
UNIT 6 TRENDS IN PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ADULT EDUCATION

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6.0 INTRODUCTION

Unit 6 is a continuation of Unit 5, elaborating the sub-theme of the philosophy of adult education and lifelong learning. In Unit 5 we discussed the issue of the development of adult education and lifelong learning. Now, in Unit 6 we will deal with the theories of some of the great thinkers of our times in the context of educational intervention, research and learning.

6.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, it is expected that you would be able to:

- Develop your own concept of andragogy and self-directed learning based on theoretical contributions of different philosophical trends;
- Understand contradictions in pedagogical processes, their dialectical unity and dependence on theory and practice; and
- Differentiate and choose theories of educational intervention, research and learning.

6.2 DEVELOPMENT OF PHILOSOPHY OF ADULT EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Although adult informal education and lifelong learning are as old as civilization itself, modern connotation of them as an organised institutional and educational activity is of recent origin. In the West, 'modern' understandings of adult informal education and lifelong learning owes much to the work of Rousseau and to the works of educators such as Pestalozzi, Froebel, Montessori and Jean Piaget. We

shall now discuss, in brief, the work of those educators who have made a significant contribution to the development of adult education philosophy.

6.2.1 Jean Piaget (1896-1980)

Jean Piaget is one of the most distinguished developmental psychologists who studied the nature of intelligence and the way it grows and develops in a human being. Piaget devoted almost fifty years of his life exploring this process. Put simply, Piaget's theory contends that all intelligence is shaped by human experience. Intelligence is not an innate internal characteristic of the individual. Rather it is a product of the interaction between the individual and his/her environment. Piaget (1951) argued that our ways of knowing change happen "qualitatively in identifiable stages, moving from an inactive stage, where knowledge is represented in concrete actions and is not separable from the experiences that spawn it, to an iconic stage, where knowledge is represented in images that have an increasingly autonomous status from the experiences they represent, to stages of concrete and formal operations." These are the basic stages in the developmental processes of an individual's mental growth, which constitute Piaget's model of Learning and Cognitive Development. These processes and stages also determine the basic learning processes among adults.

6.2.2 John Dewey (1859-1952)

John Dewey (United States), Antonio Gramsci (Italy), Mahatma Gandhi (India) and Paulo Freire (Brazil) have been four pioneer educational thinkers of the 20th century who emphasized not just on the individual development alone based on urban middle class values but also the societal development with concerns for democratization of the educational process and its content for the empowerment of the masses. Some of John Dewey's significant ideas include a concern for democracy and community, reflection and thinking, and importance of experience and the environment. He is legitimately acknowledged as the champion philosopher of democracy in the US in the 20th century. He sought an educational meaning of democracy in almost all spheres of life. According to Dewey, the main aim of philosophy consisted of realization of social progress where the role of education was of greatest interest to him. In fact as early as 1916, he published a book titled, *Democracy and Education*. Another very important work by him was in 1938 with the title, *Experience and Education*. See Box 6.1 for some of his ideas in this book.

Box 6.1: Distinction between Traditional and Progressive Approaches to Education

In *Experience and Education*, Dewey (1938: 17) makes a distinction between the "traditional" approach and the "progressive" approach to education, which he calls the "new education". In the traditional approach, "the subject-matter of education consists of bodies of information and of skills that have been worked out in the past; therefore, the chief business of the school is to transmit them to the new generation". This approach (traditional) is teacher-centered rather than learner-centered where the teacher deposits dry information, knowledge and skills as saleable commodities in the heads of the students. In this model, students are generally considered as passive but receptive, and obedient, and the teachers are supposed to be agents of this transmission of information, knowledge and skills.

John Dewey's ideas regarding education, experience and communication constitute three main pillars of adult education and lifelong learning. Dewey considered education as a process of growing in meaning, social responsibility and maturity, and said, "all genuine education comes about through experience." Experience gives a person meaning of a thing, and can find multiple meanings – even infinite meanings in course of time of a thing and use it accordingly. Meaning can also denote the consequences and relationships of events and things. Through their lives, people seek to understand their worlds, and share (communicate) their meanings. Education and communication thus imply a social and historical process of having shared meanings and purposes. According to Dewey's philosophy, education, communication and experience constitute a triad in a democratic environment and serve to maintain a culture's continuity. Education, communication and experience are thus powerful tools in mobilizing a community towards lifelong learning and towards social transformation. Dewey also provides us the main elements of his democratic ideal which consists of: (a) existence of genuine shared purposes within the members of an organization or a community; (b) freedom to communicate with one another, and with other groups; and (c) genuine educative experiences, which promote personal and social growth.

In addition, Dewey (1938: 20) proposes a progressive model, called the "new education." The underlying philosophy of this "new education" is that "there is an intimate and necessary relation between the processes of actual experience and education." Dewey rejects knowledge of the past as the only end of education and argues that it is only a means to the higher goals of attaining multiple possibilities for human development – cognitive, attitudinal, social and moral. For both the general educators and adult educators, the challenge is how to genuinely use experience to educate the masses for a better quality of life for themselves.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under "Answers to Check Your Progress".

1) What according to Johan Dewey constitutes a triad that helps in social transformation and cultural continuity?

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6.2.3 Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937)

Another most significant of radical educators is Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci did not provide a proper theory of education or ideology. Much of his writings on education are in part a reaction to the Gentile Reform of Education (1923) introduced by the Fascist regime in Italy. As a result, Gramsci comes to provide us some principles regarding education and schooling. It is from these principles and observations on Gentile Reform and his other essays on 'Intellectuals', 'State and Civil Society' and 'the Philosophy of Praxis' that one can try to sketch an educational theory. Gramsci's writings provide us deeper insights of education in the cultural sphere. For example, Gramsci (1971: 258) made statements like, "every relationship is a pedagogical relationship" or "education is an activity and initiative in political and cultural hegemony". Gramsci's resistance to Mussolini, his stress on the role of critical thinking, individual action and thought in history, his vision that workers create their own intellectual, educational and cultural institutions - all these provide a cultural agenda of education. See Box 6.2 for four major basic themes related to education in Gramsci's writings.

Box 6.2: Basic Themes Related to Education in Gramsci's Writings

Four major basic themes (subjects) like functions and purposes of schools, content and curriculum; discipline, instruction and role of teachers; and vocational schools are important in Gramsci's writings. These subjects constitute all the mainstream educational debates: e.g. the relation between education and class; the problem of specialization and vocationalism; the ideology of education and division of labour; elite school and the "comprehensive" school. These aspects demand from us an understanding of the main premises upon which a theory of education can be constructed. Gramsci's notes on 'Education' consist of three levels at which educational activity occurs. These are: "elementary education ('genacio'), secondary schools ('liceo') and the university. Teachers are involved in the process of producing, transmitting and justifying public knowledge. They do this explicitly via the curriculum and implicitly through the organization of school. Course content, teaching styles, grading procedures, power relations entered into, are all means whereby the formal educational system makes its contribution to the consciousness of students, his personal identity and social roles and to the store of public knowledge, public values and public culture. Gramsci's views in these matters change in their emphasis as well as in content as we move from lower stage of education to higher stages in education. Nevertheless, there runs consistently a coherent theme aiming 'development of critical thinking' as the major function of schooling. This function is integrated with technical knowledge of production at a higher stage of education.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under "Answers to Check Your Progress".

2) What are the four basic themes related to education in Gramsci's writings?

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6.2.4 Paulo Freire (1921-1997)

Paulo Freire may be considered the forerunner of critical theory tradition in education. Freire's (1972) concept of "the culture of silence" has popularized the role of the individual and the community including that of the adult educators to bring in social reform and change. While in exile after the 1964 coup in Brazil, Freire wrote his first book, *Education as the Practice of Freedom*. In 1972, he also got his first book published in English, titled, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Freire's work has inspired adult educators and learners worldwide to bring about social change through mass literacy. Freire warns that his educational philosophy should not be seen as a methodology. Instead, he wants adult educators and development professionals to reinvent a philosophy (of education) to fit in their context and social and political reality. As Freire says, "the future isn't something hidden in a corner. The future is something we build in the present." See Box 6.3 for some of the basic principles of his educational and philosophical foundations.

Box 6.3: Basic Principles of Paulo Freire's Educational Philosophy

- Man's ontological vocation is to be a Subject who acts upon and transforms his world, and in so doing, moves toward ever-new possibilities of fuller and richer life individually and collectively.
- Every human being, no matter how ignorant or submerged in the culture of silence he or she may be, is capable of looking critically at the world in a dialogical encounter with others.
- Provided with proper tools for this encounter the individual can gradually perceive personal and social reality as well as the contradictions in it, and become conscious of his or her own perception of that reality, and deal critically with it.

About the relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed, Paulo Freire (1972: 21) says 'the great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed' is 'to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well' who 'oppress, exploit and rape by virtue of their power'. Thus, the struggle for humanization consists in breaking the cycles of injustice, exploitation and oppression. In these roles, those who commit injustice, the oppressors, do not only deny freedom to those they oppress, they also risk their own humanity, because oppressor's consciousness 'tends to transform everything surrounding it into an object of its domination' (Freire, 1972). The oppressed too internalize this oppression as natural; they too initially become 'sub-oppressors', and a role, which they begin to think, is the 'ideal model of humanity'. To break this cycle, Freire suggests, a revolution of ideas must take place. But how would the oppressed 'resolve this oppressor-oppressed contradiction'? This contradiction can be resolved through what Freire (1972: 25) calls as "the pedagogy of the oppressed, a pedagogy forged with, not for, the oppressed (be they individuals or groups). By confronting "reality critically, simultaneously objectifying and acting upon that reality", the oppressed can begin to transform themselves from objects to Subjects. According to Freire, this makes the beginning of revolution as the first stage. Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed has two major stages.

- The oppressed unveil the world of oppression and through the praxis, commit themselves to its transformation.
- The pedagogy ceases to belong to the oppressed and becomes pedagogy of all people in the process of permanent liberation.

Freire (1972: 46) rejects the traditional approach in education, which he calls as the 'banking education' where teachers make deposits of information into the empty minds of the students, and subsequently which students memorize and repeat. 'The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world'. Thus, a libertarian and progressive education must 'begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers and students'.

Progressive educators help students to reach *conscientizacao* (conscientization). Conscientization consists in breaking through prevailing mythologies to reach new levels of awareness—in particular, awareness of oppression, of being an object in a world where only Subjects have power. The process of conscientization involves identifying contradictions in experience through dialogue and becoming a Subject with other oppressed subjects — that is, becoming part of the process of changing the world. Instead of banking methods, progressive educators must employ problem-posing methods. Freire (1972: 56) elaborates that 'in problem-posing education, people develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation'. Teacher-students and student-teachers are continually reflecting on themselves and the world, establishing an authentic form of thought and action. It is in this manner that education can be constantly remade, instead of being static. It helps people to look ahead, to hope and plan for the future. "Problem-posing education does not and cannot serve the interests of the oppressor. No oppressive order could permit the oppressed to begin to question".

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under "Answers to Check Your Progress".

3) i) What are the two major steps in the Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed?

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ii) Write in brief about conscientization.

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Paulo Freire (1972: 60) felt that for the learner to move from object to Subject, he or she needed to be involved in dialogical action with the teacher. Dialogic action has two basic dimensions - reflection and action.

Action and Reflection = word + work = praxis.

Sacrifice of Action or Action without Reflection = activism (acting without thinking).

Sacrifice of Action or Reflection without Action = verbalism.

For Paulo Freire, verbalism is an empty word, which means words without action. According to him, transformation cannot happen with action alone, it requires reflection as well. Transformation based on pure activism is impossible, because without reflection, there can be no commitment to transformation, it would be an empty action. Transformation requires praxis, which is action and reflection. It is praxis, which alone enables transformation to take place. Freire (1972: 62) held that 'Dialogue cannot exist without humility'. You cannot dialogue if you place yourself above another, seeing yourself as the owner of truth. Dialogue requires faith in humanity. "Faith is an apriori requirement for dialogue." For Freire (1972: 63-72), "Founding itself upon love, humility and faith, dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the dialoguers is the logical consequence". Dialogue further requires hope in order to exist. "Hopelessness is a form of silence, of denying the world and fleeing from it". Finally, a 'true dialogue cannot exist unless it involves critical thinking'. 'Without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication, there can be no true education.' See Box 6.4 for important elements of Freirean theory of progressive education.

Box 6.4: Important Elements of Freirean Theory of Progressive Education

- Adult educators must unveil the opportunities for hope, regardless of the obstacles.
- Adult educators must work and accept the political and directive nature of education.
- Adult educators must have respect for differences in ideas and positions.
- Adult educators must respect the learners and never try to manipulate them, whatever their level of ignorance.
- Adult educators must be tolerant, open, forthright and critical, allowing every learner to participate and dialogue.
- Teaching does not simply consist in transmission of facts and information or even knowledge concerning the object or concerning the topic; it consists in active and critical reflection.
- The learners must learn to learn as to why something is being taught, why and how a particular content is necessary.
- Learners must be challenged (not teased) about their conviction in order to help them develop convincing arguments in defense of the “why”.
- Adult educators must respect people’s knowledge and beliefs, popular knowledge available with them, and cultural content of their popular knowledge. Educators should consider this as the starting point of their discourse, which is essentially a resource of knowledge that the learner has already created his/her own world.
- Adult educators should also try to transcend the narrow horizons of the neighborhood or even the immediate geographical area, to gain a global view of reality.

The importance of Freirean theory or philosophy of education lies in its emphasis on acts of ‘cognition not only of the content, but of the why of economic, social, political, ideological, and historical facts ... under which we find ourselves placed.’ The pedagogy outlined above does not romantically celebrate the adult learner or student’s experience just for its own sake. Rather, this pedagogy is based on a critically affirmative language, and advocates that educators must work constantly on both their own and on the experiences of learners. This pedagogy in situations of classroom or textbook interaction requires that we democratise language teaching and break down the elitist mould or paternalistic barriers to the development of the communicative competence and ensure equality of all learners.

6.3 ADULT EDUCATION, THE INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT AND SEMINAL INDIAN THINKERS

It was during early 20th century that formal (official) provision and expansion of adult education in India took place. The national movement, at the beginning of 20th century placed a significant emphasis on education for citizenship, social reform and nation building. The national movement, in order to improve the social and political position of women, the untouchables and the tribals, focused on many social evils like ‘sati’, child marriage, infanticide, etc. Further, the

struggle to establish trade unionism and the desire to open up education to workers also helped rooting of adult and non-formal education in India. Simultaneously, there was the development of university extension work. With M. K. Gandhi leading a mass national movement for independence against the British, we find a creative mass movement from below. Gandhi emphasized self-education, self-discipline, and subjects that mattered in the deepening of understanding of their political struggle against evil forces, both internal (e. g. religious fanaticism) and external (e.g. British rule).

6.3.1 Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948)

Gandhi was perhaps the only Indian leader who anticipated that developments taking place under the British Raj would make the people of India lose control over national affairs including social and economic policies, culture, language and identity. He could anticipate the dangers of an increasing gap between the traditional rural masses and the Westernized urban elites. Thus, he gave a call for popular education both through formal schooling and informal education through mass political participation. Participation of masses in every national and local public activity was central to his alternative development model based on the village economy. The essential approach to socio-political transformation towards creation of such a society was improvement in the methods and conditions of debate, discussion, communication, and persuasion.

Dialogue, trust, humility, persuasive debate and discussion, tolerance and appreciation, equality between protagonists and antagonists, coherence and articulation of statements based on moral truths, assertiveness for all such truths were essential elements of Gandhi's concept of 'Satyagrah' as a political tool to fight injustice. Thus mass literacy requires training in comprehension of a social situation or a text, and based on it further articulation and expression of a speech or a statement coherently to make a case (argument) for asserting a moral truth or one's conviction. It also requires communicative competence in presenting one's viewpoints to others critically and forcefully.

Gandhi also advised the local communities to learn the basic skills of essential crafts, local industry and communicative competence in speech to achieve self-sufficiency and autonomy, both in politics and economy. For this, public participation, mass education and use of the vernacular were central to Gandhi's approach towards mass mobilisation. Gandhi considered that popular education based on moral and critical mass communication forms was necessary to relieve the people of their ignorance about the modern state, its laws and institutions, which had left them behind making them feel alienated. According to Gandhi, in a situation of ignorance and alienation, all laws and systems of governance were of little value for the people. He believed that when education becomes an instrument of dominant groups with vested interest in it, it loses its capacity to train individuals develop rational-judgement skills. Public participation in swaraj (self-rule) requires that each individual has an unrestrained ethical autonomy to exercise reason and choice rather than conform to some pre-decided pedantic knowledge. Gandhi found the existing system of education defective on three counts (see Acharya, 1997: 601-606):

- a) It was based on an alien culture, almost to the exclusion of the indigenous languages, traditions and social practices;

- b) In its exclusive emphasis on intellectual and technocratic-managerial training, it had completely ignored the culture of the heart, which is character, and the culture of hands found in artisanal and manual skills; and
- c) A popular, creative and useful education was at variance with foreign models of education, influenced by the social and educational philosophies of rich colonial countries, which were divorced from the actual needs of a disadvantaged majority.

Gandhi believed that technical and pedantic learning based simply on the 3Rs, (e. g. reading, writing and arithmetic) was unhelpful for the majority of disadvantaged groups in India. Also, learning based on reading of 3Rs and abstract principles, though quite useful for the modern world dominated by a techno-managerial ruling class, had no benefit for the India's majority. Hence, mainstream modern schools returned students from lower-class backgrounds as failures. Most school dropouts in India still come from these backgrounds, while a few who successfully climb the ladder because of their sheer hard work and perseverance are permanently alienated from their sub-culture.

In 1936 Gandhi put forward his own alternative scheme of mass elementary education - 'Basic Education' or 'Nai Talim' as he called it. His scheme was quite different from the philosophical ideas of both the Romantic tradition and the Brahmanical tradition. Gandhi emphasized a different aspect of learning usually ignored by earlier traditions. He emphasized that artisan apprenticeship skills, manual training and related discourses should be the central and the main basis of all primary and elementary education. He believed that in a largely agrarian and poor society like India, communication and manual skills related to artisanal work and vocational training could be the most profitable form of popular education. This was the philosophical basis of his 'Basic Education' scheme. See Box 6.5 for 3Hs of Education.

Box 6.5: Gandhi's 3Hs of Education

For Gandhi, true education consisted in acculturation and training of the whole person, by which he meant the 3Hs rather than the 3Rs: 'heart' (character), 'hand' (practical skills) and the 'head' (mind). By education of the 'heart', he meant training the 'character' and spiritual or moral advancement, which he placed above all knowledge, whether intellectual or vocational. Gandhi's 3H education is not only inclusive but also broader than Paulo Freire's 'problem-posing' education. Here community economics has priority over political economy, though the essence of both in the Gandhian scheme is the same i. e. to make the individual and the community viably independent.

However, the ultimate goal of education for Gandhi, was 'freedom from fear' (Julian Brotherton, 1993: 7). 'The oppressed, having internalized the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom' (compare Freire, 1972: 23). In order to overcome this fear, freedom first requires that people develop economically, morally and socially. Then it requires that people eject their own oppressor's image and replace it with conviction, autonomy and responsibility. Freedom must be 'pursued constantly and responsibly. Freedom is not an ideal located outside of man; nor is it an idea, which becomes myth. Rather it is the indispensable condition for the quest of human completion' (Freire, 1972: 23-24). This was a truly radical move. Knowledge of productive handicrafts

such as weaving, spinning, leather work and pottery in India had earlier been associated with lower caste groups. Knowledge and skills possessed by them were never considered 'worthwhile knowledge' by the upper-castes in India. In fact, we are still so heavily influenced and habituated to the dominant type of schooling that we find it difficult to understand and imagine the Gandhian scheme of education, which is based on the discourses and skills of lower caste vocational groups. The elitist notion that knowledge and intelligence are personal endowments or personal achievements, and that schools can impart only such print-based knowledge is a 'great conceit' of the dominant intellectual class in the same way 'as that of the commercial class' which thinks 'wealth is something which they personally have wrought and possess' (Dewey, 1927: 211).

As far as adult education is concerned, Gandhi said in a speech in 1945 that it should be an 'education for life' through 'close association with life'. 'Education for life' did not mean 'education for the duration of life, but education for the sake of life. ... Adult education is a matter of teaching the art of living' (quoted in Sykes, 1988: 51). By the phrase 'education through life' he meant that knowledge for adults couldn't be imported from the outside that all adult education programmes must focus on the communicative functions of language and life-experiences of learners. This also implied that learning must necessarily be carried out in the mother tongue, also a basic principle of his 'Basic Education' scheme. 'Without the capacity to speak effectively and to read and write correctly and lucidly, no one can develop precision of thought or clarity of ideas' (see Wardha Scheme on Basic National Education, 1937). He did not want the vernacular languages to lose their communicative capacity to flourish and educate the masses.

Gandhi is a good example of a self-directed adult learner. Although Gandhi may not be accepted as an adult educator in the conventional sense of the word, the views on education that he expressed, experimented with, and enforced in practice make him a historical adult educator. Gandhi's ideas regarding education are radical and revolutionary. Searching the philosophical foundations of education, he starts by asking, "What is the meaning of education and what should be its aim and object?". In Gandhi's view, education means much more than intellectual knowledge. Its primary aim is the building up of character. Education that helps to build up sound character and promotes self-development is true education. And the true education of the individual, which is all round development of personal faculties, is best obtained through action. Gandhi's "scheme of education bases itself on the sound and indisputable fact that knowledge and understanding develop in relation to problems set by action" (Gandhi, 1951).

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under "Answers to Check Your Progress".

4) i) What according to Gandhi were the three defects of the then education system in India? Do you think that education system in India still suffers from these defects? If yes, explain your reasons for your views. If No, elaborate what changes have now come about in education system in India.

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ii) What are the 3R's and 3H's? How did Gandhi draw the distinction between the 3R's and 3H's of Education?

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iii) What is the basic difference you find between Gandhi and Freire from the point of view of their approach to education for liberation of the individual?

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6.3.2 Rabindra Nath Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore maintained that a wholesome education must educate the mind along with the senses. Tagore was brought up in a family atmosphere where freedom was emphasized - freedom of language, imagination, spirit and mind. Thus, he held that the main purpose of education is to promote freedom, freedom from structured and oppressive school education, freedom from the confined walls of the classroom, freedom for consonance with child's nature, and freedom of movement. Typical of the romantic idealist tradition, Tagore stressed on the natural development of the child, emphasizing spontaneity and creativity as the crux of learning. Tagore's ideas on education were very much in the tradition of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Montessori and Wordsworth and this enabled him to develop a critique of the Anglicized education system in India, not on nationalistic grounds but on universalistic principles (see Krishna Kumar, 1991: 161-166; Mani, 1961; Salkar, 1990; O'Connell, et. al., 1989: 89-101). However, some of his thoughts have a direct bearing on primary education and the acquisition of basic skills.

The tragedy with the Tagorean vision was that it was too idealistic and romantic in the context of mass education in India. In Tagore, learning takes a romantic journey under conditions of full freedom but it does not consist of a critical elaboration, a consciousness of what one really is, knowing oneself as a product of historical processes. He wanted to criticize the inhuman face of libertarian

education guided by a market economy, which produced competition, division and alienation and accepted foreign domination. But, he did not see the hegemonic relationship of education to politics or the political domination of powerful groups in determining the content and curriculum of modern education. Tagore did not give much attention to the political nature of the state and schools and the values imparted by them. Nonetheless, he rightly pointed out the significance of a learning environment for children to grow freely and creatively, but he conceived of this environment as an island (i. e. a Tapovan) within the modern national and international system, rejecting implicitly any attempt to criticize or even comprehend the system in its political relationship to the power of different groups or nations. He was also right in pointing out the need for introducing new teaching methods, which are supported by modern humanist psychologists. His reflections on teaching methods stressing play, group learning, flexible class organization and mother-tongue education were valuable pedagogic contributions to the psychology and philosophy of education.

6.4 LET US SUM UP

This Unit has covered major philosophical trends and educational interventions in adult learning in India. It has paid special attention to the ideas of Indian social thinkers in the context of the need for adult learning in the country.

6.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1) According to John Dewey education, experience and communication constitute a triad that helps in social transformation and cultural continuity. His ideas on the triad also constitute the three main pillars of his philosophy of adult education and lifelong learning.
- 2) The four major basic themes (subjects) related to education in Gramsci's writings are: a) functions and purposes of schools; b) content and curriculum; c) discipline, instruction and role of teachers; and d) vocational schools.
- 3) i) The two major stages in Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed are as follows.
 - a) The oppressed unveil the world of oppression and through the praxis, commit themselves to its transformation.
 - b) The pedagogy ceases to belong to the oppressed and becomes pedagogy of all people in the process of permanent liberation.
- ii) Conscientization consists in breaking through prevailing mythologies to reach new levels of awareness — in particular, awareness of oppression, of being an object in a world where only Subjects have power. It is a process which involves identifying contradictions in experience through dialogue and becoming a Subject with other oppressed subjects — that is, becoming part of the process of changing the world.
- 4) i) Gandhi found the then existing system of education defective on three counts:
 - a) It was based on an alien culture, almost to the exclusion of the indigenous languages, traditions and social practices.

- b) In its exclusive emphasis on intellectual and technocratic-managerial training, it had completely ignored the culture of the heart, which is character, and the culture of hands found in artisanal and manual skills.
- c) A popular, creative and useful education was at variance with foreign models of education, influenced by the social and educational philosophies of rich colonial countries, which were divorced from the actual needs of a disadvantaged majority.

But, the present education system, (I feel) does not suffer, as it was, from these defects. Now, the educational system has begun to take into cognizance the growing needs and demands of the diverse sections of the society, the growing economy, the changing polity, the governance, the environment, and so on. The issues of access, quality and equality of education to all sections of the society have become the major concerns for the educational planners, policy makers and implementers.

- ii) The 3Rs are reading, writing and arithmetic (i. e. sound R exists in each of these three words). The 3Hs are heart, hand and head. Gandhi believed that technical and pedantic learning based simply on the 3Rs, (e. g. reading, writing and arithmetic) was unhelpful for the majority of disadvantaged groups in India. Also, learning based on reading of 3Rs and abstract principles, though quite useful for the modern world dominated by a techno-managerial ruling class, had no benefit for India's majority. For Gandhi, true education consisted in acculturation and training of the whole person, by which he meant the 3Hs rather than the 3Rs: 'heart' (character), 'hand' (practical skills) and 'head' (mind). By education of the 'heart', he meant training the 'character' and spiritual or moral advancement, which he placed above all knowledge, whether intellectual or vocational.
- iii) In his approach to education, Gandhi aimed at training the heart, hand and head and it is not only inclusive and comprehensive but also broader than that of Paulo Freire. His (Freire's) approach focuses on education for reflection and action, but states that the oppressed out of fear begins his action for liberation only through praxis. His reasoning for this is that 'the oppressed, having internalized the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom', while Gandhi goes to the root of the problem (fear) and feels that in order to overcome this fear, freedom first requires that people develop economically, morally and socially. Then it follows that they eject their own oppressor's image and replace it with conviction, autonomy and responsibility. This is essential because freedom must be pursued constantly and responsibly as it is not an ideal located somewhere outside of man.

6.6 REFERENCES

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