

NATURALISM AND EDUCATION

Naturalism is a school of thought which considers nature to be the sole truth and reality. It does not recognize the existence of soul or God. It recognizes only nature or the physical world and wants to come as close to nature as possible. According to Naturalists, the material and the physical world is governed by certain laws, and man who is the creator of the material world, must submit to it. There is nothing behind and beyond nature. Natural world is the real world. Nature is complete in itself and there seems to be no need to have insight or intuition to understand nature.

Chief Exponents of Naturalism: Naturalism is the oldest philosophy in the Western world. Its chief exponents are:

- (i) Democritus (460-370 B.C)
- (ii) Epicurus (341-270 B.C)
- (iii) Lucretius (96-55 B.C)
- (iv) Comenius J.A. (1569-1670 A.D)
- (v) Bacon (1562-1626 A.D)
- (vi) Rousseau (1712-1788 AD)
- (vii) Herbert Spencer (1820-1895 A.D)
- (viii) T.H. Huxley, James, Thomas Hobbs etc.

Meaning of Naturalism

Naturalism is one of the oldest philosophies of the world. Some of the old Greek thinkers - Democritus, Epicurus etc. may be called the early naturalists because they discovered reality within nature. Some of the famous philosophers like Thomas Hobbes, Rousseau and Herbert Spencer in modern times are also great naturalists.

The term 'naturalism' as used philosophically is best contrasted with the term 'supernaturalism' or 'other worldliness'. Naturalism takes nature to be the whole of reality. But as we see, nature is interpreted in many different ways. According to Harold H. Titus, the Dictionaries of philosophy give many uses of the term 'nature' in philosophical discussions. There are realistic naturalists who look to mathematics and physics for their orientation. Then there are poetic naturalists like George Santayana. Then there are humanistic naturalists who stress social studies and welfare of man.

Philosophical Presuppositions

1. Metaphysics: In metaphysics, the ultimate reality is nature and nature is material.
2. Epistemology: In epistemology, the naturalists are empiricists. They believe that knowledge is acquired through sense organs and with the help of the brain.
3. Axiology: The naturalists believe in living according to nature as the best type of life. 'Follow Nature' is their slogan. They are pluralists since nature has made all persons different.

Definitions

Some scholars have given the following definitions of naturalism-

1. Thomas and Lang: "Naturalism is opposed to Idealism. It subordinates mind to matter and holds that ultimate reality is physical not spiritual."
2. James: "Naturalism is the doctrine which separate nature from God, subordinate spirit to matter and sets up unchangeable laws of nature as supreme."
3. Joyce: "Naturalism is a system whose salient characteristic is the exclusion of whatever is spiritual or indeed whatever is transcendental of experience from our philosophy of nature and man."
4. Hocking: "Naturalism is metaphysics which considers nature as the whole reality. It excludes what is super natural or other world."
5. Rusk: "Naturalism is a philosophical position adopted by those who approach philosophy from purely scientific point of view."
6. R.B. Perry: "Naturalism is not science but an assertion about science. More specifically it is the assertion that scientific knowledge is final, leaving no room for extra scientific or philosophical

knowledge." Hence, naturalism is a philosophy which recognizes the truth and reality of nature. It is near to science and does not recognize anything beyond experience. It is just opposite to Idealism.

Main Features/Characteristics of Naturalistic Philosophy

1. Material world is the real world.
2. Mind is subordinate to matter.
3. Nature alone is the source of all knowledge.
4. The laws of nature are unchangeable. They explain all happenings and events in the world.
5. Senses are the gateway of knowledge.
6. Values are created by in terms of specific needs.
7. All real values exists in nature-in living close to nature.
8. Study of physical sciences is necessary in order to understand ultimate reality.
9. There is no truth beyond experience.
10. Man creates societies only to meet some of his needs.

Chief Assertions of Naturalism

1. Nature is the Ultimate Reality: One of the main concerns of every school of philosophy is regarding the nature of reality. Naturalism regards nature as the ultimate reality. This means that Nature is propelled by her own laws and consequently determined by them. For the naturalists, reality and nature are identical. In the words of Hocking:

"Naturalism denies existence of anything beyond nature, behind nature, other man nature, such as the supernatural or other-worldly."

2. Material World is the Real World: All things have originated from matter and all are ultimately to be reduced to that.

3. No distinction between Mind and Body: The Naturalists do not distinguish between mind and body. Idealists regard the mind as spiritual and the body as just the matter which decays. But for the naturalists, man is matter and his mind is the result of brain-function.

4. Scientific Knowledge: "What knowledge is of most worth?"- this is one fundamental question which has been raised very often. The naturalists regard the scientific knowledge as of highest value and of utmost worth. The scientific knowledge must be in the context of living.

5. Inductive Method: The naturalists advocate the inductive method of acquiring knowledge. It is the method of science. Naturalists believe that knowledge gained primarily through observation is of the greatest value.

6. Values are resident in Nature: Naturalists have no belief in spiritual values. For them, values are resident in nature. To realise the values which must govern life, one has to live in harmony with nature. Values are subjective and relative. Values are created in terms of specific needs and purposes which are the outcomes of the conditions of life.

7. Man an offspring of Nature: The naturalists regard man as an offspring of nature and not a segment of society. For them man is a natural animal and not a social animal as pragmatists believe.

8. Senses are the gateways of Knowledge: While Idealists believe that mind is the only source of knowledge, the Naturalists say that all knowledge is comprehensible through senses.

9. Unchangeable laws of Nature: Laws of nature are unchangeable and the whole universe is governed by them.

10. Heredity and Environment: Both influence the personality of man, according to Naturalists. Environment is of two types-Physical and Psychological. It is psychological environment that is more useful to that man must adjust.

11. Mental Activity: Experience, thinking, reasoning, imagination are all higher mental process or activities and these are there because of the functions of brain.

Schools of Naturalism

On account of its implications, there are three schools of naturalism:

1. Physical Naturalism 2. Mechanical Naturalism 3. Biological Naturalism

1. Physical Naturalism: This form of naturalism concentrates its hold on external nature. The laws of physical nature govern the laws of human life. Physical Naturalism lays more stress on the external material phenomena than the conscious human beings. Rousseau also contends that cities are the graves of the human species. He also says that everything is good when it comes from the hands of the Author of Nature. It degenerates in society. Education must be in conformity with the impulses and tendencies of individuals. For this, experiences are the better products if supported by natural laws-internal as well as external. Reality is visualised as physical substance. The external Nature has complete hold on the life of human beings.

2. Mechanical Naturalism: Mechanical naturalism regards man as a machine. This belief further gives birth to behaviouristic psychology. Mind as well as man is matter. He is mere machine devoid of spiritual soul. This machine is run by time guiding principles and these principles are natural. Nature pulls this machine according to her laws. Science is the only dependable method of knowledge.

3. Biological Naturalism: This form is based on the notion of evolution, seeking the explanation of man in terms of his racial past. It was Laymark and then Darwin who believed in the survival of the fittest. According to them, life is dynamic, ever changing and ever developing and needs constant adjustment on the part of the organism. Their survival depends upon this adjustment. There is a controversy over the impact of heredity and environment and a compromised formula seems to be the appropriate solution. Biological Naturalism emphasises the development of man's natural impulses, natural propensities and inborn tendencies. It has put forward the following three principles of evolution.

(1) Adaptation of Environment (ii) Struggle for Existence (iii) Survival of the Fittest.

"A teacher must have a thorough knowledge of the evolutionary process of human growth and intelligence." This form of naturalism gives topmost places to intelligence which is very helpful in harnessing the pace of human development.

Naturalism in Education (Educational Implication of Naturalism)

Naturalism as a philosophy of education was developed in the 18th century. Naturalism as a philosophy of education has exercised a great influence on the theory and practice of education. It decries all external restraint and condemns all necessary formalities. In the naturalistic system of education, there is no place for classroom, text-books, curriculum, time table, formal lessons or examinations. The teacher has to play the role of acquainting children with their natural environment. There is no external discipline. The only discipline is the discipline of natural consequences. Naturalism believes that formal education is the invention of society which is artificial. Good education can be possible only through direct contact with nature.

Principles/Hypothesis of Naturalism for Education

1. Back to Nature: Naturalism may be regarded as a revolt against the stereotyped system of education. It is reaction against artificiality of life. 'Back to Nature' is the watch-word of naturalism. The term 'nature' has two-fold sense-

(a) Physical nature

(b) Nature of the child, that is instincts, impulses, capacities, attitudes etc. with which the child is born. Education should be in strict conformity with the nature of the child.

2. Education-a Natural Necessity: The naturalist regard education as a natural necessity. For them, educational institutions are unwanted creation of man's superimposed upon nature.

3. Education-Development of the Natural Life: According to naturalistic thought, education is a process of development of the natural life. As Monroe perceives it, "Education is the process of development into an enjoyable, rational, harmoniously balanced, useful and hence natural life."

In the words of Ross, "Education is merely the fostering of natural development and true education takes place when the nature, power and inclinations of the child are allowed to develop freely with a minimum of guidance."

4. Freedom of the child: It gives prominent place to the concept of freedom in the education of the child.

5. Child centered educational process: Child occupies the central and pivotal role in the Naturalism set-up. The child's nature is in the forefront which all other things such as educator, the books, the curriculum, the school etc., are in the background. The child is naturally invested with all goodness, all that is necessary is to protect him from a defective environment.

6. Instincts as basis for education: According to naturalism, the instincts of the child should constitute the basis of all education. They should be the main instruments of education. They should be exploited fully to modify the behaviour of man.

7. Senses as gateway of knowledge: For naturalists, the senses are the gateway of knowledge. In order to make effective learning, sensory experiences should be provided to every child properly.

8. Against Autocratic and intellectual pretension: Naturalism is against the traditional pattern of schooling which according to Dr. Tagore, was colourless, lifeless and devoid of natural beauty.

9. No outside interference: Naturalism rejects all authority that interferes with the spontaneous development of children. It favours those conditions which are helpful in the natural development of the child according to the laws of his nature.

10. Child an adult in the making: Children should be treated as children and not as small adults or miniature adults. Nature would have them as children before they are men. A child is an adult in the making. Generally, Naturalism in education has the following common themes: (a) Look to nature and to human nature, as part of the natural order, for the purposes of education. (b) The key to understanding nature is through the senses.

Sensation is the basis of our knowledge to reality.

(c) Education is the dynamic side of philosophy.

(d) Because nature's processes are slow, gradual and evolutionary, our education also should be steady.

In short, naturalism is a sort of revolution against the traditional aims, ideals, curriculum and methods of teaching. It is against bookish knowledge. Child-centred education and scientific tendency in education are the two important aspects of naturalism in education.

Naturalism and Aims of Education

Aims of education as prescribed by Naturalism are given below:

1. Self-expression: It is the main aim of education. It means giving the child full opportunity to express or reveal his hidden capabilities and qualities.
2. Perfection of human Machine: Mechanical naturalism suggests that education should aim at the efficiency and perfection of human machine.
3. Preparation for struggle of life: Biological Naturalists believe that life is a struggle, in which only stronger living beings are successful. Hence, the aim of education should be to prepare the individual for the struggle of life, Darwin maintains that education must train the individual to struggle successfully for his own survival.
4. Adjustment with Environment: The Naturalists like James believe that man can be successful in life only if he has adjusted with environment. Hence it is essential that an individual should possess the ability to have adjustment with his environment. The aim of education should be the development of the ability of this adjustment in the individual.
5. Reduction and Sublimation of Instincts: McDougall points out that education aims at the transformation, synthesis and sublimation of instincts. Thus, the aim of education should be the redirection and sublimation of the instincts. This will help in the achievement of natural and social goals.
6. Development of Individuality: According to T.P. Nunn every individual possesses his distinct individuality. He has his own special traits. It is very essential to develop his individuality and special traits. The aim of education should be the development of his individuality.

7. Transmission and Development of Racial Achievements: According to Bernard Shaw the aim of education is to transmit and develop the culture, which we have derived from our fore-fathers. Ross has stated this point in the following way, "Education is the presentation, transmission and enhancement of the social gains from generation to generation."

8. To achieve synthesis between Individual and Society: Naturalists of the 19th and 20th centuries believe that education should achieve a synthesis and adjustment between individual and society, and also between man and nature. Bernard Shah believed that education must aim not only at the individual development but also at making the individual capable of stimulating and sustaining social development.

They stressed the need of child-centred education. Nature of the child must be understood for this purpose. In all, the aim of naturalistic education is to develop the child into joyous, rational, harmoniously, balanced, useful and mature child. But, the naturalist approach to the aims of education is rather narrow in that it fails to include the spiritual aspect of man's nature.

Naturalism and Curriculum

According to Naturalism, the curriculum, should possess the following elements:

1. No rigid curriculum: Naturalism does not advocate any rigid or fixed type of curriculum. Child learns best in a natural setting and nature is a grand book. Naturalistic curriculum is based on the psychology of the child and given maximum importance to the age and stage of his development. Spencer contends that only those subjects should be included in the curriculum which would observe self-preservation.

2. Child-centered curriculum: Naturalism considers a child as an important part of education. Therefore, curriculum must be child-centered so that a child may lead a happy life by fulfilling his present and future needs. They were not in favour of traditional curriculum.

3. Scientific study as the focal point of curriculum: Naturalists attach much importance to the scientific study of the nature. As a result of the significance ascribed to scientific study, they want to introduce physical and social sciences at every level of education because they believe these to be important than the humanities, languages and mathematics. According to the Naturalists, "text

books and teaching should be oriented towards science and scientific point of view with simplicity and objectivity as the watch words and with knowledge of relevant facts as the controlling aim."

4. Stress on various activities and skills: Herbert Spencer has laid emphasis on various activities and skills related the self- preservation, rearing and discipline of off-springs, social and political relations and glorifications of tastes and feelings etc.

He has recommended the following subjects to be included in the curriculum, based upon these activities and skills:

(a) Those subjects which help in self-preservation such as physical sciences, health and hygiene etc.

(b) Those subjects which are indirectly helpful in fulfilling the essential needs of life such as physics, chemistry, mathematics, biology, agricultural science etc.

(c) Those subjects which are helpful in the rearing up of children such as home science, psychology, physical science etc.

(d) Those subjects which provide education of social and political relations such as History, Economics, Sociology, Political Science etc.

(e) Those subjects which help in the proper use of leisure time such as music, sculpturing, painting, language, literature etc., should be included.

5. Broad based curriculum: Because, Naturalistic lay emphasis on harmonious development of the child's power and capacities, so education must take into its purview all types of education-physical, mental, moral etc. This type of curriculum is called broad-based curriculum. The above maintained curriculum of Herbert Spencer is of this type.

6. Related to the surroundings of the child: For the adaptability of the child to his surroundings, the curriculum must be co-related to his environment and surroundings. According to Naturalists, this is important for the survival of the child.

7. Equal emphasis on past, present and future: Granting that the present is more important than the future, the naturalists have not neglected the past altogether. Past contains many valuable

suggestions for the child. For this reason, Naturalists believe in the value of historical study. Such a study will enable them to construct a new social structure and thus plan for the future.

8. Subjects of Curriculum: On the subjects of curriculum, Naturalists have expressed theories which differ from each other to some extent.

(a) Comenius: He wanted the child to study every subject without making any selection.

(b) Locke: He refuted this notion by demonstrating that every individual cannot be made to study the same subjects, because of certain natural handicaps. Hence, much emphasis should be laid upon modifying the curriculum to suit the needs of the individual.

(c) Rousseau: He suggested a separate type of curriculum for 'Emile'. He advocated the idea of Negative Education. Let the child learn through direct experience in the lap of nature. He was against verbalism and textbooks.

(d) Herbert Spencer: Spencer arranged the curriculum with science as its nucleus and tried to synthesize other subjects to science. The arts were given a secondary place in his programme. Infact, he wanted to synthesize all subjects to the study of science arriving at a conception of liberal education arranged around science.

(e) T.H. Huxley: Huxley, another naturalist, attached greater importance to the cultural aspects of life than to the study of science. Thus, his conception of a liberal education different materially from that of Spencer.

Modern Naturalistic do not stress the importance of any one subject against that of any other, although still, more importance is attached to the sciences. Yet the arts are not neglected, but given an important part in the curriculum so that it may acquire a definitely wide base. In this way, naturalists did not advocate any rigid or fixed curriculum. But, the top priority was given to science subjects by them. The study of history provides functional experiences which enrich the present and help further growth of man. They also want to teach music and dance. No religious education is to be given, child learns best in a natural setting and nature is a grand book.

Naturalism and Methods of Teaching

The Naturalism has the greatest contribution to the field of education in the form of methods of teaching. It discards all rigid, uniform and traditional techniques of teaching.

1. Child-centered methods of teaching: Naturalism is the only philosophy which has strongly opposed traditional methods of teaching and has advocated new and psychological methods of teaching. They have laid great stress on child-centered methods of teaching. They have stated that we should oppose rote learning or learning by cramming.
2. Learning by experiences/doing: Naturalists have stated that we should leave the child in the lap of nature and encourage him to learn by his experiences.
3. Training of senses: Rousseau was of the view that our senses are the gateway of knowledge, hence we should train the senses of the child. It is the first step towards his education. He raises the slogan of 'Education through senses.'
4. Follow nature: Follow nature is the slogan for effective teaching Rousseau declared that all bonds of artificially should be broken and the development of the child goes on according to his inherent nature, needs and inborn propensities.

Based on these principles, Naturalism gave the following methods of teaching:

1. Self-experience or direct-experience: It lays stress on direct experience of things. It is based on Rousseau's contention when he says, "Give your scholar no verbal lesson, he should be taught by experience alone. Teach by doing what ever you can." This can be done by organising the school as a free natural society. School self-government can teach students their rights and duties as citizens.
2. Observation and Experiments: The other methods of teaching are observation and experiments in laboratory. Science should be taught through these techniques. Similar procedure should be followed for other subjects 'Chalk and talk' find no place in this procedure. Children should learn through their actual participation in different activities.
3. Playway Method: Naturalists advocate playway as another method of teaching. "Playway is a stable method of naturalistic education." Froebel too has recommended play as the supreme and

valuable technique of teaching. Through play, child acquires various skills. Play is an indication of the natural bents of children and is indeed, "a rehearsal for the serious life to come." Play is a nature's mode of education. Actually, playway has been considered as an outstanding and the most natural technique of teaching. Modern methods like Kindergarten method. Montessori Method etc. are based upon this concept of teaching. "It fosters the spirit of joyful, spontaneous and creative activity; its applications are endless."

4. Heuristic Method: Naturalism advocates Heuristic Method (Self-discovering method) for teaching science and mathematics. 5. Other Methods: Other methods of teaching as recommended by Naturalism are

- (a) Direct study of natural phenomena and experimentation.
- (b) Excursion and Trips.
- (c) Dalton Plan.
- (d) Various co-curricular activities programmes.
- (e) Left to himself the child is perfectly capable of evolving an educational technique which suits him best. Since, naturalism, believes in harmonious development of the child, it recommends free and natural environment for teaching.

Naturalism and Discipline

The naturalist philosophers oppose the traditional concept of discipline.

1. Maximum freedom to the child: Naturalism gives maximum freedom to the child. It is freedom that helps the child to grow in the natural way.
2. No external discipline: Naturalism believes that child is essentially good and pure. Therefore, no external discipline is desirable. This belief commands the support of all Naturalists. Adult standards must not be forced upon the child.
3. No physical punishment: They oppose the method of physical punishment. They believe that this gives rise to undesirable conflict in the child. Rousseau has written, "Children should never receive punishment. Freedom and not power is the greatest good."

4. Discipline by Natural Consequences: Rousseau advocated the principle of Discipline by Natural Consequences.' It means that nature itself gives punishment to the child for his bad or wrong actions and he learns to remain under discipline through natural consequences.

Spencer gives line of caution by saying, "A three years old child playing with an open razor cannot be allowed to learn by this discipline of the consequences, for the consequences may be too serious." John Stuart Mill is also of this view that warning is essential at all the stages.

John Dewey suggests a compromised formula and says that in some cases we cannot permit any experience and allow the child to discover the consequences for himself. Just possible, he is unable to act intelligently. The latest concept of discipline as envisaged by naturalists is shaming, ridiculing, disfavour etc. "Contrary tendencies in the child are applied to divert him from his troublesome line of behaviour."

3. Hedonistic theory of Spencer: Spencer has presented Hedonistic theory in support of his idea about discipline. It means that the child does not repeat those actions in future which cause him any trouble or discomfort and he repeats again and again those actions in future which give him comfort.

In short, Naturalists do not believe in external interference in the affairs of the child. They say that child should be allowed full freedom for the development of his personality. This natural discipline should give freedom to the child but we should also assign him some responsible duty according to his interests and attitudes so that he is always kept busy and does not think of breaking discipline at any time.

In this way, naturalists decry all kinds of external inferences, repressonistic measures and allow full freedom to the child with emphasis on respect for child's personality.

Naturalism and Teacher

Naturalism gives second position to a teacher in the educational process. He should not interfere in the natural development of the child. He must not exert his under pressure. The role of teacher in naturalism can be summed up as follows:

1. Nature as a great teacher: Naturalists consider nature as the only supreme teacher, in whose close contact the child develop normally and naturally. Naturalism do not like that children should be taught in lasses by teachers.
2. Teacher an observer: In the Naturalistic scheme of education a teacher is merely an observer of the natural development of the child. His job is to facilitate the process of child's growth as well as learning.
3. Teacher to understand the nature of the child: "Know thy pupil" is the maxim applied to this concept. The teacher must understand the child and in no way interfere with his spontaneous growth and development. According to R. Tagore, to teach the child, a teacher ought to have and realize child in himself.
4. Teacher as the stage-setter: Naturalism accepts teacher's position behind the scene of the curtain. He is the setter of the stage or stage manager. He has to supply material, provide an ideal environment and create conditions conducive to the natural development of the child. This fact has been recognised by the modern psychology and progressive education. In fact he has to adopt his material to the interests and temperament of his pupils.
5. No punishment by the teacher: Naturalism opposes the traditional concepts of education in which the teacher inflicted any and all kinds of punishment on the child, in order to make it progress in the desired direction. They believe that the period of infancy is important for child. The child should be encouraged to enjoying his infancy and childhood as much as he can, with the least possible interference from the teacher.
6. Friend and Guide: Naturalists suggest that the teacher should be a guide and a friend and that in his behaviour with the child, he should try to recollect his own childhood and infancy. He should be jolly and not grave, for undue seriousness of manner and behaviour depresses the child.
7. Teacher should know child psychology: The teacher must study the child's psychology and intervene in his activity only when some obstacle bars the way to the child's progress. He should create an favourable environment in which the child can experience the greatest amount of freedom.

8. To protect the child from disorders: The role of teacher is only to protect the child from repression, mental conflicts and mental disorder of all kind. Naturalism warn the teacher against unnecessary seriousness, the desire to assert his authority, physical punishment etc.,since all these measures have a detrimental influence upon the child's development.

9. Guidance to the students: The teacher should guide the students in their search for new things and should train them in new technique of doing things so that in their later life, they should become capable of doing things of their own. He should be capable for giving a positive and confident opinion on controversial matters. He must possess of unbounded self-confidence. In short, the role of the teacher in Naturalism is most clearly defined by Ross in the following words, "His (teacher) place, if any, is behind the scenes: he is an observer of the child's development rather than a giver of information, ideas, ideals and will power or a moulder of character."

The naturalists do not recognise any direct role of the teacher in the field of education.

Naturalism and Organisation of Education

The Naturalists give the child the first and most prominent place in the process of education. Hence they give him full freedom in matter of his education and development. They do not put any check upon his activities. They are of the view that school should be a place where there are no checks upon the activities of children. All efforts should be made to have a natural environment in the school. Text books do have a place but at higher levels of education.

Naturalism attaches less importance to the existence of formal school and text-books because it hinders the natural development of children. For Rousseau, "Everything is good as it comes from the hands of Author of Nature, but everything degenerates in the hands of man." According to him nature is the only pure, clean and ennobling influence. Human society is thoroughly corrupt. Therefore, man should be freed from the bondage of society and he should be enabled to live in the "state of nature". Human nature is essentially good and it must be given fullest opportunities for free development in a free atmosphere.

Contribution of Naturalistic Philosophy of Education

Naturalism is a very important philosophy of education. It has some important characteristics as well as limitations.

Contribution/Merits of Naturalism

1. **Child-centered education:** Naturalism has brought to the forefront the importance and recognition of the child in the educative process. Sir John Adams called this the conception of Paidocentric education. Naturalism, stresses the fact that education should be guided by the nature of the child.
2. **Humanistic attitude towards learning:** As a protest against the rigidity and formality of school instruction, Naturalism forms of education present a refreshing humanistic attitude towards learning and methods of instruction.
3. **Emphasis upon psychology:** Naturalism stressed the value of psychology for education. It led to considerable research in child psychology. A distinct branch of psychology called educational psychology emerged out of it.
4. **Emphasis upon free choice:** Naturalism emphasised that education must give the child an opportunity of making a free choice in everything that he want to study or play or even in manner in which he wants to behave. Some naturalists even objected to the very institution of school education because they feared that the school was an obstacle in their normal and independent development.
5. **Place of the teacher:** Naturalism grants to the teacher the place of the friend and the guide, not of the administrator, for he is not to interfere in the child's activities nor to make any attempt at influencing him. He is there merely to observe them not to give them any information. At times he finds children developing some bad tendencies and it becomes necessary to guide them.
6. **Teaching Methods:** According to Naturalism, methods of teaching must be inductive to make teaching effective, inspirational and attractive.

7. Concept of discipline: The concept of discipline in naturalism is very desirable. Punishment is based on the consequences of wrong deeds. Children share freedom as well as responsibility.

8. Comprehensive curriculum: Naturalists have favoured the adaptation of a multifaceted and comprehensive curriculum, which reflects, apart from the scientific, sociological and psychological tendencies, the holistic tendency in education. This approach represents a synthesis of the scientific, sociological and psychological tendencies in education. Use of modern audio-visual aids and extra-curricular activities was also stressed.

9. Natural surroundings: Naturalism in education draws our attention to the aesthetic aspect of surroundings. This also implies that schools should be located in natural surroundings.

10. New movement in Education: Naturalism gave birth to new movements in education. New schools came into being as a result of child study all over the world. These include Froebel's Kindergarten, the Montessori method, Tagore's Shanti Niketan and Neill's Summerhill schools etc.

Naturalism is based on psychological principles of education. Munroe has stated, "Naturalism has given direct impetus to the clear formation of psychological and scientific conception of education." It is its great contribution.

In all, naturalism has contributed a lot to progressive modern thought and practice of education. It has been a great force in bringing about 'renaissance' in education. Naturalism in education brought to the fore-front the importance of the recognition of the child in the process of education. All the modern methods of teaching owe their origin to Naturalism, which ushered in the psychology movements and formed the basis for child-centred education, stressing freedom, initiative and self-expression in learning.

Demerits/Limitations of Naturalism

1. Aims not clear: The main defect of Naturalism philosophy is that its aims of education are not clear. Different Naturalists have described different aims of education. But, it is essential to have definite aims of education in order to achieve success in the process of education.

2. Discipline: The principles of Naturalism regarding discipline is not logical because the punishment given by nature for wrong actions is not always based on justice. So, discipline by natural consequences as propounded by Naturalism is not proper.

3. Neglect of spiritual world: It neglects spiritual world. It neglects spiritual values. It is essential to know both the worlds for balanced development.

4. Negative education: The concept of negative education is not proper in modern world.

5. No importance to teacher: We can never ignore the role of the teacher in the process of teaching, but the philosophy of Naturalism ignores, the role of teacher. It is one of its chief defects. The teacher is the person who inculcates good qualities in the child. The child cannot learn these good qualities from nature by himself without the help of the teacher.

6. It ignores Text-books: Text books give knowledge to the child in an organised manner. They are an important source of knowledge. But the Naturalists totally ignore the importance of the text-books and expect the child to learn by self-experiences and self activities, which is not possible in every case.

7. Too much freedom: Too much freedom given to the child by Naturalism is harmful. Absolute freedom to child is a myth. It cannot exist.

8. Too much emphasis upon the present: They lay too much stress on present life. It ignore future life which is, infact, as important as the present life.

9. Negation of all human characteristics: Naturalists believe that man is nothing better than the next step after the animals. But man actually possesses many qualities which animal do not possess even in the rudimentary form. For example man is not merely conscious but also self conscious.

10. Keeping the child away from social environment: Naturalism believe in keeping the child away from social environment of every kind to be polluted. But no individual can be separated from society, because man is a social being and makes proper development by living in society. The child should be, no doubt, saved from bad society, but he should not be kept away from every kind of society.

Conclusion

It can be said that naturalists were responsible, for some of the most revolutionary ideas in all spheres of education. They vigorously opposed all traditional thinking on child psychology, educational techniques, curriculum, school administration etc. Although all their ideas are not found acceptable to day, many of the principles propounded by the Naturalists are still being applied. Modern educationists now agree that the aim of education is not to provide education but to encourage spontaneous development of the child. Naturalism in education brought to the forefront the importance of the recognition of the child in the process of education.

In the end, it may be clearly mentioned that Naturalism has contributed a lot to the modern educational thought and practices. It has given birth to progressive education. If supplemented by some other schools of thought, it can prove to be the most outstanding philosophy of education.

