivity, artistic imagination and exceptional sympathy for children have given a new touch to the theory and principles of education. In fact, she has ushered in a new era in child education and especially of small children at the nursery stage. The chief merits of the Montessori method are as follows:

1. **Reverence for small children:** To Madam Montessori 'the child was God.' Her school was the temple and duty of the temple was the essence of childhood. She further writes, 'Today there stands forth one urgent need—the reform of methods in education and instruction, and he who struggles towards this end is struggling for the regeneration of man.' The method as suggested by Montessori gives an important place to the child.
2. **Scientific bases of the method:** The method is based upon scientific grounds. Madam Montessori was a scientist and she applied scientific principles based on experience and observation and not upon prejudices.
3. **Individual teaching:** Individualism is the key-note of the Montessori method. Her method is a reaction against collective teaching.
4. **Freedom for children:** She ranks among the topmost educators who want to give education in an atmosphere of complete freedom. In her method discipline is that of self-control and self-directed activity.
5. **Sense training:** The Montessori method aims at educating the children through sense training. It is based upon the maxim 'proceed from concrete to abstract', from 'general to abstract'.
6. **Unique method of reading and writing:** Special importance to the learning of writing has been provided in the method. She takes into consideration the muscular movements in the process of writing. Properly graded and correlated exercises for reading and writing are provided.
7. **Learning through living:** She has provided practical exercises in her school which enable children to learn good habits of cleanliness and order. The students learn the lesson of dignity of labour and self-help by attending to their needs themselves. Many practical lessons are provided.

Social Value of the Method

Though her method is individualistic in nature, yet it is full of social values. The social value of serving at the table and lunching together and cleaning plates is beyond doubt. The students perform many other activities cooperatively.

Limitations of the Montessori Method

The limitations of the montessori method are as follows:

1. **Mechanical and artificial nature of didactic apparatus:** Too much importance has been given to the didactic apparatus. The critics argue that the apparatus handcuffs both the teacher and the pupil. The pupil is expected to do different types of exercises with the help of the apparatus and the teacher also has to teach through the didactic apparatus with the result that free expression of the children is limited and so is the work of the teacher. The apparatus is unreal and unnatural.

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2. **More emphasis on biological aspects and less on psychological:** The teacher in this system takes special care in keeping records of the height, skull and limbs of each individual child. She hardly observes temperament and other emotional traits.
3. **Belief in transfer of training:** The idea of sense training in the Montessori method is based on the old theory of formal training of the senses. She feels that by training particular faculties through particular senses it will be possible to get advantage of that training in other life situations through transfer of training to the desired field. Modern psychology disapproves of this idea.
4. **Neglect of the training of imagination:** There is no place for fairy tales in the Montessori system. Fairy tales used in a proper way form part of the literary training of children and help in the development of imagination.
5. **Lack of suitable teachers:** The successful working of the Montessori system depends upon teachers who possess extensive knowledge of child psychology and acquisition of laboratory procedure. It is not possible to find such teachers in sufficient numbers.
6. **Little scope for projects and correlation:** The present tendency is to teach all subjects together in the form of projects. Learning by doing is the key-note of the present methods of teaching. In the Montessori method the children have to depend upon the mechanical apparatus.
7. **Very expensive:** It requires a lot of money to set up a school on the lines as suggested by Dr Montessori. It is very doubtful if could be spared huge sums on such schools.

4.3.3 Points of Similarity: Montessori and Froebel

The points of similarity between montessori and froebel are as follows:

1. **Recognition of the importance of nursery education:** Froebel as well as Montessori have given us a method of educating the infant. They have brought about a revolutionary change in the concept of education at the pre-school age.
2. **Education as development from within:** Both the educators regard education as the development of the inner nature of the child. They point out that the function of the educator is to draw the inner out.
3. **Congenial environment:** Both the educators stress the importance of providing a congenial environment in which the growth of inner nature of the child should take place in a suitable manner.
4. **Reverence and affection for the child:** Froebel as well as Montessori have greatly stressed that there should be an environment of love and affection for the child; his personality should be recognised and even worshipped.
5. **Stress on sense training:** Froebel as well as Madam Montessori have devised apparatus for the training of senses of the child.

Points of Contrast

Froebel's Kindergarten	Montessori Method
1. Based on Philosophical Background. The education principles of the kindergarten are based on the philosophy of Froebel who was a philosopher and who became interested in education afterwards. To understand the method one has to understand his philosophy.	1. Based on Scientific Background. The Montessori Method is the outcome of the efforts of a doctor and scientist. Therefore, it has a scientific foundation. Its principles are clear-cut.
2. Scope for Development of Imagination. For the development of imagination, Froebel recommends story telling.	2. No Scope for Fairy Tales. In the Montessori Method there is no place for fairy tales. Realities of life are given more importance.
3. More Scope for Social Development. The children are encouraged to work in groups. Same things and same subjects are taught to them together.	3. Comparatively Less Scope for Social Development. There is too much stress on the development of the individual child and less on social development.
4. Class-room Teaching. Class- room instruction forms an important part of instruction. A fixed time-table is followed.	4. Individual Learning. Montessori is individualistic out and out. There is no set time-table. Students are free to learn according to their taste.
5. Sense Training through Gifts. In the Kindergarten there is a set of gifts to be presented to the child in a set order and each child is provided with an occupation with the gift.	5. Sense Training through the Didactic Apparatus. There is the sensory apparatus for the development of senses which is entirely different from that of the kindergarten.
6. Emphasis on Play-way. The Froebelian system puts more stress on play activities. All lessons are accompanied by songs, gestures and movements.	6. Self-corrective Apparatus is provided to the child and this appartus is to be used in a specific way and it affords little opportunities for play.
7. Importance of Manual Activities. There is much scope for activities like gardening, nature study, class modelling etc. in this system.	7. Stress on Daily-life Activities. Besides manual activities, dusting, cleaning, washing, sweeping etc., the students learn how to take care of themselves.
8. The Teacher as Leader. The teacher is like a gardener who looks after the young human plant. He is a leader who guides their songs and movements.	8. The Teacher as a Directress. The function of the directress is to provide apparatus and work like a spectator and watch from a distance.
9. Easily Applicable. This method can be made use of even without the apparatus. We do not require any elaborate material to equip a school to run on kindergarten lines.	9. Apparatus is Indispensable. An elaborate and costly apparatus is required to set up a school on Montessori lines. No school can be set up without the apparatus.
10. Not a Detailed System. It lacks a suitable system for the teaching of three R's.	10. Detailed System. A detailed system of teaching the three R's, i.e., reading, writing and arithemetic has been decided.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

7. Define Montessori's doctrine of freedom and liberty.
8. State one function of a teacher as given by Montessori.
9. What are the three exercises that are provided in the children's school?
10. State one point of similarity between Froebel and Montessori with reference to the method of education.

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4.4 SUMMARY

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- John Dewey was born in 1859.
- Dewey's philosophy and programme has been variously termed as 'Experimentalism', 'Functionalism', 'Instrumentalism', 'Operationalism', 'Progressivism', 'Practicalism' and above all 'Pragmatism'. All these indicate his emphasis on the dynamic and ever changing character of life.
- Dewey does not believe in the existence of any absolute values or ultimate moral principles which are at once 'unassailable and un-improvable'.
- 'Utility' was the touchstone of every value. Pragmatism teaches that which is useful, what works in a practical situation is true; what does not work is false.
- Experimental method is the foe of every belief that permits habits and wants to dominate invention and discovery, and readymade system to override verifiable fact. Constant revision is the work of experimental inquiry.
- Experimental method is fatal to dogmatism because it shows that all ideas, conceptions, theories, however extensive and self-consistent and aesthetically attractive they maybe, are to be entertained provisionally until they have been tested by acting upon them.
- Dewey thinks that education is a continuous process of adjustment, having as its aim at every stage an added capacity of growth.
- According to Dewey, the educative process has two sides—one psychological and the other sociological, and neither can be subordinated to the other or neglected without evil results following.
- Dewey believes that all education proceeds by the participation of the individual in the social consciousness of the race.
- According to Dewey there cannot be two sets of ethical principles, one for life in the school, and the other for life outside the school.
- The school is fundamentally an institution erected by society to do a certain specific work, to exercise a certain specific function in maintaining the life and advancing the welfare of society.
- Dewey's philosophy grew out of his experiments to establish an ideal school—the University Laboratory School, founded in 1896.
- With an increase in a diversified school population, Dewey advocates that broader curricular programmes are needed and emphasis should be placed on the total development of the person as being equally important as the intellectual and the academic.

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- Democracy postulates full freedom of enquiry into social and political problems and solving them. Likewise the schools should promote a spirit of enquiry in educational thinking. Discussion should be freely permitted.
- Joe Park observes in *Philosophy of Education*: 'As a pragmatist, Dewey rejected the authoritarian and classical approach to education, which he thought stressed the ability to talk about things rather than the ability to do things.'
- Maria Montessori, the originator of the Montessori Method, was born in 1870 in Italy.
- For seven years from 1900 to 1907, Maria worked as a Professor of Anthropology in the University of Rome.
- Mussolini came to power in Italy and he was a Fascist dictator. He wanted to educate children for war.
- Montessori who was an ardent supporter of child's freedom, could not work under such a regime. So she was obliged to run away from there and proceeded to Holland where she founded a school.
- Like Froebel, Maria believes that education of a child is from within.
- 'If any educational act is to be efficacious, it will be only that which tends to help towards the complete unfolding of the child's individuality. The child has a body which grows and a soul which develops.'
- Montessori has shifted the emphasis from teaching to learning. She believes that self-education or auto-education is the only true education. She advocates that the child should remain undisturbed by adult interference.
- Maria replaces the word 'teacher' by the word "directress" as she thinks that the function of the teacher is to direct and not to teach. Her motto should be, 'I must diminish to let you grow.'
- 'Children's House' is the name given to a school by Dr Montessori. This house provides all the requirements of a good 'family house'.
- There are three types of exercises that are provided in the children's school. These are as follows:
  (a) Exercise in practical life
  (b) Sense training exercise
  (c) Didactic exercise for teaching language and arithmetic
- Madam Montessori is of the opinion that muscular skill in children is very easily developed and, therefore, the teaching of writing should precede the teaching of reading.
- Madam Montessori's profound love and affection, keen sensitivity, artistic imagination and exceptional sympathy for children have given a new touch to the theory and principles of education.

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4.5 KEY TERMS

- **Experimentalism:** It is the philosophical belief that the way to truth is through experiments and empiricism.
- **Functionalism:** It is the theory that all aspects of a society serve a function and are necessary for the survival of that society.
- **Instrumentalism:** It is a pragmatic philosophical approach which regards an activity (such as science, law, or education) chiefly as an instrument or tool for some practical purpose, rather than in more absolute or ideal terms.
- **Operationalism:** It is a form of positivism which defines scientific concepts in terms of the operations used to determine or prove them.
- **Anthropology:** It is the study of various aspects of humans within past and present societies.
- **Fascism:** It refers to an authoritarian and nationalistic right-wing system of government and social organization.
- **Sensory education:** It refers to the belief that education of the senses is the basis of intellectual development. It helps develop a child's intellect.

4.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Five values stressed by Dewey are as follows:
   (a) Aesthetic taste or capacity
   (b) Conscientiousness
   (c) Efficiency
   (d) Scientific spirit
   (e) Sociability and social efficiency
2. One merit of the Experimental methods is that it is the foe of every belief that permits habits and wants to dominate invention and discovery, and readymade system to override verifiable fact. Constant revision is the work of experimental inquiry.
3. According to Dewey, the educative process has two sides—one psychological and the other sociological, and neither can be subordinated to the other or neglected without evil results following.
4. The first function of the school is to provide a simplified environment. It should select the features which are fairly fundamental and capable of being responded to by the young.
5. The occupations that Dewey introduced in the school are namely, shop work with wood and tools, cooking work and work with textiles (sewing and weaving).

6. Curriculum should reflect the social life and social activities. It should have utility.
7. Montessori's doctrine of freedom or liberty is the outcome of the concept of education as development. Her belief is that there should be no hindrance or interference in the way of a child's growth and development.
8. Maria Montessori replaced the word 'teacher' by the word 'directress' and believed that the primary duty of the person in authority is to direct and not to teach. She insisted that the directress should have an extensive knowledge of psychology and laboratory technique.
9. There are three types of exercises that are provided in the children's school; these are exercise in practical life, sense training exercise and didactic exercise for teaching language and arithmetic.
10. Froebel as well as Montessori have given us a method of educating the infant. They have brought about a revolutionary change in the concept of education at the pre-school age.

4.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short on John Dewey's experience and experimental method.
2. State the functions of the school as asserted by Dewey.
3. Write a brief note on the Laboratory School.
4. Briefly list the limitations of Dewey's philosophy.
5. Write a note on Montessori's 'Children's House'.
6. Write a note on the didactic apparatus for teaching language and arithmetic.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Give a detailed explanation of Dewey's views on various aspects of education.
2. What is the importance of school curriculum? State the main characteristics and principles of the curriculum.
3. In what ways has John Dewey contributed to educational thought and practice? Evaluate.
4. Explain the educational principles underlying Madam Maria Montessori's philosophy.
5. Who is a teacher? What are the functions of a teacher as given by Montessori?
6. What is the Montessori Method? Discuss its merits and demerits.
7. List and explain the points of similarity and contrast between August Froebel and Maria Montessori.

4.8 FURTHER READING

NOTES

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