Education: Formal, Informal & Non-formal

Meaning & Types of Education:

Education is a gradual process which brings positive changes in human life and behavior.

We can also define education as “a process of acquiring knowledge through study or imparting the knowledge by way of instructions or some other practical procedure”. Education brings a natural and lasting change in an individual’s reasoning and ability to achieve the targeted goal. It facilitates us to investigate our own considerations and thoughts and makes it ready to express it in various shapes. Education is the main thing that encourages us to distinguish between right and wrong because in the absence of education, we can’t do what we need or we can’t achieve our goal.

Straightforwardly, we can say, “education is the passage to progress”. It is additionally the way to our fate as achievements can only be accomplished when individuals have information, aptitudes, and frame of mind. In this way, education resembles a medium through which we can associate with various individuals and offer our thoughts.

To tackle issues and do inventiveness we first need to gain proficiency with some essential abilities. We require learning and abilities to wind up increasingly imaginative. So education is fundamentally learning of abilities and ideas that can make us increasingly innovative and issue solver. Education is to pick up the capacity to develop and take care of issues in order to achieve their lawful motives.

**Types of Education**

Education also means helping people to learn how to do things and encouraging them to think about what they learn. It is also important for educators to teach ways to find and use information. Through education, the knowledge of society, country, and of the world is passed on from generation to generation.

In democracies, through education, children and adults are supposed to learn how to be active and effective citizens.

More specific, education helps and guide individuals to transform from one class to another. Empowered individuals, societies, countries by education are taking an edge over individuals stand on the bottom pyramid of growth.

**Meaning & Nature of Education**

Education goes beyond what takes places within the four walls of the classroom. A child gets the education from his experiences outside the school as well as from those within on the basis of these factors. There are three main types of education, namely, Formal, Informal and Non-formal. Each of these types is discussed below.

Formal Education

Formal education or formal learning usually takes place in the premises of the school, where a person may learn basic, academic, or trade skills. Small children often attend a nursery or kindergarten but often formal education begins in elementary school and continues with secondary school.

Post-secondary education (or higher education) is usually at a college or university which may grant an academic degree. It is associated with a specific or stage and is provided under a certain set of rules and regulations.

The formal education is given by specially qualified teachers they are supposed to be efficient in the art of instruction. It also observes strict discipline. The student and the teacher both are aware of the facts and engage themselves in the process of education.

**Examples of Formal Education**

Learning in a classroom

School grading/certification, college, and university degrees

Planned education of different subjects having a proper syllabus acquired by attending the institution.

Characteristics of formal education

Formal education is structured hierarchically.

It is planned and deliberate.

Scheduled fees are paid regularly.

It has a chronological grading system.

It has a syllabus and subject-oriented. The syllabus has to be covered within a specific time period.

The child is taught by the teachers

**Advantages of Formal education:**

An organized educational model and up to date course contents.

Students acquire knowledge from trained and professional teachers.

Structured and systematic learning process.

Intermediate and final assessments are ensured to advance students to the next learning phase.

Institutions are managerially and physically organized.

Leads to a formally recognized certificate.

Easy access to jobs.

**Disadvantages of Formal education:**

Sometimes, brilliant students are bored due to the long wait for the expiry of the academic session to promote to the next stage

Chance of bad habits’ adoption may be alarming due to the presence of both good and bad students in the classroom

Wastage of time as some lazy students may fail to learn properly in spite of motivation by the professional trainers.

Some unprofessional and non-standard education system may cause the wastage of time and money of the students which leads to the disappointment from formal education and argue them to go for non-formal education.

Costly and rigid education as compare to other forms of learning

Informal Education

Informal education may be a parent teaching a child how to prepare a meal or ride a bicycle.

People can also get an informal education by reading many books from a library or educational websites.

Informal education is when you are not studying in a school and do not use any particular learning method. In this type of education, conscious efforts are not involved. It is neither pre-planned nor deliberate. It may be learned at some marketplace, hotel or at home.

Unlike formal education, informal education is not imparted by an institution such as school or college. Informal education is not given according to any fixed timetable. There is no set curriculum required. Informal education consists of experiences and actually living in the family or community.

**Examples of Informal Education**

Teaching the child some basics such as numeric characters.

Someone learning his/her mother tongue

A spontaneous type of learning, “if a person standing in a bank learns about opening and maintaining the account at the bank from someone.”

Characteristics of Informal Education

It is independent of boundary walls.

It has no definite syllabus.

It is not pre-planned and has no timetable.

No fees are required as we get informal education through daily experience and by learning new things.

It is a lifelong process in a natural way.

The certificates/degrees are not involved and one has no stress for learning the new things.

You can get from any source such as media, life experiences, friends, family etc.

**Advantages of Informal Education**

More naturally learning process as you can learn at anywhere and at any time from your daily experience.

It involves activities like individual and personal research on a topic of interest for themselves by utilizing books, libraries, social media, internet or getting assistance from informal trainers.

Utilizes a variety of techniques.

No specific time span.

Less costly and time-efficient learning process.

No need to hire experts as most of the professionals may be willing to share their precious knowledge with students/public through social media and the internet.

Learners can be picked up the requisite information from books, TV, radio or conversations with their friends/family members.

**Disadvantages of Informal Education**

Information acquired from the internet, social media, TV, radio or conversations with friends/family members may lead to the disinformation.

Utilized techniques may not be appropriate.

No proper schedule/time span.

Unpredictable results which simply the wastage of time.

Lack of confidence in the learner.

Absence of discipline, attitude and good habits.

Read also: Importance of education: comprehensive article

Non-formal Education

Non-formal education includes adult basic education, adult literacy education or school equivalency preparation.

In nonformal education, someone (who is not in school) can learn literacy, other basic skills or job skills. Home education, individualized instruction (such as programmed learning), distance learning and computer-assisted instruction are other possibilities. Non-formal education is imparted consciously and deliberately and systematically implemented. It should be organized for a homogeneous group. Non-formal, education should be programmed to serve the needs of the identified group. This will necessitate flexibility in the design of the curriculum and the scheme of evaluation.

**Examples of Non-formal Education**

Boy Scouts and Girls Guides develop some sports program such as swimming comes under nonformal education.

Fitness programs.

Community-based adult education courses.

Free courses for adult education developed by some organization.

Characteristics of Non-formal Education

The nonformal education is planned and takes place apart from the school system.

The timetable and syllabus can be adjustable.

Unlike theoretical formal education, it is practical and vocational education.

Nonformal education has no age limit.

Fees or certificates may or may not be necessary.

It may be full time or part-time learning and one can earn and learn together.

It involves learning of professional skills.

**Advantages of Non-formal Education**

Practiced and vocational training.

Naturally growing minds that do not wait for the system to amend.

Literacy with skillfulness growth in which self-learning is appreciated.

Flexibility in age, curriculum and time.

Open-ended educational system in which both the public and private sector are involved in the process.

No need to conduct regular exams.

Diploma, certificates, and award are not essential to be awarded.

**Disadvantages of Non-formal Education**

Attendance of participants is unsteady.

Sometimes, it’s just wastage of time as there is no need to conduct the exam on regular basis and no degree/diploma is awarded at the end of the training session.

Basic reading and writing skills are crucial to learn.

No professional and trained teachers.

Students may not enjoy full confidence as the regular students enjoy.

Some institutes provide fake certification through online courses just for the sake of earning.

Analysis of Formal, Informal & Non-formal Education