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Education is a process of learning and development that equips individuals with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to lead a meaningful and productive life. It is a fundamental right for all, and it plays a crucial role in shaping the future of a nation. Education is not just about acquiring facts and figures; it is about fostering critical thinking, creativity, and a sense of responsibility. It is a journey of self-discovery and growth that empowers individuals to overcome challenges and achieve their dreams. Education is the key to unlocking the potential of every individual and building a better world for all.

'Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.' - Nelson Mandela. Education is the foundation of a strong and prosperous society. It is the engine of innovation and progress, and it is the key to eradicating poverty and inequality. Education is a lifelong process that starts from the moment we are born and continues until the end of our lives. It is a process of continuous learning and growth that allows us to adapt to a rapidly changing world. Education is the path to a brighter future, and it is the responsibility of all of us to ensure that every child has access to quality education.

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# What is Education? Types of Education in Bangladesh Perspectives

*Dr. Habibur Rahman Khan*

**Introduction:** Education is the process of learning new knowledge and ideas to apply them to one's daily life. Education is not just about learning things from books; it can also involve getting real world experiences beyond the class rooms. Education is the intellectual process of imparting knowledge, skills, values, and attitude of individuals, empowering them to navigate life successfully and contribute meaningfully to the world around them. Education is an essential part of life because it empowers people with knowledge, enables them to contribute to society, earn money, and become independent.

**Types of Education:** There are three types of education (i) Formal, (ii) Informal, and (iii) Non-formal education.

**Formal education:** Formal teaching has long been the cornerstone of education. It's the structured and organized method through which knowledge is imparted to learners, often in a class room setting. It is an organized and regulated system of education, which follows a curriculum and awards recognized academic certificates or degrees. This type of education is given in schools, colleges, official institutions, and universities either in person or through e-learning platforms.

Formal education is a key aspect in the academic development of an individual. Through pre-established content, students not only acquire a knowledge base, but also develop analytical skills, critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.

In the professional field, formal education also plays a significant role. Certificates and Degrees validate that a person has the necessary knowledge for a certain job. But, in addition, it gives professionals a theoretical basis that can be applied in real work contexts.

For many years formal education is the basis for a person's development.

**Non-formal education:** Non-formal learning has experiential learning activities that foster the development of skills and knowledge. This helps in building the confidence and abilities among the youth of today. Non-formal learning takes place outside formal learning environment but within some kind of organizational framework. It arises from the learner's conscious decision to master a particular activity, skill or area of intentional effort.

Non-formal education is all about practical learning. Knowing the characteristics of a non-formal education system will give interests. The features of non-formal education are given below:

- (i) Un-organized learning: It creates an environment where people can learn and expand their knowledge.
- (ii) Learning environment: It creates an environment where people can learn and expand knowledge.
- (iii) Practical knowledge: It gives students practical knowledge that makes it more attractive.
- (iv) Conversational: It starts with a conversation about life experiences and is a friendly discussion between the teachers and students.
- (v) Focuses on Experiences: It creates an environment where everyone will learn from each others' experiences.
- (vi) No classroom: Non-formal education can happen in any place like house, park, street, or community.
- (vii) Accessible learning: People can learn from anywhere and anything in non-formal education.
- (viii) No curriculum: There will be no formal education system and curriculum in non-formal education.
- (ix) No boundaries: In this system interstate and inter-country education become possible.
- (x) No end: Non-formal learning continues throughout our life.

**Informal education:** Informal education is a method of acquiring knowledge that is characterized by its lack of structure. It does not have clear goals or set objectives, as it is often unplanned and self-directed by the learner. This type of learning takes place through everyday experiences and situations at home or in the workplace. Main characteristics

of informal learning are: (i) Spontaneous learning—is a process of discovery and reflection when students conduct active learning engagements. Students who preoccupy themselves with their spontaneous learning bring to themselves new self-knowledge. (ii) Unstructured learning—it refers to a learning experience that is not planned and does not have an organized progression. It also known as a student-centered, self directed or open ended learning, is an educational approach that prioritizes individual student’s needs and interests. Unstructured learning makes a large contribution to the cognitive development of a child. (iii) Contextual learning is based on a constructivist theory of teaching and learning. Learning takes place when teachers are able to present information in such a way that students are able to construct meaning based their own experiences. Contextualized learning involves learners making personal connections to vocabulary words. Students could draw pictures of something related to new words they have encountered to help them remember the words.

**Education in Bangladesh** is compulsory for all citizens until the end of grade eight. In 2024, an Education Ministry Directive will abolish separate departments for Sciences, Business Education, and Humanities in the new curriculum. Students in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades will now study within a unified department.

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