EDITORIAL NOTE

DEBATING EDUCATION: ISSUES AND CONCERNS – Volume Four 2020

Editor: Maya John

The 2020 volume (volume four) is centred on the theme, **'Debating Education: Issues and Concerns'**. Apart from thought-provoking research articles on the dedicated theme, and reviews of recently published books, the 2020 volume also carries two interviews of well-known scholars, i.e. Professor Tim Ingold (anthropologist and Chair of Social Anthropology at the University of Aberdeen), and Professor Meenakshi Thapan (sociologist of education and former Professor at Delhi School of Economics).

Needless to say, the 2020 volume has materialised in an extremely tumultuous context. While the volume was in preparation, the world witnessed the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns, which have amply revealed the multiple vulnerabilities of the populace and the culpability of ruling regimes. Even as the current COVID-19 pandemic is increasingly being 'normalised' and is joining the ranks of ever recurring and concurrent diseases and epidemics, this conjuncture has also seen the Union Cabinet approving the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in the bid to formalise and normalise many educational measures that already existed in India; albeit with a vigorous tempo now being assigned to them by the new policy framework.

Almost all the contributions in the current volume have NEP 2020 as a special reference whilst dealing with other concerns. Contributions by scholars from India and abroad have enriched our understanding regarding issues and concerns pertaining to education. These contributions will definitely remain a scholastic milestone for future research.

This volume amply highlights that education as a component of cultural inheritance remains a contentious issue. Representing the transfer of knowledge, skill endowment, etc., education harbours the tendency to support and reproduce social hierarchy, as well as the countervailing propensity towards amelioration of vulnerable socio-economic groups. A rich body of work cutting across disciplines like history, sociology, anthropology, economics, philosophy, among others, has sought to establish the contentious past, ambivalent present and uncertain future of education.

The contemporary conjuncture of the twenty-first century has been identified by academics, educationalists and activists as a moment of 'crisis' in education. Still others have questioned this emphasis on the concept of a crisis, given the continuities between existing and earlier education systems and paradigms. To take these discussions forward, the current volume offers critical perspectives from historical, sociological, philosophical, and other social science disciplines. Importantly, some of the contributions speak to each other and elicit much-required introspection of the arguments claimed about India's educational experience.