

RADICAL THOUGHT IN EDUCATION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PAULO FREIRE

By: Sudeep Kaur Randhawa & Satinderpal Kaur Gill

*Lecturer, DIET, Verka, Amritsar, Punjab, India.

**Principal, Sewa Devi College of Education, Tarn Taran, Punjab, India.

Abstract:

Radical thought in education indicates change in the present system of education. Though Paulo Freire expressed his views long back in 1998 but it is still applicable for the improvement in the present scenario. By following his views we can bring about a desirable change in the prevalent system of education. He believed that society should be built on cooperation rather than competition and that social decision making should be governed by democratic procedure. The student may not be considered as empty vessels. The learning process should be participatory. The basic format of the class should be a dialogue around problem posed by teacher and students. The classroom discourse must be democratic in so far as it is constructed mutually by students and teacher. The classroom should be active and interactive based on problem posing, cooperative learning and participatory format. Let the teaching learning environment be critical and democratic leading to the development of human feelings as well as development of social inquiry and conceptual habits of mind. The role of a teacher is to be changed one ie from a dictator to a guide and a facilitator, so that real learning takes place and education imparted by educational institution can help an individual to live a balanced life and to bring about the overall development of an individual.

Key Words: Paulo Friere, education, radical, learning

About Author:



The author Sudeep Kaur Randhawa is working as lecturer in DIET (district institute of education and training) Verka, Amritsar, Punjab. She is in the education department for the last 21 years. Other than educational, she has keen interest in co curricular activities.

*The term **radical** is from Latin word Radix meaning root, arising from or going to a root or source – BASIC, departing markedly from the usual or customary- EXTREME. Radical philosophy focuses on the fundamental social change.*

The main radical critique of education is that it reproduces the social, political, and economic norms

of the dominant ideology. Education is not neutral. It is political. Radical philosophy promotes ideas that society should be built on cooperation rather than competition and that social decision making should be governed by democratic procedure

Education imparted by educational institution helps an individual to live a balanced life and it is this

education which is believed to be contributing to the overall development of an individual, Everyday in newspaper we observe that there are photographs of winners, students getting 99%. It means all those students whose photographs are not in the newspaper, ARE THEY LOOSERS. If there are 30 students in a class and 3 or 4 are successful in getting admission in engineering or medical college, are others loser. Nation should grow as a team, there should be horizontal growth .we accept our society to be secular, socialist, and republic, giving equal opportunities to develop. But now days in society such a thing is nowhere to be seen. We see that this is not a competition but a stupid competition. There should be school which can teach values to the students. Children should grow by observing what all is happening all around them and not just by class room teaching. Children should be taught through the use of co-operation, unity organization and cultural synthesis. It must me explanatory, practical and normative all at the same time. It must explain what is wrong in society with current social reality; identify the model to change it. Students who have the feeling of uselessness die before their death and society keeps on reminding them of their failure.

However, the present educational system is producing mechanical individuals who is not utilizing education in their day to day life but are engaged in learning lessons by heart to pass the exams rather than. Their aim is to get high examination results and the over specialization of one discipline at an early age contributes to current Indian education tendencies that continue to encourage rote learning instead of critical thinking skills. Given the present Indian condition of poverty, lack of facilities and improper training of teachers an enriched educational system remains a distant dream. One of the most prominent features of the typical Indian style of teaching lies in the dominance of textbook use. Most of the time, teacher teach by the lecture method and sometimes take up activities to verify the factual knowledge given in the textbooks. These methods of teaching are used since teachers believed that their role is to transmit

authoritarian knowledge to the passive learner. People began in a state of magical consciousness; they are voiceless and unaware of their oppression Nowadays our teaching process is as follows

- the teacher teaches and the students are taught;
- the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;
- the teacher thinks and the students are thought about;
- the teacher talks and the students listen- meekly;
- the teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined;

Freire's work has its roots in the constructivist theory of learning. The constructivist theory holds that knowledge is constructed by individuals by using their experiences, which is what Freire drew upon in developing his pedagogy. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

The teacher student relation as per Feire is like an object and subject, where teacher is a subject and a patient listening student an object. Thus teacher student relationship is fundamentally narrative character. In this way the content of teaching becomes lifeless petrified. In another words, an act of narrate becomes what is known as banking concept of education. Where the teacher teaches and the student is taught, what is away from reality and disconnected from totality that engendered them. students thus becomes depositories and teacher is the depositor, where the student patiently receives, memorize and repeat the content.

In Feire classroom students think critically of subject matter, doctrines, learning process and their society. The students are taught to discuss problem from their life, social issue and academic subject in a mutually created dialogue

In Freireian education system the students are treated as complicated, substantial human being and the system also encourage in them the curiosity, activism about knowledge and the world. This method do not make students passive and anti intellectual but delivering lecture into sleepy silence.

Freire lays stress on consistence between democratic value of critical pedagogy and the classroom practice. The teacher adopts the method of democratic learning process and liberating classroom which lays emphasis on self discipline and collaboration

According to Freire, teaching learning environment should be based on the following characteristics-

i. -The learning process should be **participatory** ie interactive and cooperative where students do a lot of discussing and writing instead of listening to teacher talk.

ii. The basic format of the class is **dialogue** around problem posed by teacher and students. Each must trust the others; there must be mutual respect and love (care and commitment). The teacher initiates this process and guides it into deeper phases. By frontloading questions and back loading lectures, the teacher invites students to assert their ownership of their education building the dialogue with their words. They approach students as fellow dialoguers, which creates an atmosphere of hope, love, humility, and trust.

iii. The classroom discourse is **democratic** in so far as it is constructed mutually by students and teacher. Students have equal speaking rights in the dialogue as well as right to negotiate the curriculum. They are asked to co-develop and evaluate the curriculum.

iv. The classroom should be **active and interactive** based on problem posing, cooperative learning and participatory formats.

v. The teaching learning environment should be critical and democratic leading to the development of human feelings as well as development of social inquiry and conceptual habits of mind.

Thus we can say that the teacher chooses and enforces his choice and the students comply; each child is unique and has strengths and weaknesses. Children learn and progress at different pace and style. Some children learn best visually,

some by questioning, some others by describing and observing, accordingly opportunities need to be given to get exposed to various situations. We all are concerned that every school needs to provide opportunities where each child learns and happily engages in school level activities. This requires that the teaching-learning processes in each classroom must address the needs of all children- *cognitive/ age appropriate curriculum, conducive and non threatening classroom environment, encouraging school based assessment and reporting practices in the school*. If children find such learning environment they would be able to achieve more successfully. Thus there is a need to visualize their learning processes holistically rather than viewing child's progress in isolation. We all realize that children learn when they are exposed to the real situations in their surroundings that help them construct, be aware, appreciate and get sensitized towards the issues (natural, social and cultural) prevailing around. The learning process begins with the child's immediate environment. Efforts need to be made to avoid giving direct information, definitions and descriptions as children construct their own knowledge using varied teaching and assessment strategies. However, this requires ensuring their active engagement participation in learning by exposing them to diverse experiences through a variety of sources within and outside the classrooms.

References

1. Pedagogy of the oppressed by Paulo Freire. 1970
2. Death at an early age by Jonathan Kozol.1967
3. en.m.Wikipedia.org
4. Teaching4betterworld.co.in