CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

Education is the basis of human life. Development and progress of man depends on education. Education also constructs personality and beautifies it. A child conducts himself like an animal at the time of birth; at that time, he acts as inspired by his instincts; education guides these instincts of his in order to provide maturity; it makes his behaviour, his conduct and his activities proper and socially useful. Education motivates, encourages and guides man from falsehood to truth, from dark to illumination, from ignorance to knowledge and from mortality to immortality. It is by education that man has reached this zenith of civilization.

Education is an eternal thirst and desire, which is not related with the Art of Living alone, rather it is connected with the ideals of life. Education awakens the social consciousness; it protects the social heritage and transfers it to the next generation and develops it. Education brings out man from his limited knowledge in order to enable him so that he can adopt a healthy attitude towards the society, nation and the whole world and so that he is able to perform his duty well.
1.1 MEANING OF EDUCATION

Education is a comprehensive term. Its implications are rich and varied. It deals with ever growing man in the ever growing society. Different philosophers, politicians, statesman and educationists have defined education differently, according to their own point of view and circumstances.

Etymologically, the term education has been explained in a number of ways. It is also said to have been derived from the Latin word *Educare* which means to bring up. The aim of education is to bring up or to nurse.

It might also have been derived from the Latin Word *Educere*, which means to lead out or to draw out. Education draws out the best in the man. Thus education is the development of individual’s talents. It is to draw out inner knowledge, virtues and powers of the child.

1.2 EDUCATION IN INDIAN AND WESTERN CONTEXT - OLD AND MODERN EDUCATION

INDIAN CONCEPT OF EDUCATION

(a) OLD CONCEPT : According to *Rig-Veda*, education is something which makes a man self-reliant and selfless. The Upnishads explain that
education is that whose end product is salvation. Kauttlya is of the view, education means training for the country and love for the nation. Shankracharya considers education as the realisation of the self.

**(b) MODERN CONCEPT :** In the words of Vivekananda, “Education is the manifestation of divine perfection already existing in man.” Tagore held the view “Education means enabling the mind to find out the ultimate truth which emancipates us from the bondage of dust and gives the wealth, not of things but of inner light, not of power but of love, making this truth its own and giving expression to it.” Mahatma Gandhi has said, “By education I mean all round drawing out of the best in child and man, body, mind and spirit.”

The Indian concept of education is well summarized by the **Secondary Education Commission**:

Education according to Indian tradition is not merely a mean to earning a thing, nor is it only a nursery of thought or a school for citizenship. It is initiation into the life of spirit, a training of human souls in the pursuit of truth and the practice of virtue. It is a second birth dvitiyam janma i.e. education for liberation.
WESTERN CONCEPT OF EDUCATION

(a) OLD CONCEPT: Plato was of the view, “Education is the capacity to feel pleasure and pain at the right moment. It develops in the body and the soul of the pupil all the beauty and all the perfection, which he is capable of.” Aristotle held the view, “Education is the creation of a sound mind in a sound body. It develops man’s faculty, especially his mind, so that he may be able to enjoy the contemplation of supreme truth, goodness and beauty in which perfect happiness essentially lies.”

(b) MODERN CONCEPT: Pestalozzi has said, “Education is a natural, harmonious and progressive development of man’s innate powers.” Froebel was of the view “Education is unfoldment of what is already enfolded in the germ. It is the process through which child makes his internal external.”

T.P. Nunn has laid down: “Education is the complete development of the individuality of the child so that he can make an original contribution to human life according to the best of his capacity.”

Ross has said, “The aim of education is the development of valuable personality and spiritual individuality.” John Dewey holds the
view, “Education is the process of living through a common reconstruction of experiences. It is the development of all those capacities in the individual which will enable him to control his environment and fulfill his possibilities.”

1.3 SYNTHESIS OF INDIAN AND WESTERN EDUCATION

It is clear from the above discussion of the meaning of education in West and India, ancient and modern that it may be synthesized since all these accept some common characteristics of education. The following points concerning the meaning of education emerge from a review of the meaning of education in the west and in India:

1. **A life long process**: Education according to most of the philosophers continues from birth to death. As Madam Paul Richard pointed out, the education of man, “should begin at his very birth and it is to continue the whole land of his life.”

2. **Unfolding**: Education is a gradual unfolding. In his allegory of the cave Plato observes that “the power and capacity of learning exists in the soul already, and just as the eye was unable to turn from darkness to light, without the whole body, so too, the instrument of knowledge can only, by the movement of the whole
soul, be turned from the world or becoming into that of being and learn by degrees to endure the sight of being and of the brightest and best of being or in other words of the good.” It is in the same sense that Sri Aurobindo, “The Chief aim of education should be to help the growing soul to draw out that in itself which is best and make it perfect for a noble use.”

3. **Based on child psychology**: Western thinkers anonymously agreed that true education should be based on child psychology. This again has been accepted by Indian philosophers of education. According to Sri Aurobindo, “Nothing can be taught to the mind which is not already concealed as potential knowledge in the unfolding soul of the creature.” Educational theory must be based on sound psychology. As Sri Aurobindo points out, “The true basis of education is the study of the human mind, infant, adolescent and adult.”

4. **Individual as well as social**: True education is individual as well as social. Plato brought out a scheme of education according to each individual’s capacities to serve the society. Philosophers in the west have everywhere laid emphasis upon individual as well as social aims of education. Contemporary Indian philosophers also
exhibit this tendency. **M.K. Gandhi** said, “I value individual freedom, but you must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to his present status by learning to adjust his individuality to the requirements of social progress.”

5. **Total development**: Thus education by general agreement is a total development, physical, mental and spiritual, individual as well as social. This total development is the meaning of self realisation. This synthesis of the different aspects of man’s development is characteristics of not only idealism but also naturalism, pragmatism and realism. It is again the meaning of perfection, acclaimed as the aim of education by so many thinkers. It is also what is known as complete education. It is again the humanist meaning of education since man is a complex being having several aspects of his personality all of which require full development. According to **Sri Aurobindo**, education should help the individual to grow, “into a fullness of physical and vital energy and utmost breadth, depth and height of his emotional, his intellectual and his spiritual being.” The total development lays equal emphasis upon physical as well as spiritual growth. Without physical culture mental training has been considered as one sided. In the words of **Aldous Huxley**, “where
the body is maladjusted and under strain, the mind’s relations, sensory, emotional, intellectual, conative, with external reality are likely to be unsatisfactory.” Education aims at an all round and total perfection of the individual and society. Hence physical culture should form an important part of the education process. As Sri Aurobindo puts it, “If seeking is for a total perfection of the being, the physical part of it cannot be left aside, for the body is the material basis, the body is the instrument which we have to use.” Similar quotations may be hunted from other philosophers of education in West and East. The total development involves character development, development of social virtues and individual skills. It includes all the various aims of education. It involves all the functions of education in human life such as development of natural abilities, character building, personality integration, preparation for adult life, control and sublimation of basic instinct, creation of useful citizens, development of a sense of community, progress of culture and civilization, social welfare, use of leisure and synthesis of national as well as international consciousness.
1.4 EDUCATION SYSTEM FROM ANCIENT PERIOD TO MODERN PERIOD

ANCESTOR EDUCATION SYSTEM

Vedic Period:

The present history of India begins from the Vedic Age. The period between Vaivaswat Manu and Mahabharat may be called the ‘Vedic Age’ because some ‘mantras’ were perceived during the time of Mahabharat. The civilization of Vedic Age continued developing during the Ramayana and Mahabharata periods.

Realization of Brahma and self-knowledge by free thinking was the aim of ancient Indian education. There was close relationship between the teacher and the pupil. The pupil lived as a family member of the teacher. The Guru occupied a very high place in ancient education. The later half of ancient Indian education is called the period of Buddhist education.

Buddhist Period:

Buddhas gave no regard to the light of ‘Vedas’. They also rejected the idea of caste-system. Great importance is attached to
knowledge in Buddhist education: as salvation is possible only through knowledge. Therefore, people showed an increasing interest in studying and teaching at that time. Memorisation and meditation were the main methods of teaching.

Education was free in Vedic and Buddhistic periods. Life was very easy, so there was no need of much money. If we want to understand the ancient educational system on the basis of modern system of education, we would say that there was the organization of the education of all stages – Primary, secondary and higher. ‘Ashramas’ were, in a way, primary schools and ‘Charanas’ may be called secondary schools. There were ‘Parishads’ for higher education which was like central universities.

**Muslim Period:**

We find the description of two kinds of schools in the Muslim period, the one being 'Muslim education system' and the other 'Hindu education system'. There were mainly Maqtabs and Madarsas in muslim education system. The Hindu children studied in Pathshalas. Education of different subjects like Sanskrit, Language, Poetry, Drama, Purana, History, Mathematics, Astronomy and Ayurveda was skillfully
imparted to the children by efficient teachers. Thus, Hindus presented the tradition of their ancient education, even though they were not aided by the government.

**British Period :**

When English people dominated over India, they did not pay any attention towards Indian education. During the regime of the company no attention was paid towards education. The pathshalas and Maqtabs gradually come to an end due to the shortage of money. If English government had made an attempt to develop the traditional system of education by giving it proper help, its condition would not have been so bad as is today. The medium of education in this period was English and the study of all subjects of knowledge and Science was started.

The British system of education benefited the Indians indirectly. It was due to the introduction of English language as medium of instruction and teaching of English literature as a subject that the scientific and industrial development and the social and political philosophy of west became familiar to Indians. Indian mind was freed from the slavery of old world ideas and laid the foundation of a renaissance in modern Indian life. India owes the scientific and critical
study of her ancient culture to European scholars. It was due to some western linguistic and literary scholars that the development of Indian Modern Languages was possible. The contribution of Sir George Grierson's Linguistic survey of India can never be forgotten. It is true that the first incentives to the study of modern Indian language came from European scholars.

The same may be said about Indian Art. In the rediscovery of Indian painting, architecture or sculpture, the pioneer work was almost done by European scholars who found our ancient treasure. It was the contact with the West which was responsible for the awakening of several humanistic trends in modern Indian life. The sympathy for the downtrodden, the movement against untouchability, the emancipation of the modern Indian women, the spirit of social service which are seen in every walk of life and more clearly in education - all these movements owe a debt of gratitude to western influence that came in the wake of the British Administration. Finally we owe to the British our acquaintance with the modern democratic institutions of Europe, the Western system of law and medicine, the auxiliary tools of popular education such as press, the cinema, the radio, the television, the
computer, the library, the museum etc. Thus we see the contribution of British people in our modern day to day life is no less important.

Pythagoras is said to be the inventor of the word philosophy. Philosophy then occurred in the context of travelling for the sake of theory. Pythagoras was a recipient as well as transmitter of Indian wisdom. Herodotus, Plato and Aristotle etc. recognize the Greek debt to India. Bertrand Russell was also one of them who affected much Indian education system and showed a path of progress to our country.

**Bertrand Russell** has been a bright star in the education world who created a revolution in the field of education by his teaching thought and contemplation. He was a man of uncommon talent, his personality was multidimensional. He was a British philosopher, lecturer, politician, mathematician, political scientist, messenger of world peace and disarmament and great educationist, all woven into one. He supported human welfare. He took interest in the basic problems of man and tried to serve man by presenting a happy solution of those problems. The educational theories that he laid down on the basis of his personal experiences are certainly his great contribution to the history of education.