

## CHAPTER - 14

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

We have come a long way in our journey from the time of Greek educators to present day Indian scenario. We have in a sense spanned more than two thousands years of thoughts on education. We have seen that in every age there had been thinkers who were dissatisfied with the system of education that prevailed in their countries and times. We may briefly refer to such Greek educators as The Sophists, who accepted fees for the instruction they imparted to the Greek youth in rhetoric. Athens was a Greek democracy and every citizen enjoyed the democratic right of speaking in the Senate. Persuasion played a great role in the life of the citizen. The Sophists also led the foundation of a humanistic philosophy of life in making man the measure of everything. *Homomensura* was the criterion of truth for Protagoras. This humanistic way of looking at the business of life did not appeal to Socrates. He felt that it would lead to relativism in morals. Socrates' programme of educating the Athenian youth was intended to restore their balance disturbed by the Sophists. It is well known that the Socratic method of teaching consisted in dialectic, Socrates proposed that every concept or idea that one uses should be examined, one should look for the sufficient and necessary conditions for applying those concepts. One should know what one says, and mean what one says. "What is justice?" "What is virtue?" were the frequent questions that Socrates used to pick up from the conversations with the fellow citizens in the market place, and by the dialectical method he sought to show how empty these concepts were as used by the ordinary men. One should look for the definitions of these terms before one used them. But above all Socrates as a teacher reminded his listeners that an unexamined life was not

worth living. In this way he focused on the idea that education is not merely a matter of public life, but have serious implications for the inner life of the educators.

Socrates' disciple Plato was also a dissatisfied soul and proposed an elaborate utopia for the proper education of the members of the Republic. We find that theories of education spring out of a dissatisfaction with the prevailing system of education and every time the main thrust of a theory of education lies in the direction of envisaging a life worth living. In that respect theories of education tend towards a sort of idealism with an emphasis on the should or ought aspect in comparison to the is as aspect.

We have dealt with the major landmarks of educational theories in the east and west. We have found that there cannot be any educational theory without an accompanying concept of mind. Since it is the mind of the student or the pupil which is sought to be educated or trained. For example, Plato's theory of education and Locke's theory of education is different because their concepts of mind are different. For Plato, knowledge is recollection and his theory of education is based upon the presupposition that human souls are immortal and the souls reincarnate. We may put the matter little differently. There is a lot of emphasis on the a priori capacity of the human mind in Plato's case, which we don't find in Locke. Plato for example, thought only wisdom was worth having and that what goes on by the name of empirical knowledge was not possible. He thought so because he considered perception as an unsure guide to knowledge. For Locke, on the contrary, perception is the king.

There has also been theories of education in India. One often hears of Vedic education of Buddhists education. The Upanishad gives us an idea of the curricula of studies such as Prosody, Astronomy, Logic, History etc. These were looked upon as

aids to self-knowledge the study of the subjects mentioned were a prerequisite for one before he enters the life of the householders. But we had not gone into any detail about this area of inquiry. But we have noticed that idea of educational environment has never lost its appeal to the recent Indian thinkers. The concept of Tapovan or Ashrama is found recurring in the writings of Rabindranath, Sri Aurobinda and Gandhi. Even, Krishnamurty appears to be in favour of residential schools. The idea of a residential school was revived by the modern Indian thinkers as a heritage concept directly from the Upanishads. And the very notion of the word 'Upanishads' signifies the close association of the teacher and the taught.

Sadly enough his aspects of an educational system is somehow missing in the present day educational scenario in India, that concepts of 'Distant Education' and 'Open University' are becoming increasingly popular the reasons for these is not far to seek. There has been a phenomenal increase in the demand for degrees, without which one stands disqualified in seeking positions anywhere. One may not question the viability of the aforesaid systems but one many reasonably doubt the intrinsic merit of being educated through such a system. The living feedback that a teacher receives from a pupil and the inspiration that a pupil may have from his teacher are not there on there on the agenda of 'Distant Education' or 'Open University'. Again the concept of liberal education has suffered greatly in recent times. The language of industry has invaded the mode of expression of the administrators of the educational institutions. At the graduates or successful students who pass out of an educational institution are referred to as 'products' of the education industry. This is certainly a very dehumanised mode of reference. How can a living, growing, creative, enquiring boy or a girl be said to be a 'product' of an institution? This is very sad expression. Moreover, the 'products' are judged as waste if the young man or women who pass

out filed to be Indian Administrative Service or any competitive examination. A student's intrinsic worth is judged by his or her performance in terms of an impersonal standard of assessment, and never by this quality of life or thought he or she may have come to acquire by spending money and years in the campus. Kant has distinguished between price and dignity of a human individual. Our present day educational system right from below upwards, from schools to colleges and then to universities care less for the dignity of the individuality of the students and judge them in terms of their price. These are all very painful facts to observe and come about.

In spite of the fact that several commissions on education have been appointed and commissioners have made their recommendations, some of the recommendations have been implemented but some are left out of consideration. There may be good and various reasons for such neglect of the recommendations. Since independence a lot of change has undeniably taken place in school, college and university administration. But to what extent these changes have benefited the students remain an open question. One point is certain. The general atmosphere in the education institution is a far from tranquil and conducive to devoted learning. The country, as a whole, is ideologically uncertain. Which pattern of society we shall have is a matter that is decided upon by the political elite in power. This is reflected in the text book statements relating to the historical accounts of the countries past. Meaning debates concerning the secular education are waged from the platform of political interests. In a multicultural society that India has, care should be taken the students their cultural and religious neighbours. Nothing of moment in that direction appears to be there in any of the stages of the educational ladder. The newspapers carry stories of corruption, rape and murder almost everybody. Even

school-going teenagers have been reported to be involved in cases of rape and murder. These should be an alarming matter of concern to any sociologist of education. Education in values is given due weight age compared to the importance given to accumulation of data and information. The humanities stream is undervalued as second grade population in school or college campus. There may be economic reasons on the part of students in opting science or technology courses. But a society cannot remain alive with technologies alone. A technocrat need not necessarily be the best representative of an well-educated person, however, successful he may be in financial placement. These are a few facts that may be really and easily observed in present day India. In most of the states educational institutions are becoming commercial propositions. Further more, the country does not have any uniform system of education for the schools. Most of the states have their own bodies for governing the secondary and higher secondary courses. Their syllabi are at variance with the syllabi of such all India bodies of secondary education such as CBSE or ICSE. The students passing out such a varied examining bodies do not find themselves favourably positioned when they appear for regular competitive tests. This is also a matter of pity that notice, hardly any, has been given to it.

I may now make some specific observations of recommendatory nature :

(a) The position of a teacher has been undervalued in a consistent manner. Everybody has his or her memory of an ideal teacher who took up teaching as a vocation, rather as a mission of their lives. The number of such teacher is gradually dwindling. Because of the unplanned job management in the society most of our teacher continue in their present positions as a second or third based options. They would have been happier if they have bagged an administrative or economically profiting job elsewhere. Teaching by such a community of teachers cannot be

expected to yield human results. Therefore, teaching in most of the stages of education has become a routine affair, without any trace or inspiration or idealism.

(b) Educational institutions are so governed as to lack any autonomy in decision making with regard to desirable change or improvement in the educational set up. Educational bureaucracy stands in the way of decision making at the grass root level in spite of the best intention.

(c) The importance given to physical education by such a great thinker as Plato is underplayed in the Indian context. Either it is looked upon as a diversion or a pastime. Physical education does not have any important in the curriculum and it is often observed the reutinised physical education is from or drill, which the students found highly boring and try to escape it. The concept of a sound body with a sound mind has yet to be incorporated in the education management.

(d) Schools should be looked upon as the nursery of democracy and with that view in mind efforts should be made to integrate the students in affairs of school management as much as possible. They should make them responsible members of the school community.

(e) Different commissions recommended the spread of adult education. Government of India also tried to implement it. But due to unknown and unfortunate reason these aspects remained a mere formality. If these programmes were materialised properly then adults could be helped to live their life properly and peacefully. At the same time their children could be benefited to have proper education continuously. Those adults could understand the necessity of sending their wards to schools as well as they might try to make well equipped in this regard. So the proper installation and execution of these programmes might benefit us both directly through adult

education and indirectly through the consequent effect of it through the continuous spread of education of their eards.

(f) The recommendations of different commissions stressed upon the identification of the special talents from the very school levels. But such recommendations are not given proper effect in the prevalent system of education. Neither the education cell of the government nor the family are fully aware of the import of such recommendations. At both the sectors 'talent' is equated with 'academic brilliance'. The Government provides financial support to the brilliant students in the shape of scholarship and the guardians leave no stone unturned to make their wards their perform better and better only in the academic examinations. Such one sided programme always don't fare well. We may consider the word 'talent' in a wider sense to include some creative activities such as fine arts, performing arts etc. if such talents are identified and nurtured properly then perhaps a fuller fashioning of human life will be made possible.

(g) In ultimate analysis, it is observed that throughout the mentioned period of two thousand years of human civilization some doctrinal trends appeared again and again in so far as Philosophy of Education is concerned. It is these trends which in the above discourse has humbly and modestly been tried to limit together and to put into something which may, at the mercy of the readers, be called ideal Philosophy of Education.

(h) Throughout the discourse, a modest attempt has been made to show a relationship between the concept of mind and education. Western stalwarts and Indian theoreticalans were always in the pursuit of the intrinsic concept of education. With the change of time policies of implimentation in the acquired field of knowledge and education have changed. It is the belief and the conviction that we must not forget

our rich heritage of our Philosophy and attitude towards the concept of education. We are passing through a crisis, a transitional period where an economic disorder, absurd wishful thinking have taken their place ahead of our heritage. Let us hope this crisis can be negotiated if we try wholeheartedly to reconcile our thoughts regarding philosophy of education with that of economic and financial needs not forgetting of course our rich cultural, religious and traditional heritage.