***Aims of Higher Education***

(Цели высшего образования)

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**Aims of Higher Education**

What are the aims of higher education? Why do people spend their time studying different subjects in higher educational establishments? Isn’t it just a waste of time? Let’s try to find out the answers.

After finishing school pupils have to think about their future life. Most school-leavers enter higher educational establishments – colleges, institutes, universities. They make one and the same choice – to continue their studies. Still, graduates attend higher educational institutions for different reasons. The number of aims is uncountable. While making this research, I came to the conclusion that there are four main aims of higher education: prestige, new experience and communication, no definite purpose and finally – parents’ wish.

Let’s consider all these aims of getting higher education in turn.

First of all comes prestige. Recent researches showed that 51 % of students decided to get higher education in order to earn much money and to have career prospects. We live in a competitive society which needs specialists and professionals in various spheres. If one wants to be a success in his/her career or if someone just wants to find a promising job, nowadays his/her knowledge must be on a high level. Otherwise, he/she will have to be satisfied with some quite unchallenging job and low salary. Different investigations proved that graduates earn more than non-graduates. In fact, on average, their salaries are around 50% higher. All in all, this proves the prestige of getting higher education.

Now that we have explored one of the main aims of higher education – that is prestige – let us turn to the next aim - new experience and communication. School-leavers enter higher educational establishments because they look forward to new experience. They study numerous courses many of which differ to a great extent from school subjects. Aristotle (384 BC - 322 BC) in his “Metaphysics” said “All men by nature desire knowledge”. However, what is most important – students get acquainted with new people. Who hasn’t heard that “students’ years are the best years in one’s life”? Students do their best to make this statement a kind of a motto, and it is rather easy because while you are a student you have a chance to combine your studies with participation in different kinds of students’ festivals and movements. One can even become a member of some international student’s organization, thus, having an opportunity to make friends all over the world.

Apart from these two aims of getting higher education – that is prestige and new experience together with communication, one of the reasons of entering higher educational establishments is the lack of purpose. Very often graduates feel uncertain about their future. They go to an institute or a university because they need time to realize what they want to be. Even if they have entered a wrong higher educational establishment, it means that they have found out what they really want to do in life. They can enter another university, this time with a definite purpose. One of my numerous cousins is an example of it. When she finished school, she didn’t know what university to enter; she even didn’t know what she wanted to study. Thus, after a year of studies in technical college, she understood what profession she wanted to get – she wanted to become a teacher. The next year she tried to enter Teacher Training University and finally passed the exams.

At last but not least, another aim of getting higher education, apart from prestige, new experience, communication and lack of definite purpose, is parents’ wish. Some school-leavers enter higher educational establishments only because everyone around them does so or just because they are told to do so by their parents. Most parents want their children to become highly educated people, as they deeply worry about their children’s’ future. Even though it is not the best reason to become a student. Many people gradually realize the necessity of education and become quite successful in their studies. Still, there are those who don’t care for increased knowledge but who attend higher educational establishments because they don’t want to work and they have nothing else to do, but they are rather few.

I hope I have made clear 4 main aims of higher education, which are prestige – that is good salaries and career prospects, new experience and communication, lack of definite purpose and finally – parents’ wish.

Of course, there are many other aims of getting higher education, but one should remember that, actually, all the reasons are rather subjective as every person has his/her own idea about the purpose of his/her studying in a higher educational establishment. In conclusion, I’d like to quote the words of Euripides

**Who neglects learning in his youth,  
Loses the past and is dead for the future.**

**(484 BC - 406 BC), Phrixus**