



Panel Discussion: Knowledge, Culture and Education

Speaker:

Padma Sarangpani, David Carr, Denis C Philips, Rohit Dhankar and Venu Narayan (as moderator)

Date / Time:

January 22, 2013 - 3:45pm - 5:15pm

Venue:

Room No 307, Pixel B, APU

Abstract:

The discourse on education cannot ignore questions about the nature of knowledge, sources, and criteria and procedures for validation. While discussions on these questions consider reason, objectivity, veracity and universality as the most important parameters, concerns about these have been raised on at least two counts: 1. that these parameters ignore marginal forms of knowledge; 2. that these parameters are themselves socio-cultural constructs. Proponents of objectivism argue that this position leads to relativism, and, further, that relativism itself is an incoherent view. The important questions here are - How best can educational epistemology deal with these pulls in opposing directions? What kind of balance should it strike between possibility of social acceptance and commitment to conceptual criteria for knowledge? These are not the kind of issues educational epistemology can easily ignore. This panel will address these questions and other related ones and their implications for education.

A Note on the Speaker:

David Carr is Professor Emeritus of Education, Teaching and Leadership at the Moray House School of Education, University Edinburgh. His large body of influential writings has tackled issues in philosophy of education such as moral education, nature of knowledge, citizenship and democracy, art education and education of emotions. Author of the widely read *Making Sense of Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy and Theory of Education* (Routledge, 2003), Professor Carr has been an important voice in the debates about virtue ethics and value education.

Denis C. Phillips is Emeritus Professor at the School of Education, Stanford University. In his long career, he has written on philosophy of education, foundations of empirical educational research, indoctrination and directive teaching, teacher knowledge, autonomy and moral development. His writings include *Constructivism in Education: Opinions and Second Opinions on Controversial Issues* (2000), *Perspectives on Learning* (with Jonas F. Soltis). He is also

author of the entry on Philosophy of Education in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.

Rohit Dhankar is Professor of Philosophy of Education, Azim Premji University, Bangalore. He has been part of several initiatives of the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) to develop material and curriculum through various committees. He was an integral part of the National Curriculum Framework 2005 process, serving as a member of the National Steering Committee and Drafting Committee and Chair of the Focus Group on Curriculum, Syllabus and Textbooks. He was also part of the collaborative group of institutions that developed the M.A. Elementary Education programme at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai and he taught philosophy of education course at TISS for several years. Professor Dhankar is the founder secretary of Digantar, a voluntary organization in Jaipur engaged in providing alternative education to rural children.

Venu Narayan's teaching interests are in Education and the Philosophy of Education. He coordinates a research unit at Azim Premji University called the Mind and Society Initiative. The Mind and Society Initiative has three key areas of focus: original research and technology development, communication and outreach and pedagogy. He has a degree in Engineering from the University of Madras and another in Management from the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta. After a few years in the business sector he left to teach at a Krishnamurti School in 1989 and subsequently helped start, with a group of educators, a small alternative school outside Bangalore.

Padma Sarangapani is a professor at TISS, Mumbai. She is interested in curriculum, teacher education, elementary education and policies relating to it, classroom processes and socio-cultural studies of learning/schooling, indigenous education, and comparative education. Professor Sarangapani has written extensively on the subject of knowledge-construction by school children. Her book, *Constructing School Knowledge: An Ethnography of Learning in an Indian Village* was published in 2003. Alongside her other contributions, she is known for her writings on folk pedagogy.