A Practitioner's take on Philosophy of Education

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The general attitue of educationists in India to philosophy of education is that it is of limited use in deliberating on aims of education, and has almost nothing to offer in curricular and pedagogical decisions. The aims themselves are considered either almost irrelevant to actual task of educating children as they are too remote from the immediate concern of, say, teaching a school entrant reading and counting. Alternatively they are already determined by the goals of national development, which basically is a political economic decision. Therefore, even in deliberating on aims, the role of philosophy of Education (PoE) is limited to working out implications and possibly some conceptual clarification. Another view is that in the Indian tradition, philosophy of education is woven into the overall analysis of education from sociological, political and economic perspectives. Working out a territory and method of PoE on it's own is a western idea of recent origin, and the Indian approach of an overall analysis is more robust and fruitful in our context. Without immediately challenging any of these contentions we will identify three issues which may throw up unavoidable philosophical issues, and then try to see how PoE might help there.

Recently a short video of a math teacher went viral first on social media because a business tycoon tweeted it. Then a very famous Bollywood star was floored by its simplicity and effectiveness, and sent it to the largest online tuition group in India, then TV channels picked it up. In the video a teacher is explaining a very interesting and simple way of multiplying 9 by any number less than 10, in other words working out multiplication table of 9. To multiply 9 by 4, she asks one child to raise her hand and show ten fingers of both hands. She writes "4" on the black board. Then holds the 4th finger on the child's hand and asks: how many fingers are to the left of this finger? Children reply "3", and she writes "3". Then she asks how many fingers are to the right of this finger and children say "6". She writes 6 after 3, and the number on the board becomes "36". She declares "Multiplication is done", implying 4x9=36.

We have to be a little careful in understanding the issue with this method of teaching. First, the teacher is doing a good job of teaching children a "math trick", which could be very useful, if certain other conditions are fulfilled. We will come to those conditions presently. Second, goodnatured and socially concerned business tycoon and Bollywood star are appreciating the teacher's work, and promoting it, which is very kind of them. The TV channels are going berserk in declaring that this can happen only in India. All this raises a suspicion (hopefully for some) that this is going to be used by a large number of mathematics teachers in the country. The hope or suspicion is not unfounded, there are scores of videos propagated by foundations, NGOs and teachers with such tricks and teaching methods.

One can ask, "What is the issue here? This sounds so good." To understand the problem first let's note that mathematics classroom activities should be necessarily directed to achieve

aims of teaching mathematics. Our National Curriculum Framework 2005 states that "[D]eveloping children's abilities for mathematisation is the main goal of mathematics education"[1]. It further states "[T]he higher aim is to develop the child's resources to think and reason mathematically, to pursue assumptions to logical conclusions and to handle abstraction. It includes a way of doing things, and the ability and the attitude, to formulate and solve problems." Methods such as shown in video, unless followed with discussions and explanations concerning the clarification of concepts and logic involved, are very unlikely to achieve these aims. It requires understanding the nature of mathematical knowledge, logic behind mathematical procedures or algorithms to create a dialogue which can ground mathematics in reason. How many teachers might be doing that? My guess is less than one percent.

The problem in this example is not the teachers using this trick to simplify multiplication table of 9. The problem is that philosophical considerations of nature of math, mathematical logic behind procedures and epistemic grounds for accepting math conclusions are absent. And these are philosophical considerations. Proliferation of math videos like this one seems to be a direct result of neglecting philosophical issues involved in math teaching in teacher development and generally in the country.

Let's take a second example to understand the roots of problems in classroom teaching. Presently the Indian public education system is seriously infested with so-called improvement programmes initiated by foundations created by large corporates to channel their own CSR funds. One would have considered it a very welcome development and avoided the word "infested" had these corporations

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1. NCERT, National Curriculum Framework 2005, New Delhi, page 40.

been careful about their theories of change and theories of education. But the only strength they have is their money. Most (there are some exceptions as well) of them are running on half understood ideas borrowed from the west. Therefore, it is important to understand and analyse their thinking on education.

The head of an organisation running a few thousand schools for poor children very seriously put a question to an educationist: "How essentially should pragmatic goals of (i) acquiring knowledge, (ii) acquiring skill-capabilities, (iii) acquiring-reinforcing attitudes-values, and (iv) acquiring the capability to learn, be facilitated by philosophical discussion of issues involved." The educationist very confidently replied: "In my opinion not worth the effort". At present this is the way most of the people in India who are influencing education at a large scale think.

The question itself can make any meaning only when one has reasonably clear answers to a host of sub-questions: What is Knowledge? What is a Skill? What is the difference between a Skill and Capability? What are Values? What are Attitudes? How is an Attitude different from a Value? Where do they come from? What is the 'capability to learn'? How do the 'capability to learn' and 'learning itself' differ? How do I know that X has it? What is the relative worth of knowledge, skill, attitudes and values in achieving educational aims? Obviously, all these are philosophical questions requiring conceptual analysis. If someone is making decisions regarding curriculum and teaching-learning without having coherent and reasonably clear answers to these questions then she is groping in the dark.

Both the questioner and the respondent here are assuming that sufficient clarity to weave these capabilities, concepts and values into curriculum and pedagogy is available in

common sense understanding. But actual observation of Indian curricula, textbooks and classroom practices all militate against this assumption. Another very influential assumption in India is that if a group of teachers, curriculum framers or textbook writers get together to work on practical problems of their respective domains and share ideas and experiences, such clarity will naturally emerge. Whether the assumptions hold or not requires a rigorous empirical study. Philosophy cannot really say anything about this assumption. However, in India wherever it has happened, for there are such examples, these groups necessarily had one or more members who could think philosophically and were good at conceptual analysis. On the other hand, there are a large number of such groups working for years and producing no clarity .

Let's take a third example from policy level. Recently there was a national debate on something called "no-detention policy". In brief, no-detention policy emerged from Section 16 of the RTE Act 2009 which states "[N]o child admitted in a school shall be held back in any class"[2]. In other words, promotion to next class is independent of satisfactory learning achieved in the year, it is the right of the child to be promoted to the next class, irrespective of whether she can cope with the curriculum or not.

There was a nationwide debate and controversy on the issue. Majority of teachers demanded that this policy be done away with, because the only motivation for learning for school students is "passing an examination". Politicians supported the teachers and finally the no-detention policy was made optional for states to decide by an amendment passed in the parliament. Most of the states repealed it. Progressive educationists' (all Indian educationists are progressive by

2. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Act 2009.

definition) assertion that no-detention is a progressive policy and its removal or limitation would be a retrograde step in our education reforms, was completely ignored.

In this entire debate no one noticed that the RTE 2009 has messed up the very definition of Elementary Education. Under present provisions, a common sense (nothing particularly philosophical) analysis of the interrelated stipulations of RTE will reveal that elementary education has no necessary relationship with learning achievements of the children. All it requires is spending one year in the school at 8th class, being admitted in "age appropriate class" at the age of 14 years. The point I am making is not particularly philosophical, it is rather a common sense observation. But the issue of definition of any defined stage of education and standards of learning achievement is important, and requires serious philosophical deliberations together with help from sociology and psychology of education. Can education be defined purely in terms of time spent in the school? This is a conceptual issue having bearing on definition of education. A whole society and particularly its educationists ignoring it in order to make psychological and sociological arguments in favour of no-detention reveals an attitude of unconcern for conceptual clarity and coherence. It is unimaginable that the educationists did not know about this messing up of definition of elementary education, they did not pay attention to it because it weakened their psychological and sociological arguments against detention in the same class for non-achievement of required learning standards. This unconcern for conceptual clarity and coherence is a philosophical issue with much wider ramifications than just the detention-no-detention controversy.

We have deliberately taken three examples starting from the actual classroom practice to curricular decision making

to policy level confusion which require philosophical deliberations; concerned with either epistemic or ethical perspectives. This involves conceptual analysis and responding to normative questions.

The range of issues

The issues indicated in connection with the video are one extreme of the spectrum of issues PoE has to deal with. To get a rough idea of the complete spectrum lets have a cursory look at the other extreme of the spectrum. Often people claim that the most abstract extreme of the issues PoE has to deal with is aims of education. This may be true if considered together with justification of aims, but is false if interpreted only at the level of understanding and working out implications of the educational aims. Educational aims reflect our views on human nature, our imagination of good human life and desirable society; among other things. Thus, the most abstract end of the spectrum that PoE considers is human nature and human capabilities. Aurobindo states that "there are three things which have to be taken into account in a true and living education, the man, the individual in his commonness and in his uniqueness, the nation or people and universal humanity"[3]. This puts in the centre the notion of human being, the nation or the society and a vision of humanity.

Tagore articulates his notion of human being and humanity thus: "It is an insult to his humanity, if man fails to invoke in his mind a definite image of his own ideal self, of his ideal environment, which it is his mission to reproduce externally. It is the highest privilege of man to be able to live in his own creation. … And what is more, man is not truly *himself* if his personality has not been fashioned by him according to

3. Sri Aurobindo, A Preface to National Education, in Early Cultural Writings, Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, Pondicherry, 2003, page 425.

some mental picture of perfection, which he has within. … It is for him inwardly to see himself as an idea, and outwardly to show himself as a person according to that idea. … He is an artist, whose medium of expression is his own psychology. Like all other artists, he has perpetually to struggle hard with his materials, to overcome obstructions, inner and outer, in order to make definite his manifestation."[4]

The nature of human being, her capabilities, good life for her and a desirable society necessarily demand philosophical deliberations, as they involve values and normative considerations. A rational scheme of education is not possible without considering these aspects of humanity. The first quote above indicates a necessity to keep human nature at the root of educational thinking, and the second indicts the complexity and abstractness one has to deal with in forming any notion of human nature.

Between these two extremes are situated aims of education which connect the ideals of humanity and human life on one side, with the practical task at hand in the classroom on the other. There can be umpteen ways of articulating aims which may serve to workout a connection between these two extremes. One good example (just as an example, not necessarily recommended) could be found in Basic National Education[5] which is approved by Gandhi: "the new scheme which we are advocating will aim at giving the citizens of the future a keen sense of personal worth, dignity and efficiency, and will strengthen in them the desire for self-improvement and social service in a co-operative community".

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4. Rabindranath Tagore, Man the artist, https://www.parabaas.com/rabindranath/articles/pRabindranath_MantheArtist.html, downloaded on 18th May 2020.
5. Basic National Education (Report of Zakir Hussain Committee), Hindustani Talim Sangh, Waradha, (1938). Page 16.

Since everywhere in this spectrum there are multiple perspectives and views, the connections worked out look very tentative and speculative. In addition, there have to be a large repertoire of tools, one can call them as content literature, which themselves sound very abstract and unconnected to the classroom practices but are necessary to connect the vision, the aims and the actual teaching practices. As the necessity of developing all this conceptual material is not immediately clear to the pragmatic man, and the connections worked out are neither as firm nor as clear as in Science; he gets frustrated and suspicious of the whole activity called PoE; and reaches the conclusion that it is not worthwhile to spend resources and time on this. However, as we have seen above, the necessity of dealing with philosophical issues can not be dismissed without losing our way in the long and complicated path from classroom to aims; and then to politics.

The important issue here, then, is: how do we conceptualise and fashion work in philosophy of education that may do its job properly, and can also convince the teacher and those who control education either through policy and administration or through their financial resources? One cannot answer this question from within PoE. Therefore, what I will do below will only be a tentative suggestion which may work..

Philosophy of education

On Dewey's advice we can begin with accepting that philosophy of education "is not an external application of ready-made ideas to a system of practice having a radically different origin and purpose: it is only an explicit formulation of the problems of the formation of right mental and moral habitudes in respect of the difficulties of contemporary

social life"[6]. Since our focus is on PoE we can restrict present considerations to the difficulties of contemporary education. A relatively more recent expression of a similar view is articulated by Barrow and Woods when they say: "[O]ne of our main objects will have been achieved if we can help readers to become more skilful at philosophical debate, able to think about and discuss in a philosophic manner issues which they have not met before and on which they have not read what other philosophers have to say"[7].

Accepting PoE as a way of identifying philosophical issues in education and thinking about them, we need to think of it as an area of knowledge as well. An area of knowledge to become a reasonably well defined discipline for such a purpose will necessarily require

(i) a methodology, at the least for initial stages in studying it and to finally fall back upon even in the advanced stages when nothing else is at hand,

(ii) a more or less clear set of criteria to mark the boundaries of the domain of issues and concepts it is likely to deal with, and

(iii) moral and intellectual dispositions expected from its study, as well as the requirement to practice it properly.

We will try to outline a brief sketch of PoE in the Indian context in three aspects mentioned above.

Before that, however, two preliminaries are in order. One, it is not a rigorous definition and delimitation of PoE for philosophers. It is a somewhat simple outline of PoE as a

6. John Dewey, Democracy and Education, Aakar Books, Delhi, (2004) (First published 1915), page 356.
7. Robin Barrow and Ronald Woods, An Introduction to Philosophy of Education (4th Edition), Routledge, London, (2006). Page 1.

discipline for educational practitioners. Two, there is nothing particularly Indian about what I am saying below except keeping in mind interest and concerns of Indian audience as stated in the first part of this article.

Philosophical enquiry and its method

For the sake of simplicity, taking cue from Hamm[8], we can start with examining the kind of questions philosophers ask, rather than the issues or particular areas of human knowledge they take up for reflection. According to Hamm "they ask, and try in various ways to answer, three sorts of questions:

(1) What do you mean? (Or, what does *it*—the word, the concept—mean?)

(2) How do you know? (Or, what, in general constitute the grounds or kinds of grounds for claiming to know something?)

(3) What is being presupposed? (Or, what assumptions or presuppositions are you now making or must you make for the proposition you are now asserting?)".

And further he rightly states that "[It] is when one acquires the habit of asking these questions about one's own and others' speech and writings that one begins to be a philosopher." These questions and hope of developing the habits indicate a tentative methodology and expected dispositions.

The first question (What does it mean?) encompasses the entire range of conceptual analysis. Conceptual clarity in philosophical investigation is of paramount importance,

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8. Hamm, C.M. (1989) *Philosophical Issues in Education: An Introduction*, RoutledgeFalmer, London and New York. P5.

as concepts are the basic building blocks of human understanding. This insistence on clarity of concepts does not demand flattening notions people may have (say of education or any other x under consideration) by imposing an uncompromising uniformity; all it demands is being conscious of the overt and covert differences in meanings of the same word people could be using in a discourse. In other words, it demands that one knows what one is talking about. Since language is a rule-governed system of symbols, and it offers endless scope of formulating grammatically well-formed sentences, the possibility of meaninglessness may creep in. That may very quickly lead to building of a tower of Babel, if the question "What do you mean" is not seriously asked. Thus, if one is not clear about what one is saying s/he is not doing any good philosophy; at most a sloppy one. This also indicates and emphasizes a thought through response to any issue being discussed. One of the biggest problems in a dialogue, be that educational or political, is responding without fully understanding the meaning and import of the speaker/writer. Thus, conceptual analysis indicated in this question demands clarity from the speaker/writer and responsibility of effort to understand from the reader/listener before reacting to any idea. It should also strengthen the disposition of patience in doing philosophy.

The second question (How do you know?) demands grounds for accepting or rejecting a proposition. Philosophy does not deal with assertions or received knowledge; it has to be squarely a rational activity if it is to have any worth at all. Therefore, the understanding of grounds on which one proposes something and their consistent employment in discourse can hardly be dispensed with. Again, the question does not preclude or prescribe any particular criteria for assessing the epistemic worth of grounds proposed; all that is demanded is banishment of arbitrariness and unjustified assertions.

Asking for reasons to accept something demands epistemic responsibility from the one who advances a proposition; and at the same time asserts dignity and independence of the one who is supposed to accept that proposition. This gives the discourse a meaningful seriousness and dignity. Thus again, asking for grounds emphasises making an attempt to be correct in the theoretical sense; as well as emphasising independence of mind as a disposition.

The third question (What is presupposed?) is to bring into open unexamined or, at any rate, not yet articulated, beliefs and assumptions. In most of the arguments what we say and hear is just the tip of the proverbial ice-berg of fondly held beliefs replete with unexamined assumptions. The discourse or argument that does not look under the visible tip is likely to be misunderstood and misjudged. Asking for articulation of assumptions is not the same thing as their rejection, it is just a serious attempt to render them visible, and open them up for examination. It will bring to the surface all the buried metaphysics (as well as more common assumptions) without which no discipline or discourse can take off. Looking for presuppositions hints at what Dewey describes as a "disposition to penetrate to deeper levels of meaning—to go below the surface and find out the connections of any event or object, and to keep at it".[9]

Thus, these three questions seem to be of undeniable importance in doing philosophy. To quote Dewey again: "It is of assistance to connect philosophy with thinking in its distinction from knowledge. Knowledge, grounded knowledge, is science; it represents objects which have been settled, ordered, disposed of rationally. Thinking, on the other hand, is prospective on reference. ... Philosophy

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9. John Dewey, Democracy and Education, Aakar Books, Delhi, (2004) (First published 1915). Page 351.

might almost be described as thinking which has become conscious of itself—which has generalized its place, function, and value in experience"[10]. These three questions taken as a method help a novice practitioner of philosophy to develop required dispositions and make her thinking "conscious of itself". Additionally it seems to me, they are equally useful to a more advanced philosopher when she is stuck for want of a proper method to deal with complex situations.

However, philosophical deliberations on education are not armchair reflections of a spectator. They are concerned explorations directed at finding solutions to practical problems of education and to give direction to possible action. Therefore, whatever judgment one forms on theoretical issues has implications for further development of thought as well as practice. PoE can not stop at arriving at a well-considered theoretical judgment and leave implications for practice to be worked out by someone else. Philosophers of education are mostly reticent to spell out the implications for practice, as it is largely an empirical domain. The relationship between ideas can be understood purely through speculative methods; but the relationship between action and its effect, whether one assumes it to be correlational or causal, requires empirical observation and analysis of data gathered from that observation, which is beyond PoE. Still, to realise its full potential PoE has to venture into the world of the practical. All three examples given in the beginning are illustrations of PoE indicating problems and hinting, however tentatively, to possible practical remedy through informed action.

Philosophical analysis can help in this in two ways. One, showing contradictions as in the case of RtE, that what is self-contradictory cannot be implemented in its true spirit; simply because it has no true-spirit or has a conflicting

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10. Ibid, page 351

spirit. As a general principle it can adopt the idea that what cannot pass a rigorous theoretical examination cannot bear significant fruit if implemented practically; however, the reverse, that that which passes theoretical examination necessarily produces good results, is not always true. Second, it can help in identifying limited number of possibilities and direction for action which are likely to bear fruit; which otherwise using a trial and error approach would be endless possibilities. Thus, action does not remain blind trial and error but acquires a reflective character. In other words, it helps turn random activity into guided practice and/or enquiry.

Therefore, we have to add a fourth question to Hamm's three we have considered above: What are the implications? If a proposition is accepted it would have its own logical implications for all that is connected with it and may have been already accepted in the discourse (or argument). Rational enquiry cannot afford to contain contradictions; and therefore, implications of accepting a new proposition may induce unforeseen changes in the entire belief system.

To reiterate, we can say that irrespective of the content, philosophy of education organises its enquiry around four key questions:

1. What does it mean?
2. How is it known?
3. What is presupposed? And
4. What are the implications of its acceptance?

Now we can round up our discussion on the method of PoE. One aspect of the method is already outlined above in characterising philosophical enquiry, namely: investigation around the four key questions. The second aspect can be tentatively captured in articulation of the way

philosophy approaches these questions. One suggestion worth considering is that philosophy tries to build a rational discourse through argumentation. Argument is important in order to encompass all possible aspects and interpretations of an issue. The philosophical argument is characterised by its emphasis on coherence or at least attempts to avoid contradiction. Since philosophical investigation is primarily speculative and is aimed at coherent organisation of human thought, it has very little to fall back upon for its justification other than consistency of the thought itself. This coherent system of thought is built on the ground (however shaky) of: agreement in intuitions, agreement in use of language, the principle of non-contradiction, logic, and open-mindedness to examine accepted positions. Adherence to these principles builds rational rigour, as the ultimate method in philosophy.

The above discussion takes care of the core of the general method of PoE. The method also hints at the dispositions required:

An attitude of careful examination from all possible directions before proposing or accepting any idea, principle, fact, and so on.

Recognition of epistemic responsibility and cherishing the value of cognitive clarity.

Epistemic independence in accepting or rejecting any idea.

Equal respect to reasons advanced by others irrespective of one's own position; or impartiality in theoretical deliberation.

Courage to accept inadequacies and mistakes, and open mindedness to revise one's position, and

Willingness to put in hard work to examine grounds for and against any ideas before arriving at any judgement. That brings us to the domain of PoE.

Domain of PoE

Making a list of issues that can be dealt with in PoE or demarketing its domain as clearly as that of sciences or mathematics does not seem to be possible. However, leaving the question of domain relatively open does not mean that philosophy has equal interest in all issues or it is equally capable of contributing to all issues. For example, the issues which can be settled on the basis of available empirical evidence, though are not out of bounds for philosophy, but at the same time are also not of great interest. In order to convert an empirical issue into philosophically interesting, one has either to investigate the epistemic veracity of the available empirical evidence, or the use of that evidence in argument building; which also includes normative aspects of epistemic criteria involved. Another aspect of an empirical issue that can be of interest to philosophy is working out its implications for human understanding and human conduct. Thus, the preferred terrain of philosophy is fundamental questions of human situation, understanding and conduct, that involve normative considerations.

Any philosophical enquiry arises from the present conflict in meaning making and ideals in the society. But since it tries to find general unifying principles, it has a tendency to become technical and abstract very quickly. The issues philosophers get interested in may seem to be completely abstract and arcane, with no relation to the practice of education. If all that PoE becomes interested in is of this nature, it loses its relevance. Thus, connection with the pragmatic issues of education ranging from classroom to research is a necessity for PoE. But we should also remember that often finding solutions to practical problems requires theoretical resources, without which it would be impossible to imagine new ways of tackling a problem. Such theoretical resources can not be

built on demand immediately when a problem arises. One can not dig a well each time one is thirsty. Mathematics has proved amply that in the world of abstract ideas, useless but rigorously developed concepts and results (theorems) may become useful after decades or even centuries of their first formulation. Philosophical explorations do have a similar propensity. The abstract and seemingly unrelated but meaningful in the discourse and rigorously worked our ideas and studies may become useful in future problem solving and development of knowledge. For example, a comparative study of *Nyaya* and *Inca* logic may sound very esoteric and useless to a practical minded person. Moreover in actuality, it may not give any results that are immediately useful in curriculum and pedagogy. But it may be an interesting topic to a philosopher of education, and the conclusions drawn may become very useful someday. One should not scoff at this hope of becoming useful someday.

Actually, it is building a repertoire of intellectual tools. Larger the repertoire of intellectual tools to understand the world one has, better chance one stands of finding a suitable tool when the need arises. This also helps in developing knowledge. In mathematics there are plenty of theorems which are of no direct use themselves, but very useful and important theorems can not be proved unless one first proves the 'useless' ones.

Therefore, the domain of PoE necessarily has to include very abstract ideas related with human understanding and human situations. However, to repeat, unless the larger part of the discipline deals with conceptual and normative issues which can throw immediate light on the practice, it can not hope to gain support from the society; and runs the danger of becoming completely useless. Therefore, a balance is certainly needed in the domain; a balance tilted towards

that which helps solve current problems of the practice and theory.

Conclusion

The above discussion provides hints on how to approach educational issues and what methods to use. The entire educational endeavour could be seen as an integrated whole comprising educational practice, system and theory. Philosophy of education in this sense, as Dewey noted, is not an application of content of philosophy to education; but should be seen as spotting and approaching the issues in educational practice and theory in philosophical manner.

Philosophy of education then will have a double task to perform in education. One, as a component of educational theory contributing assumptions and insights regarding educational practice; for example, analysis of aims of education, possible curricula, pedagogy, human nature, knowledge, etc. And second, constructing an umbrella framework in which all aspects of educational theory can be understood in relationship with each other and in relationship with educational practice and critiquing educational theory. It would be gross misunderstanding to take the second aspect as an attempt to establish any kind of disciplinary hegemony; in its more appropriate and justifiable form it is labour of love undertaken and responsibility accepted to ensure coherence and interconnectedness within educational theory and between educational theory, between practice and system. This task is philosophical by nature as the most fundamental principles used here would necessarily be normative; the analysis of their nature, range and application being one of the primary tasks of philosophy in any case.

Prima facie, this operational understanding of philosophy of education seems to be capable of encompassing all aspects

usually considered within this discipline; from analysis of aims, curricula, pedagogy etc. to epistemology, ethics, socio-political philosophy and issues of special interest in education like critical thinking, creativity, environment, *et al.* I am unaware of other countries, but Indian education for the last at the very least fifty years has been an arena of irresponsible play of unexamined and half understood ideas. This happens in the name of improvement and keeping abreast with current developments. The remedy is not to stifle new ideas through any kind of systemic restrictions, that would be a disaster as it will kill all new initiative. The solution lies in rigorous philosophical examination of all such attempts and ideas, and a proliferation of philosophical writing which is closely connected with the practice at the ground one hand and most generalised and abstract but rigorous theory on the other.