

EDUCATION

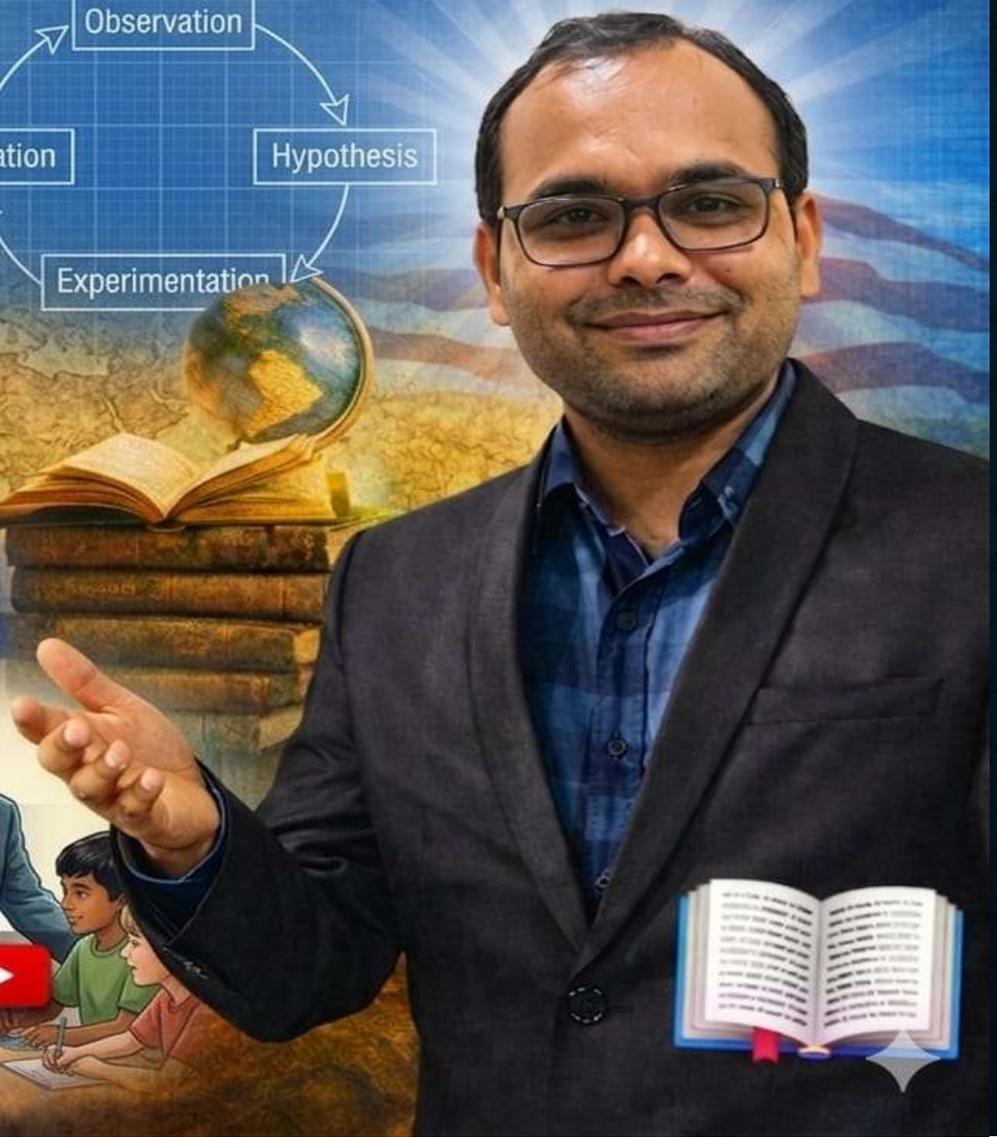
& PHILOSOPHY

PRAGMATISM

✓ *Pragmatism in Education*

✓ *Role of Pragmatism in Teaching*

Let's Study Together 



INTRODUCTION

- • Origin: Emerged in 19th-century America due to migrants facing new challenges after the Industrial Revolution.
- • Old ideals failed to solve problems → led to learning by doing and judging events by consequences.
- • Pragmatism is considered the gift of American philosophy, deeply influencing 20th & 21st-century education.
- • Focus: Practical solutions, usefulness, and adaptability to changing life conditions.

PROTAGONISTS OF PRAGMATISM

- • Charles S. Peirce – introduced the term in 1878.
- • William James – emphasized pragmatism as a theory of truth and reality.
- • Schiller, **John Dewey**, Margaret Mead, W.H. Kilpatrick – further developed and applied pragmatism in education and philosophy.

MEANING OF PRAGMATISM

- • Derived from Greek pragma = "to do, act, accomplish".
- • Emphasizes action over thought; practice comes first, theory later.
- • Everything tested by experience and utility.
- • Known as:
 - • Practical philosophy
 - • Utilitarian philosophy
 - • Experimental philosophy
 - • Instrumentalism / Consequentialism
- • Archie J. Bahm: called it "down to earth philosophy" and "cash value philosophy"

FORMS OF PRAGMATISM

- 1. Humanistic Pragmatism
 - ❖ Concerned with **human welfare, needs, aspirations, and satisfaction.**
 - ❖ Truth = whatever fulfills purpose, satisfies desire, and develops life.
 - ❖ Emphasis: Activities that benefit humanity are considered true.

- 2. Experimental Pragmatism
 - Truth = what can be experimentally verified.
 - Motto: “Whatever works is true.”
 - Focuses on personal experiences rather than social ones.

FORMS OF PRAGMATISM....

3. Nominalistic Pragmatism

- • Rooted in medieval European nominalism: “Universe is only a name.”
- • Results of experiments are particular and concrete.
- • Example: Different names for water (English: water, Hindi: jal, Tamil: thannir, Urdu: paani) → meaning remains the same.
- • Emphasis on material form of ideas and naming.

4. Biological Pragmatism

- Values the **capacity of humans to adapt and change environment.**
- Knowledge = instrument for creating a better environment.
- Known as **Instrumentalism.**
- Chief exponent: **John Dewey.**

CORE PRINCIPLES OF PRAGMATISM

- 1. Revolt against traditionalism
 - • Rejects rigid philosophies like idealism and naturalism.
 - • Truth = what works in practical situations.
- 2. Truth changes
 - • Truth is not absolute; it varies with time, place, person, and circumstances.
 - • John Dewey: "Truth is made just as health, wealth and strength are made in the course of experience."
- 3. No ultimate values
 - • Values (truth, goodness, beauty) are man-made, unstable, and changing.
 - • Dewey: "Values are as unstable as the forms of clouds."
- 4. Thought is subordinate to action
 - • Practice comes first, theory afterwards.
 - • Ideas should emerge from activities.
- 5. Faith in democracy
 - • Education, life, and democracy are interconnected.
 - • Emphasizes social skills, sharing experiences, and cooperation.
- 6. Faith in flexibility
 - • Nothing is fixed; everything evolves.
 - • Change brings progress and development.
- 7. Faith in present and future
 - • Focus on solving current and future problems, not the past.
- 8. Faith in pluralism
 - • Accepts multiple truths and perspectives.
 - • Rusk: Pragmatism admits several principles instead of one absolute explanation.
- 9. Faith in experimentation
 - • Life = laboratory; truth tested by experience and experiments.
 - • William James: "The cash value of truth is in experimental terms."
- 10. Faith in manpower
 - • Man has the power to create environments beneficial for himself and society.

CORE PRINCIPLES OF PRAGMATISM.....

- 11. Faith in experience
 - • Human experience is the reliable test of truth and values.
- 12. Principle of utility
 - • Truth = what is useful and satisfying.
 - • William James: "It is true because it is useful."
- 13. Reality still in the making
 - • Reality is not complete, but continuously evolving.
 - • James: Pragmatism sees reality as awaiting completion from the future.
- 14. Faith in practical philosophy
 - • Philosophy = solving life's practical problems.
- 15. Instrumentalism
 - • Ideas are tools/instruments for practical knowledge.
- 16. Interaction with environment
 - • Growth occurs through adjustment with environment.
- 17. Social values
 - • Emphasizes freedom, equality, tolerance, responsibility, justice.
- 18. Knowledge as by-product of action
 - • Knowledge = reconstruction of experience through action.
- 19. Problems motivate truth
 - • Problems drive experiments → experiments lead to truth.
- 20. Rejection of authoritarianism
 - • Opposes authoritarianism in government, religion, and education.
 - • Strong faith in democracy.

PRAGMATISM IN EDUCATION

- Introduced into education by William James and John Dewey.
- • Core beliefs:
 - 1. No principle or idea is valid for all times.
 - 2. Real value of a thing lies in its utility for human welfare.
- • Education must adapt to changing needs and circumstances.
- • Education = life itself, not just preparation for life.
- • John Dewey: “Education is the process of reconstruction of experiences, giving it a more sociological value, through the medium of increased individual efficiency.”

CHARACTERISTICS OF PRAGMATIC EDUCATION

- 1. Education as life
 - Education = life itself, not preparation for life.
 - Child gains knowledge through activities and experiments.
- 2. Education as growth
 - Education is dynamic and progressive, adapting to changing needs.
 - Dewey: "Growth is the real function of education."
- 3. Education as reconstruction of experiences
 - Knowledge gained through experiments and experiences.
 - Continuous process → one experience leads to another.
- 4. Education as a social process
 - Man is a social animal; education must develop social qualities.
 - Brubacher: Education has a social function and must provide social experience.
 - Dewey: "Education is the social continuity of life."
- 5. Education as responsibility of the state
 - Education = birthright in a democracy.
 - State must provide education to all citizens.
- 6. Education as freedom
 - Based on democracy → promotes freedom, initiative, equality, responsibility.
- 7. Education as development of philosophy of education
 - Aim: comprehensive practical education (intellectual, moral, aesthetic, physical, spiritual).
- 8. Education as humanitarianism
 - Education should evolve human values in all spheres.
- 9. Education as democracy
 - Education must prepare children for democratic and social life.
- 10. Education as human personality
 - Human personality = most significant element.
 - Education must be child-centered, based on natural activities and inclinations.

PRAGMATISM AND AIM OF EDUCATION

- General View
 - Pragmatists reject fixed, predetermined, ultimate aims of education.
 - Aims of life change with time, place, and circumstances → so education must also adapt.
 - John Dewey: “Education has no aims, only persons have aims.”
 - Brubacher: Progressive education has no fixed aims; its only general aim is growth, which itself has no end beyond further growth

SPECIFIC AIMS OF PRAGMATIC EDUCATION

- 1. More education
 - • Education = continuous development of knowledge.
 - • Each learning experience leads to another → process has no end.
- 2. Creation of new values
 - • Education should help individuals create new values to meet personal and social needs.
 - • J.S. Ross: “The general educational aim of the pragmatist is just the creation of new values.”
- 3. All-round development
 - • Education must direct impulses, interests, and abilities toward satisfying needs.
 - • Development in physical, intellectual, social, moral, and aesthetic aspects.
- 4. Growth
 - • Ultimate aim = growth of insight.
 - • Growth occurs through mutual interactions and changing social order.
 - • Dewey: “Life as growth and education is a process of growth of man and society”
- 5. Social efficiency
 - • Education = development of social efficiency.
 - • Prepares child for social life through cooperative learning, discipline, co-curricular activities.
 - • Aim: to make child a dedicated citizen.
- 6. Personal and social adjustment
 - • Education develops a dynamic, adaptable mind to adjust to changing environments.
 - • Dewey: Education develops capacities enabling individuals to control environment and fulfill possibilities.
- 7. Leads to democracy
 - • Education must create a democratic environment.
 - • Kilpatrick: Schools must become living democracies, building self-directing personalities.
 - • Democracy provides the basis for morality and moral conduct.

PRAGMATISM AND CURRICULUM

- General View
 - Pragmatism advocates a useful, flexible, dynamic, active, and correlated curriculum.
 - Curriculum must include all experiences: classroom, playground, laboratories, libraries, and social relationships.
 - Since aims of life change, curriculum must also change with society's needs.
 - Focus: subjects and activities that help solve real-life problems.

PRINCIPLES OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN PRAGMATISM

- 1. Principle of Utility
 - • Utility = watchword of pragmatism.
 - • Curriculum includes only useful subjects and activities.
 - • Examples:
 - • Elementary stage → reading, writing, arithmetic, nature study, drawing, handwork.
 - • Later stage → languages, physical training, hygiene, social studies, sciences, mathematics.
 - • Vocational subjects → agriculture (boys), home science (girls), technical education.
- 2. Principle of Interest
 - • Curriculum should match child's interests, aptitudes, and tastes.
 - • Dewey identified four interests:
 - • Conversation
 - • Investigation
 - • Construction
 - • Creative expression
- 3. Principle of Experience
 - • Emphasis on practical work and social activities.
 - • Experiences promote original thinking and moral character.
- 4. Principle of Integration
 - • Subjects should be taught through interrelations, not in isolation.
 - • Avoid watertight divisions → encourage correlation of knowledge.
- 5. Principle of Flexibility
 - • Curriculum must be changeable and adaptable.
 - • Dewey: curriculum cannot be fixed in advance; must evolve with child's needs and times.
- 6. Principle of Child-Centredness
 - • Child = pivot of education.
 - • Curriculum should consider individual differences, abilities, aptitudes, and development stages.
- 7. Principle of Life-Centredness
 - • Curriculum should mirror real life.
 - • Subjects and activities must relate to child's life patterns and problems.
 - • Aim: prepare child to meet compulsory needs of life.

PRAGMATISM AND METHOD OF TEACHING

- General Approach
 - Pragmatism rejects traditional, fixed methods of teaching.
 - Education is not about telling children what they ought to know, but about encouraging them to learn for themselves.
 - Teaching must be child-centred, scientific, psychological, and active.
 - Main methods: Project Method and Problem-Solving Method.

KEY METHODS OF TEACHING

- 1. Learning by Doing
 - • Children learn best when they perform acts related to subjects.
 - • Child is naturally active → activity-based learning develops natural abilities.
 - • Knowledge is acquired through direct engagement and experimentation.
- 2. Project Method (developed by W.H. Kilpatrick)
 - • Learning organized around projects chosen by the child.
 - • Projects involve purposeful activity → integrates multiple subjects.
 - • Encourages cooperation, creativity, and problem-solving.
- 3. Problem-Solving Method
 - • Teaching begins with a problem situation.
 - • Child learns by attempting to solve real-life problems.
 - • Promotes critical thinking, reasoning, and adaptability.
- 4. Scientific and Psychological Methods
 - • Teaching must align with child's interests, aptitudes, and developmental stage.
 - • Encourages investigation, experimentation, and discovery.

PRAGMATISM AND METHOD OF TEACHING

• Expanded Teaching Methods

- 1. Project Method (Kilpatrick)
 - • Central to pragmatic teaching.
 - • A project is a purposeful activity chosen by the child.
 - • Integrates multiple subjects into one activity.
 - • Encourages cooperation, creativity, initiative, and democratic participation.
 - • Example: Building a school garden → involves science, math, social cooperation, and responsibility.
- 2. Problem-Solving Method
 - • Starts with a problem situation.
 - • Child learns by attempting to solve real-life problems.
 - • Develops critical thinking, reasoning, adaptability, and independence.
 - • Encourages children to test ideas through experimentation and experience.
- 3. Learning by Activity
 - • Pragmatists emphasize activity-based learning.
 - • Child's natural curiosity and spontaneity are harnessed.
 - • Activities → lead to knowledge, skill development, and personality growth.
- 4. Scientific Method
 - • Teaching must follow scientific steps: observation, hypothesis, experimentation, verification.
 - • Promotes logical thinking and inquiry-based learning.
- 5. Democratic Method
 - • Classroom should function like a mini-democracy.
 - • Encourages freedom, equality, cooperation, and responsibility.
 - • Teacher acts as a guide and facilitator, not an authoritarian figure.

PRAGMATISM – DISCIPLINE, TEACHER’S ROLE, AND EVALUATION

• Discipline in Pragmatism

- Pragmatism rejects rigid, authoritarian discipline.
- Discipline should be self-imposed through activities and responsibilities.
- Child learns discipline by participating in democratic life.
- Emphasis on cooperation, responsibility, and social adjustment rather than punishment.

• Role of the Teacher

- Teacher is a guide, facilitator, and co-worker, not an authoritarian figure.
- Duties include:
 - Creating problem situations for students to solve.
 - Encouraging experimentation and investigation.
 - Providing opportunities for projects and activities.
 - Helping students develop social values and democratic habits.
- Teacher must respect individual differences and nurture child’s natural interests.

• Evaluation in Pragmatism

- Rejects traditional examinations that test rote memory.
- Evaluation should be continuous and comprehensive, based on:
 - Child’s activities and projects.
 - Problem-solving ability.
 - Social participation and cooperation.
 - Growth in personality and democratic values.
- Focus: process of learning, not just final results.

PRAGMATISM – MERITS AND DEMERITS

- Merits of Pragmatism

- 1. Practical Philosophy

- • Focuses on solving real-life problems.
- • Philosophy is meaningful only when applied to life situations.

- 2. Dynamic and Flexible

- • Adapts to changing times, needs, and circumstances.
- • Rejects rigidity and embraces progress.

- 3. Child-Centred Approach

- • Education revolves around the interests, abilities, and aptitudes of the child.
- • Promotes individuality and creativity.

- 4. Activity-Based Learning

- • Emphasizes learning by doing.
- • Encourages experimentation, projects, and problem-solving.

- 5. Democratic Values

- • Promotes freedom, equality, cooperation, and responsibility.
- • Schools become mini-democracies.

- 6. Social Efficiency

- • Prepares children for social life and citizenship.
- • Encourages cooperation, discipline, and adaptability.

- 7. Utility-Oriented

- • Curriculum and teaching methods are designed for usefulness and relevance.
- • Education equips learners to face practical challenges.

PRAGMATISM – MERITS AND DEMERITS

- Demerits of Pragmatism
 - **Lack of Fixed Aims**
 - Rejects permanent aims of education → may lead to **uncertainty and instability**.
 - **Overemphasis on Utility**
 - Truth defined only by usefulness → risks ignoring **higher ideals and values**.
 - **Neglect of Spiritual and Absolute Values**
 - Focuses on practical life, often ignoring **spiritual, moral, and eternal truths**.
- **Risk of Materialism**
 - Utility-driven philosophy may encourage **materialistic outlook**.
- **Excessive Flexibility**
 - Constant change may cause **lack of continuity** in education.
- **Undermines Theoretical Knowledge**
 - By prioritizing action over thought, it may **downplay intellectual depth**.

SOME PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS

- Which philosophy of education emphasizes *learning by doing*?
 - A) Idealism
 - B) Naturalism
 - C) Pragmatism
 - D) Realism

- Pragmatism lays emphasis on:
 - A) Spiritual values
 - B) Fixed curriculum
 - C) Activity and experience
 - D) Bookish knowledge

- According to Pragmatism, truth is:

A) Absolute

B) Pre-determined

C) Changeable and practical

D) Divine

- The project method is associated with:

A) Idealism

B) Pragmatism

C) Realism

D) Naturalism

- Which of the following is NOT a principle of Pragmatism?

- A) Learning by doing

- B) Reality is dynamic

- C) Knowledge is fixed

- D) Experience is central

- Pragmatism in education advocates:

- A) Teacher-centered approach

- B) Rigid discipline

- C) Child-centered education

- D) Memorization

- Education according to Pragmatism is:
 - A) Preparation for future life
 - B) Life itself
 - C) Acquisition of knowledge
 - D) Moral training

- Pragmatism gives importance to:
 - A) Theory over practice
 - B) Practice over theory
 - C) Only values
 - D) Only discipline

✨ *Join Us for Latest Updates & PDFs*

- ▶ 📠 Telegram Channel: <https://t.me/lstyt2>



- ▶
- ▶ 🌐 Website: <https://lovesocio.in>
- ▶ 📦 Stay connected for PDFs, MCQs, live class links, and exam strategies – all in one place!

If You Have Enjoyed The Video,
To Appreciate Our Efforts!



LIKE

SHARE



SUBSCRIBE



Let's Study Together

