CHAPTER ONE

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1.1 INTRODUCTION:

The chief task of education is above all to shape man and to
guide the evolving dynamism through which man forms himself as a
human.

The discipline of education has recently witnessed an explosion
of knowledge. We live in a period of exceptionally rapid changes in
all sectors of our social life. Education as a sub-system of society
cannot escape the impact of social change, so we must reflect to
consider the innovative approaches to meet the challenges of future.
This is both inevitable and essential as societies are faced with new
problems social economic, political and environmental, thus
generating a high pressure on the minds of social scientists to explore
and invent effective solutions to these problems. Education as a potent
factor in this regard, must not only study and understand these issues
but also reflect on them adequately through its plans and programmes.

Education as a discipline and as a way of living is growing
enormously. As an answer to the emerging social problems, new
dimensions and directions are being added to education. It has picked
up the gauntlet to meet these challenges. Hence new “sub disciplines”
under the broader discipline of education are fast emerging.
The development of new knowledge or of new applications of existing knowledge has been the "new frontier" for education for the last several decades. The new thinking and emphasis on interdisciplinary approach to the solution of educational problems has led to the emergence of new fields and areas, which have attracted the attention of educational researchers. Among such emerging new fields of education, the field of creativity is considered to be the most important as development of any country owes much to the efforts of its creative citizens. The expansion of knowledge and skills also, depends on the creative contributions of creative minds.

Every individual is born with certain distinctive characteristics. Each one is blessed with one or the other talent or creative abilities. All children have some element of creativity. Creative talents may be expressed through child’s writings, poems, paintings, drawings, music, dance, classroom discussions, experiments, working on projects and several other co-curricular activities.

Creativity includes the capability of producing more ideas in many different directions and giving original responses along with their relevant details for the solution of a given problem. Creativity is practically independent of conventional intelligence. In fact creativity is a potential which influences human activity in almost all fields, scientific, technical and artistic, dramatics and so on. It may be expressed in scientific discoveries on one hand and in literary writings, paintings, musical compositions, poetry and sculpture on the other. Thus it contributes significantly not only enhancement of knowledge, but also to enrich culture.
Creativity is the ability to bring something new into existence. It is not a fixed and static quality but something that changes over time. For many years, persons labeled 'creative' were considered to be someone who had produced a recognized work in the area of fine arts, a sculptor, painter, and composer etc. Gradually this concept was enlarged to include inventors who might bring forth novel products in almost any field of human endeavour. Creativity was considered to be a characteristic of a new outstanding individual, a trait that the common man might admire but never aspire to possess. More recently there has been a growing conviction that everyone has it in his power to be creative to some degree. Some feel that this degree is inherited and some believe that it is developed as a characteristic of healthy mature personalities.

1.1.1 Expression of creativity at the Primary Level

Young children often reveal many of their inner needs and cravings through what they draw and the way in which they draw it. In the lower classes, the children engage in finger painting, water colouring, and drawing with crayons and craft activities. Each activity serves a particular function to develop child's imaginative and emotional interests. Different children show wide variation of expression as they manipulate the mud in finger painting. The teacher may suggest and encourage, but the resulting pattern should be that of the child. When freedom is given to children we observe a form of play among children. They won't care for their clothes or the material used. Insight can be gained into the child's emotional state by an experienced teacher as he watches the child at work. This type of
activity is believed to have therapeutic value for some types of emotional maladjustments.

Children have a strong urge to manipulate and to construct. The child is happy when he molds a lump of clay into many shapes. He will be fascinated when he cuts, tears, folds and decorates with paper, by means of any media, engages in activities that provide a wide range of expression of creative abilities and interests.

Many a time teachers are not responding to the children’s abilities and there is no opportunity to express their talents. Then automatically the creative talents are curbed to a certain extent. Teachers at primary level treat such talented children as abnormal, suppress their inborn talents, instead of recognizing it and fostering its growth, they feel such children are problem children and impose more restriction on such children. So these children use their talents for distructive ends. Therefore it is a must today, that their teachers identify these students and encourage them to channelise their talent for a good cause, which will be helpful to the mankind in future.

1.1.2 Creativity, Teaching and Learning at the Secondary Level

Educational developments in Karnataka in general and South Kanara in particular has mostly emphasized academic achievement of children in their school examinations. Over the years no doubt, students from South Kanara District have shown better results in school achievement compared to achievement in many other districts. But one cannot say that such emphasis has lead to their full mental development. Often rote memory and specific attention to examination
results have hampered development of creative abilities in most children and this cannot be accepted as the goal of education. Teachers are driven to an examination oriented teaching process and they, therefore, hardly consider it as their duty to identify creative talents in school children, leave aside encouraging them in creative thinking.

Added to this the social and family background of the majority of school children is hardly conducive to create a better environment, for fostering creativity. The rampant poverty and increasing unemployment supported by geometrically progressing population growth hinders all efforts, to foster creativity, and as a result ultimately, the nation suffers.

Dr. R.P. Singh rightly said that school children constitute one of the nation’s most valuable assets and hence the national progress will entirely depend upon the proper mental development of the younger generation.

But unfortunately one finds that the generation of teachers during recent decades are hardly equipped for this newer task because the teaching methods employed in most of the Indian schools are so outmoded, fit to be methods of teaching used in eighteenth century. The product of such education process, which does not encourage creativity, can hardly initiate progressive methods. Thus it is a vicious circle, which does not give room to more progressive methods to be introduced in the education system.

This will be possible, only if the creative talents of the younger generation are identified, encouraged and supported with more
rational and progressive methods. Alongwith this school curricular and co-curricular programmes too would need considerable reshaping so as to sustain better efforts to foster creative talents among children.

The very goal of education in our country as a whole will have to be redefined and all efforts in all directions will have to be made to achieve these goals. Necessarily the educational policy both at the national and the state levels will have to be reframed and vigorously pursued.

1.2 IMPORTANCE OF CREATIVITY IN OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Education is the touchstone of civilization and culture of a country. The progress of a country depends to a large extent on its achievement in education. Education is generally considered to be the backbone of national ideals. Educators should be aware that things learnt inside and outside the classroom exert a great influence on the student’s attitudes, work habits and values. The quality of education determines the quality of nation and if we want to be a strong and prosperous nation we will have to recognize the importance of education based on sound principles.

Education is a process of unfolding of potential abilities from within. It is a never-ending process of inner growth and its period stretches from cradle to the grave. In a country like ours where importance is attached to specialized skills and where the life is becoming very complicated, education cannot stand aloof. It is the age
of scientific and technological advancement and important things are clothed informal and well-defined attire.

Education today is expected to help the students to cope with the stress and strain of technological advancement, to adjust their lifestyle to it, to contribute to society and above all to contribute to the domain of knowledge. This implies that students coming out of schools need to be well equipped with certain cognitive skills, reasoning, problem solving, awareness of circumstances and perception and such other skills. Such cognitive skills can develop primarily when one is endowed with mental and intellectual capacities. Unfortunately in our country cognitive awareness seems to be sadly lacking among students today and students are rarely aware of the changes around them.

Education is one of the most important sub-systems of a society because it generates both finite and infinite power. The quality of power helps in shaking the pattern of society, where educational institutions turn out capable, intelligent, and mentally alert and self-sufficient pupils, society becomes strong and productive. Hence every nation has a potent need to develop a system of education, which would be economically and socially fruitful. A healthy system of education would be one, which ensures physical, mental, economic development and sensitivity of the students. The foundation of all development is of mental alertness, which should be encouraged. We should discourage such a system of education, which fails to nurture mental growth, and alertness. It implies development of problem solving ability like reasoning, analytical thinking, logical perception
and abstraction. Such individuals can succeed in creating innovating and meeting new challenges and in perceiving new horizons of thought and action.

Dube (1975) stressed that ‘A vital culture is a creative culture’. One of the major objectives of the present context would be to promote creativity in the field of literature, music, visual and graphic arts as well as science and technology. The importance of socio-cultural influence is so pronounced that Toynbee (1964) warned that “potential creative ability will be stifled, stunted, and stultified by the prevalence in the society of adverse attitudes of mind and habit of behavior”.

Human creativity is the key to success or failure in mankind’s quest for knowledge. Indian Philosophers, over the centuries, have given deep and abiding thought to the theoretical and philosophical aspects of the process of creativity.

1.2.1 Under emphasis of creativity in the classroom

The present education system in India is defective in certain vital respects. In the lives of young ones, we can conceive of nothing better for the development of character, adoption of high moral standards and the expansion of the mind and intellect than the daily contact and association with a right teacher. In our educational system the teacher and the taught are thrown together at certain stated periods of the school. This hardly enables the teacher to mould the minds of his pupils. Most of the students are neither under parental authority, nor under proper control of their teachers.
Unfortunately in our country the educational system is not effective enough to develop the desired mental alertness among students. The traditional rote method of learning, lecture method of teaching and passive role of pupils are still evident in the classes. Emphasis is laid on mastery of content rather than understanding of concept. Percentage of marks is considered a major criterion of academic worth. Carelessness of academicians in the preparation of text books is also a matter of grave concern.

Creative thinking is one of the by-products of integrated thinking faculty of the brain but nowadays this has been weighed down and under emphasized in the curriculum. The problem is that sometimes, such ideas are beyond the comprehension of even their teachers, hence the creative talents remain mostly unrecognized and if at all noticed, remain unencouraged.

Many times a genius or creative person is an unlettered person from the point of view of academic and educational achievement. If by chance, their creative needs remain frustrated, what they would have become turns out to be the lives of people who turn out to be the psychologically disturbed or maladjusted individuals.

Under emphasis of creativity needs in individuals may result in an unrealistic or uncertain self-concept. Torrence opines that educational institutions are legitimately concerned about mental health of their students. If creativity needs of children are stifled, the result is that it cuts at the very roots of satisfaction in children and ultimately may create overwhelming tension resulting in breakdown in them
that it cuts at the very roots of satisfaction in children and ultimately may create overwhelming tension resulting in breakdown in them because one's creativity is one's most valuable resource in coping with stresses and strains experienced by individuals in daily life.

Even though the need to provide ample opportunities to each pupil to develop his/her originality and creative talents had emerged as an important curricular concern, the emphasis on rote methods has narrowed down the aims of education to a mere acquisition of minimum knowledge and passing of examination.

It is a welcoming trend that some of enlightened educational administrators have stopped giving over emphasis to first division in school board examinations. The quality of school is being redefined. Some of our schools are becoming conscious in favour of protecting our talented children (Passi 1996).

Hence, it can be concluded that in the modern context in teaching learning process the teacher's goal is to help children develop creative thinking skills and creative expression.

1.3 CONTRIBUTION OF CREATIVE PEOPLE TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

No nation whether big or small can afford to over look the importance of creativity in this age of competition. The creative persons affect enormously not only scientific and technological progress, but society in general. The nations, which learn best as to how to identify, encourage and develop the creative potential in their people, may find themselves in very advantageous position.
Creativity has existed in the past and currently is also the hallmark of goals of education. The twenty first century is going to be the century of creative thinking alone, because the world problems need altogether new and innovative creative thinking strategies for their solutions.

The discovery and development of creative talent has become essential in our modern world. The national interest now demands increased emphasis on creativity and superior thinking ability in all branches of science, art and literature.

It has been recognized that creativity is a distinguishing characteristic of outstanding individuals in almost every field. It has been conceded that the possession of high intelligence, special talent and technical skills are not enough for outstanding success but being creative in scientific discovery, invention and the arts is also essential. Creative thinking appears to be important in jobs, which are quite routine in nature.

The future of our civilization, our very survival depends upon the quality of the creative imagination of our next generation. Therefore educators are legitimately concerned that their students make useful contributions to our society.

Democracies collapse when they fail to use intelligent imaginative methods for solving their problems- Greece collapsed because of not listening to the warning by Socrates. Instead of trying to stuff a lot of facts into the minds of children and make them encyclopedias, we must ask what kind of children they are becoming?
What kind of thinking they do? How resourceful are they? Whether they relate similar experiences together in order to draw conclusions?

Daul Wolfle (1960) argued that it is advantageous to a society to see the greatest achievable diversity of talent among those who constitute the society.

Education is a means of developing our creative potentialities because in each of us there is vast fund of abilities, a private hope and a dream, which when realized can be translated into benefit for everyone and be the greatest strength of our nation. It is essential that talent hidden in every individual be explored, understood and adequate effort should be made for the conservation and development of the same.

1.4 ENCOURAGING CREATIVE ABILITIES

It is the real challenge before the humanity. A beginning needs to be made in schools from the early years of school education to face the challenges. In current system of education, the lack of opportunities for creative expression for teachers as well as students is stifling because teachers are involved with textbooks and external examinations, to the exclusion of the real process of education. Whole generation of teachers has not known any other system and any positive changes in the present system is bound to be met with resistance. There is also an inertia in the system to upgrade educational material promoted by the cozy relationships between textbook writers, education administrators and publishers. Studies undertaken by the National Teachers Commission indicate that
majority of teachers are ill-prepared, do not keep abreast with developments in their knowledge and take private tuitions at the cost of their institutional work.

Our teachers' training has to be geared up to prepare teachers who encourage openness, freedom of expression, values and risk taking behavior of their students and above all appreciate every bit of ideas expressed by their students. What we need is to spot out creative children and cultivate in them creative habits for the ultimate benefit of society. This can be achieved only by placing creative children in the company of such teachers whose own acts encourage creativity. Pre-school and primary education is obsessed with making children learning, reading and writing. Ironically, learning by hearing and feeling, which are better-developed faculties, are not given prominence. Child psychologists have repeatedly pointed out to this basic lacuna in primary education. The emphasis on reading and writing from very young age is also not conducive to creativity. The latent curiosity in children is not tapped.

The current system of book-based and examination oriented teaching does not inculcate independent thinking. It should be changed to make the students learn by practice and experience.

Therefore an important agenda for reforms in education is to shift from mere verbal teaching to sensory learning in order to provoke curiosity. Pre-school learning should not be allowed to degenerate into formal learning. The accent must be on fostering creative expression of joy and healthy psychological development. Darnell et al (1999) also share the opinion that to turn out into creative
learners, students value their independence in the classroom and their freedom to express their creative ideas without fear of personal judgment. One should not go to the absurd extent of claiming that each and every child can be turned out to be a Newton or an Einstein, or Shakespeare, but every teacher can confidently claim that potential for creativity exists in everyone. It only requires the proper environment in which each and everyone can sprout and be nurtured to the fullest development.

Very few teachers, in fact, seem to be aware that in our educational system creativity is badly missing though greatly desired. A few teachers seem to recognize the potential creativity of students and fewer still would dare to nurture it. If we hope that teaching should lead to real growth and development and if we believe that teaching should bring a desirable change in children then we should and must make teaching creative, in spite of the fact that creativity in teaching cannot be commanded, it can be encouraged.

The present Investigator working in the teachers college during her supervision of lessons in the High School level found out a large variety of children from different socio-economic group with varying intellect often coming from both rural and urban areas prompted her to study the subject of creativity deeply. This effort ultimately drew her to the vast literature available in the subject matter and thus exposed her to several research efforts made by eminent scholars in the field.