

Quadrant II - Notes

Paper Code: EDU-01

Module Name: The Salient Features of UNESCO's Education Commission Report Education in the 21st Century (Jacques Delors)

Module No:38

The Salient Features of UNESCO's Education Commission Report Education in the 21st Century (Jacques Delors)

International commission on Education for the 21st century (1993-96)

- The international community began its efforts in 1990 to search for an educational philosophy for better international understanding and an educational system that can meet the challenges of 21st century.
- The most important step was taken by the UNESCO by appointing an International commission on Education for the 21st century (1993-96).

The Delors Report (1996) 'Learning – The Treasure Within'

- The Delors Report (1996) 'Learning – The Treasure Within' reaffirms the view of Education Commission (1964 – 66) when it visualizes learning as harnessing "the treasure within". According to the Delors Report, learning constitutes "the heartbeat of society" while 'learning to know', 'learning to do', learning to live together' and 'learning to be' constitute four pillars of education; mutual understanding, peaceful interchange and harmony can be taken as the social aims of education.

The Delors Report (1996) 'Learning – The Treasure Within'

Learning: The Treasure Within is the report submitted to UNESCO, Paris by an International Commission on Education for the twenty-first century headed by **Jacques Delors**. In the opening submission chapter by the chairman, education has been declared to be a **necessary utopia**. Education is declared to be "the principal means available to foster a deeper and more harmonious form of human development and thereby to reduce poverty, exclusion, ignorance, oppression and war."

Tensions to be overcome

The commission identifies a few tensions that it regards will be central to the problems of the 21st century. They are:

1) the tension between the global and the local, i.e., local people need to become world citizens without losing their roots;

2) while culture is steadily being globalised, this development being partial is creating tension between the universal and the individual.

3) the third tension is pretty familiar to Indians the tension between tradition and modernity. Whereas for some the process of change is slow, for others it is not so, thereby creating problems of adaptation;

4) the need to balance between impatient cries for quick answers to peoples' problems and a patient, concerted, negotiated strategy of reform results in the problem/tension between long-term and short-term considerations

It is the last tension which the commission thought was necessary to address. In the language of Delors; "There is, therefore, every reason to place renewed emphasis on the moral and cultural dimensions of education, enabling each person to grasp the individuality of other people and to understand the world's erratic progression towards a certain unity; but this process must begin with self-understanding through an inner voyage where milestones are knowledge, meditation and the practice of self- criticism"

5) tension arising out of human desire to compete and excel and the concern for equality of opportunity;

6) the tension between the extraordinary expansion of knowledge and the capacity of human beings to assimilate it;

7) lastly, another perennial factor the tension between the spiritual and the material.

- * Commission stressed the **need of educating young children and youth** which is an expression of affection.
- * Education is an ongoing process of improving **knowledge and skills** and it is exceptional mean of bringing about personal development and building relationships among individuals ,groups and nations.

Design of the Report

- The reason why the commission titled its report Learning: The Treasure Within is taken from a line in one of the parables of La Fontaine (1668-1694), titled The Ploughman and his Children, which calls learning a treasure. But what placed it inside is not clear except that the spark within is divine.
- The chapter scheme in the report reflects the basic thinking already done by Delors and Co. The recommendations consisted of 3 parts and 9 chapters.

Major Pointers and Recommendations

- **Education** is declared to be "the principal means available to foster a deeper and more harmonious form of human development and thereby to reduce poverty, exclusion, ignorance, oppression and war."

- Delors regards "education as an ongoing process of improving **knowledge and skills**, it is also perhaps primarily an exceptional means of bringing about personal development and building relationships among individuals, groups and nations."
- Commission stress the need of improvement, general availability and strengthening of **Basic Education**-A requirement which is valid for all countries.
- The emphasis should be laid for **primary education and its traditional basic programmes** –reading, writing , arithmetic-but also on the ability to express oneself in a language that lends itself to dialogue and understanding.
- The concept of **life long education** is different from the traditional distinction between initial and continuing education.
- The concept of '**Learning Society**' , in which every one affords an opportunity of learning and fulfilling one's potential.
- It press **the need of literacy work and basic education for adults**.
- **Teachers** should be provided with the psychological and material situation by the society and **their position should be recognized with suitable resources and necessary authority** .
- **Teachers** should be also concern the need for imperative requirement to update the knowledge and skills; should accommodate the professional opportunities; should benefit from the economic ,social and cultural life experiences.
- Major Pointers and Recommendations
- Commission stress **the importance of exchanges of teachers and partnerships between institutions in countries**.
- The **administrative decentralization and autonomy** of educational establishments are required for the developments .
- It also recommends for the reorganization of **funding structures** in the light of the principle that the learning should continue throughout individual's lives.
- Major Pointers and Recommendations
- The diversification and the improvement of distance education through use of technologies; greater use of technologies in adult education and in-service training of teachers; **dissemination of such technologies** throughout the society are also the commission recommendation.
- The need for international co-operation should be felt in the field of education.
- A policy for strong encouragement for the education of girls and women should be promoted at the level of international co-operation .
- **Four Pillars of Education**

In the view of the commission, there will be four bases of education in the twenty first century:

- 1. **Learning to know**
- 2. **Learning to do**
- 3. **Learning to be**
- 4. **Learning to live together.**

Learning to Know

- In the opinion of Delor's commission, to understand the rapid changes occurring due to scientific progress and social processes, and cultivate skill to work accordingly, the following will be necessitated in the twenty-first century-
- **1. Basic education should be expanded.**
- **2. Specific education should follow basic education.**
- Commission suggest that learning to know can be achieved by **combining a sufficiently broad general knowledge with the opportunity to work in depth on a small number of subjects.**
- In the view of the commission, the children should be trained in learning methods, especially in focusing concentration, memorizing and thinking, and this task should be started right from infancy. In the view of the commission, these are the **methods of learning which can help learn lifelong.**

Learning to Do

1. The provision for **work experience and social service** will have to be compulsorily made along with formal education.

2. Peoples should be given **opportunities to learn life long**. For life long learning, the societies have to be transformed into '**learning societies**'. By 'learning societies' the commission means such societies in which are given different opportunities for obtaining knowledge and skill in social, cultural and economic field, also with imparting of formal education.

Learning to Be

- The aptitude and latent talents of children and peoples can be brought out.
- Children's personality can be fully developed.
- Physical abilities and mental abilities (memory, reasoning, and imagination) can be developed in children.
- Social skills and aesthetic sense and communication skills of children can be cultivated together with leadership ability. **In the opinion of the commission, only such people will be able to guard themselves in the twenty-first century.**

Learning to Live Together

- In the commission's view, the first thing for this is to cultivate the ability to understand one another. Unless all people are able to understand others, they will not like to live together. Our modern needs have so expanded today that we are no more self-dependent even in our family, social and national matters, and leave alone international level.
- Education should train children to understand others.
- Children should be trained to cooperate with one another for the attainment of goals right from the beginning.
- The commission has explained that when people come nearer, some conflicts can arise among them. Therefore, education will have to train them in subsidizing conflicts, and they will have to be trained in eradicating conflicts on the bases of human values.
- The commission has clarified that now all nations of the world will have to resolve their mutual differences, will have to sow the seeds of peace instead of that of war, and will have to solve one another's problems in mutual cooperation. Therefore, it is essential that children be trained to live together right from the beginning and be taught a lesson of peace and harmony in place of conflict and struggle.