CHAPTER: 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

2.0  INTRODUCTION

Theoretical framework is a detailed description of a proposed study. It includes justification for the study, detailed description of the steps that will be followed in the study, the sequence related concepts and events with the topic and information about the analysis of the collection of data. Theoretical framework provides a guide for conducting the study. It lays the ground for establishing the linkage of the topics with the present study and the past. It is also a background and context of the research and the operational explanation of the concept and ideas on the basis of which the work is carried.

Philosophy deals with ideas and experience. It is considered as the basis for many other disciplines. Almost all academic pursuits have its philosophical underpinnings. The history of philosophy is divided into many epochs. Each epoch is having its own unique features and implications. Each phase is marked by the development of new ideas and visions of different thinkers. These philosophical epochs are Dark Age, Age of reasoning, Enlightenment, modern and postmodern age.

Philosophy is root from which other disciplines develop. Therefore a detailed description of the overall concept of philosophy is needed for developing the plot for any new and emerging field of study.

2.1  MEANING AND CONCEPT OF PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy is the study of general and fundamental problems which are related with existence, knowledge, values, reason, mind and language. The most essential characteristic of philosophy which distinguished it from other ways of knowing is its reliance on rational argument.

2.2  BRANCHES OF PHILOSOPHY

Metaphysics: It is study of the nature of reality, including the relationship between mind and body, objects which are beyond physical in nature.
Epistemology: It is connected with the nature and scope of knowledge one of its central concerns has been the challenge posed by Skepticism and the relation between truth, belief and justification.

Ethics or moral philosophy: It is concerned primarily with the question of the best way to live. The main branch of ethics is Meta ethics, normative ethics and applied ethics. Met ethics is concerned with the nature of ethical thought, such as with the origin of the words good and bad and origin of the comparative words of various ethics system. Normative ethics are more concerned with the question of how one ought to act and what is the right course of action. Lastly applied ethics go beyond theory and step into real ethical practice.

Political philosophy: It is the study of government and the relationship of individuals to communicate including the state. It includes questions about justice, law, property and the rights and obligations of the citizen.

Aesthetics: It deals with beauty, art, enjoyment, sensory-emotional values, and perception.

Logic: It is the study of valid argument form.

2.3 EVOLUTION OF PHILOSOPHY

The introduction of the term philosophy and philosopher has been ascribed to the Greek thinker Pythagoras. Historians of western philosophy usually divide the subject into some periods, the most important being Ancient philosophy, Medieval philosophy and Modern philosophy and Contemporary philosophy.

Ancient philosophy

Ancient philosophy is the philosophy of Greek-Roman world from the 6th century B.C. to the 6th century A.D. It is usually divided into three periods, the pre-Socratic period, the period of Plato and Aristotle and the post Aristolian (Hellenistic) period. The most important philosopher of this period is Plato and Aristotle. The main subject of ancient philosophy is to understand the fundamental causes and principles of the universe. The epistemological problem of reconciling the diversity and change of the natural universe, with the possibility of obtaining fixed and certain knowledge about it, question about the things which cannot be perceived by the senses such as numbers, elements, universals and god. Socrates is said to be the initiator of more
focused study upon the human beings including the analysis of the pattern of reasoning, the importance of understanding and knowledge in order to pursue it, the explication of the concept of justice and its relation to various social aspects.

**Medieval philosophy**

Medieval philosophy is the philosophy of Western Europe and the Middle East during the Middle Ages roughly extending from the Christianization of the Roman Empire until the Renaissance. The history of western European medieval philosophy is traditionally divided into two main periods. The period in the Latin West following the early middle ages until the 12th century when the works of Aristotle and Plato were pressured and cultivated. Some philosophers from the middle ages include the Christian philosophers Augustine of Hippo, Thomas Aquinas and others.

**Renaissance Philosophy**

The renaissance was a period of transition between the Middle Ages and the modern thought in which the recovery of classical text helped shift philosophical interests way from technical studies in logic, metaphysics and theology towards electric inquiries into morality, philosophy and mysticism. New movements in philosophy developed contemporaneously with larger religious and political transformation in Europe, the reformation and the decline of feudalism. The gradual centralization of political power in nation state was echoed by the emergence of secular political philosophies as in the works of Niccolé Machiavelli, Thomas Moro, Erasmus, Jean Bodin and others.

**Modern Philosophy**

Chronologically the early modern era of western philosophy is usually identified with the 17th and 18th centuries often been referred as the age of Enlightenment. Modern philosophy is distinguished from its predecessors by its increasing independence from traditional authorities as the church, academic and Aristotelianism, to a new focus on the foundations of knowledge and metaphysical system building and the emergence of modern physics out of natural philosophy. Other central topics of philosophy in this period include the nature of the mind and its relation to the body, the implications of the new natural sciences for traditional theological topics such as free will and God and the emergence of a secular basis for moral and political
philosophy. These trends distinctively appeared in Francis Bacon’s call for a new empirical programme for expanding knowledge and soon found massively influential form in the mechanical physics and rationalist metaphysics of René Descartes. Thomas Hobbes was the first to apply this methodology systematically to political philosophy and is the originator of modern political philosophy including the modern theory of social contract. The major thinkers of this period were Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant. Besides that Galileo, Isaac Newton, Adam Smith, Jean Jacques Rousseau were seminal figure in initiating reaction against the Enlightenment. The approximate end of early modern period is often identified with Immanuel Kant’s systematic attempt to limit metaphysics, Justify scientific knowledge and reconcile both of these with morality and freedom. Later modern philosophy is usually considered to begin after the philosophy of Immanuel Kant at the beginning of the 19th century. German idealists such as Johann Gottlieb Fichte, George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel transformed the work of Kant by maintaining that the world is constituted by a rational mind like process and as such is entirely knowable. After Hegel 19th century philosophy largely turned against idealism in favour of varieties of philosophical naturalism such as positivism of Auguste Comte, the empiricism of J.S. Mill and the materialism of Karl Marx. Other philosophers who initiated lines of thought that would continue to shape philosophy into the 20th century include Gottlob Frege and Henry Sidgwick who’s ‘In logic and ethics’ respectively provided the tools for early analytic philosophy, Charles Sanders Peirce and William James founded pragmatism. Soren Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche who laid the ground work for existentialism and post structuralism in this phase of philosophy.

**Twentieth century philosophy**

Within the last century philosophy has increasingly become a professional discipline practiced within universities like other academic disciplines. Philosophy has become a highly organized discipline. Analytic philosophy became the dominant school form much of the 20th century. In the first half of the century, it was a cohesive school shaped strongly by logical positivism united by the notion that philosophical problems could and should be shaped strongly by logical positivism. The pioneering work of Bertrand Russell was a model for the development of analytic philosophy moving from a rejection of the idealism dominant in the late 19th century British philosophy to
neo-Humean empiricism strongly themed by the conceptual resource of modern mathematical logic. In the latter half of the 20th century, analytic philosophy diffuses into a wide variety of disparate philosophical views. The postwar transformation, led in two broad directions on the one hand on interest in ordinary language as a way of avoiding or re-describing traditional philosophical problems and on the other hand a more thorough going naturalism that sought to dissolve the complexities of modern philosophy through the application of natural sciences. 20th century philosophy is also marked by the evolution of continental philosophy. The other schools of thought that marked the development in the field of 20th century include phenomenology, existentialism, modern hermeneutics, critical theory structuralism and post structuralism.

**Modernism**

Modernism in its broadest definition is modern thought, character or practice. More specifically the term describes the modernist movement in the arts, its set of cultural tendencies and associated cultural movements. Originally arising from wide scale and far reaching changes to western society in the late 20th centuries particularly the development of modern industrial societies and the rapid growth of cities followed by the World War I were among the factors that shaped modernism. Modernism may be defined as a socially progressive trend of thought that affirms the power of human being to create, improve and reshape their environment with the aid of practical experimentation, scientific knowledge or technology. From this perspective modernism encouraged the re-examination of every aspect of insistence. On the other hand modernism has been interpreted as an aesthetic introspection.

**2.4 CONCEPT OF PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION**

Philosophy denotes one’s admiration towards wisdom. At its nascent stage it is a way of seeking information. In the next phase it is concerned with acquisition of knowledge and in its highest echelon it is path towards wisdom. This is the general notion about philosophy. Education on the other hand is a process of growth, development and learning. It is a process of reaching to a destination. And this destination is formed through ideas. And these ideas are philosophical. Therefore both education and philosophy have interdependent relation as education is the means through which the goals of life which are essentially philosophical in nature are
realized. John Dewey in the opening chapter of his classic work *Democracy and Education* (1916) explained that in its broadest sense education is the means of the social continuity of life. Dewey pointed out that the primary ineluctable facts of the birth and death of each one of the constituent members in a social group make education a necessity, for despite this biological inevitability “the life of the group goes on”. The great social importance of education is underscored, too, by the fact that when a society is shaken by a crisis, this often is taken as a sign of educational breakdown; education, and educators, become scapegoats.

It is not surprising that such an important social domain has attracted the attention of philosophers for thousands of years, especially as there are complex issues that have great philosophical interest, abstractly, at its best education equips individuals with the skills and substantive knowledge that allows them to define and to pursue their own goals, and also allows them to participate in the life of their community as full-fledged, autonomous citizens.

**INFLUENCE OF VARIOUS PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION**

Philosophy of education is an important area of study since a very long period. It is important because it explains how educational theories evolve. An understanding of philosophy is therefore essential in guiding and critiquing the development of educational theory. Education has only recently been recognized as a subject in its own right. Many educational theories are drawn from other disciplines and a philosophy of education can provide a pedagogical history of ideas, theories and vocabulary. It helps to place educational discipline on a similar philosophical footing to other disciplines through the establishment of distinct discourse and rationale. Philosophy of education can be defined as the study of the purposes, processes, nature and ideals of education.
Ideas and its educational implications

The theoretical explanation of the diagram is provided below.

**Ideas**

In philosophy the term idea has been used to cover a wide range of concepts. Ideas are often construed as mental representational images i.e. images of some object. In other words ideas are taken to be concepts. Many philosophers have considered ideas to be fundamental ontological category of being. The capacity to create and understand the meaning of ideas is considered to be an essential and defending feature of human being.

**Idealism**

The philosophical doctrine that stems from the category of thought associated with ideas is idealism the notion that, ideas represent reality. Idealism originates with Plato, the third century BC thinker who believed that objective truth expressed through the unchangeable world of the Forms. These forms were originally proposed by Plato’s mentor Socrates. For Socrates ideas exist prior to experience in two ways. They are more important and they are already in existence. A belief in the objective truth of ideas was a rejection of the Sophist position that truth was relative. Plato’s thinking has significant implication for ideas about education and knowledge.
According to Plato to be morally good is to possess true knowledge. But the process of acquiring true knowledge is difficult because most of us are chained to the world of senses unable to look beyond clear sightedness and knowledge involves overcoming prejudice and ignorance after rigorous mental and ideological training. The elevation of mental over physical activity or experience reappears in the writings of the French Seventeenth Century philosopher Rene Descartes. Descartes thinking was similar to Plato. Descartes proposed a method of systematic doubt in which everything in the universe was to be questioned until he came to something he could not doubt. But these means he arrived at his famous principle ‘cogito ergo sum’-It think therefore I am. Plato and Descartes illustrate the main characteristic of idealist thought and their ideas were instrumental in shaping the problem of knowledge Idealism has three main implications for education:

- An emphasis on theory before practice.
- An emphasis on logical thinking.
- A high value attached to liberal education.

**Theory before practice**

The principle that education should concentrate solely on conceptual and moral development is an educational legacy of idealism. Teaching should deal with abstract subjects such as mathematics and philosophy with principles expounded before application. The teacher’s role is to draw out the knowledge of principles that learners already possess and help learners to organize these coherently.

**Theory before practice: Educational implications:**

- Theoretical subjects are valued more than practical ones in the curriculum.
- Learner’s previous ideas are established.
- Misconceptions are challenged.
- Ideas are organized in a subject outline.
- General theories are abstracted from examples.
- Theory is presented and then tested.
- General principles are emphasized over particular examples.
- Learning is guided through dialogue and questioning.
Understanding ideas is emphasized over their memorization.

**Logical Thinking**

Logical thinking is the second educational legacy of idealism. Dialogical approaches such as those used by Plato led to logical thinking and the rules that were laid down by Plato’s successor, Aristotle. Some of Aristotle’s most important rules concern concept formation and deductive reasoning. Aristotle offers a well-known example in a three-step argument called a syllogism:

1. Major premise – all men are mortal.
2. Minor Premise – Socrates is a man.
3. Conclusion – Socrates is mortal.

These ideas are bases of mathematical and geometrical theorem construction. They allow us to explain why some arguments are faulty as a result of incorrect relationships between premises and their conclusions. Aristotle classified different types of false reasoning and fallacies. These include reasoning in which argument is swayed by appeals to emotion or by threats. A public demonstration of the rates of argument still survives in the viva voce or defence of the Ph.D. thesis which developed in the Middle Ages. Logical and analytical thinking has regained importance in late twentieth-century education. The thinking skills and the associated philosophy for children movements attempted to incorporate critical thinking and logic into the school curriculum. Descartes thinking has also had implications for contemporary education. For example, systematic doubt became a forerunner of empiricism and the western scientific method and is particularly important in defences of higher education, whose roles are to develop skeptical, critical and independent thinkers.

**Logical Thinking**: Educational implications

- Critical thinking is encouraged in schools.
- Skepticism is a valued academic stance.
- Educators search for a range of analytical tools.
- Convergent and divergent thinking are developed as part of education.
- Intellectual freedom and freedom of speech are prized by academic institutions.

Thinking is promoted as a generic transferable skill.
Liberal Education

Aristotle claimed that good life can be achieved through an education in the liberal arts where knowledge is valued for its own sake and its own reward. This is the third educational legacy of idealism. A liberal or free education consists of subjects suitable for the free citizen and includes literature and the arts which develop the whole person. Cartesian mind body dualism have influenced curriculum design in the past. Some subjects have been valued above other because of their emphasis on ideas and the mind at the expense of experience and the body. The role of the liberal education teacher or curriculum designer is to introduce learners to the finest exemplars of thought from all ages. For Hirst (1965) a British educationists the curriculum must initiate the learner into all major forms of thought. The curriculum should therefore be broad and wide ranging.

Liberal education: educational implication

- Education is valued for its own sake.
- A balanced curriculum is necessary to develop the whole person intellectually and morally.
- Some subjects are more highly valued than others.
- Liberal education introduces learners to a range of disciplines and ways of thinking.
- Teaching is a complex human activity demanding personal characteristics and insight. Debates and discussions are encouraged in liberal classroom.

Experience

The second major category of western thought claims that experience is more significant than theory. This category is split into two broad philosophical strands, empiricism and romanticism. Empiricists claim that learner is the passive recipient of experience. What matters is the way this experience is organized. This perspective leads to a technical conception of education in which teachers and curriculum developers are important arrangers of appropriate experiences.

Diametrically opposed is the romanticist claim that formal education is unnecessary and restrictive.
Empiricism

The view that all knowledge is gained from the senses came to prominence in the seventeenth century. When the English philosopher John Locke in his Essay ‘Concerning Human Understanding’ argued that there is nothing in the mind which was not first in the senses. In this view mind is a blank slate on which experiences are imprinted. According to Locke all primary and secondary ideas including abstract ideas come either from the sense or mind’s reflection on sensory experience. The eighteenth century empiricist David Hume in his Enquiry concerning human understanding developed Locke’s argument. According to empiricists for a statement to be valid it must either be true or it must be open to self-verification by experience. A compromise between empiricism and idealism is found in the theory of knowledge proposed by eighteen century German philosopher Immanuel Kant. According to this theory the world consists of Noumena representing ultimate reality and unknowable but giving rise to mental organizing structures or categories.

Phenomena

Things as they appear to us structured by the mental categories that organize our perceptions. This solution avoids both mind body dualism and the problem of causality.

Educational implications of empiricism the technical rational model

Empiricism leads to the commonplace view of education as the filling of empty vessels – that is, imparting knowledge to those who lack it. It requires nothing from the learner but passivity and willingness to learn. This view emerges in the work of nineteenth century experimental psychologists such as Pavlov which is known as Behaviourism. The emphasis on the careful structuring of stimuli and the observation for learners responses led to the behaviourist concept of a technology of education.

Behaviourism

It was highly influential in education in the first part of the twentieth century especially in the area of training and competencies. Its curricular approach was technical rational ‘or ‘means-end’ because it prioritized technical questions about the correct approach to methods over a consideration of the ends of education.
The American educationist Benjamin Bloom expanded on the technical rational model. His cognitive taxonomy of learning specified different levels of knowledge and shows how they can be demonstrated in observable and verifiable behaviours rather than in mental acts.

1. Knowledge: demonstrating outlining recounting, defining and enumerating ideas.
2. Comprehension: demonstrating in paraphrasing recognizing illustrating and explaining ideas.
3. Application: demonstrated in transferring employing and organizing ideas.
5. Synthesis: demonstrated in summarizing generalizing about, integrating and constructing ideas and arguments.
6. Evaluation: demonstrated in appraising discriminating between and assessing ideas or resolving problems and arguments.

**Educational implications of the technical rational model**

Learning is a science and has general principles,

The teacher or the designer determines what is learned according to scientific principles

The purpose or end of education are not discussed values are taken for granted.

The learner will respond to learning stimuli in a predictable way.

The technical rational model was best in the training of skills and competencies where behaviour can be observed.

**Romanticism**

Romanticism emerged in the 18th century to provide an alternative perspective on the role of experience in learning. Rousseau was romanticism’s strongest proponent in what is often called its first didactic text Emile, which deals with proper education for a boy. For Rousseau gender was biologically determined and he thought that a different education process was necessary for girls as shown in Emile and Sophie the sequel to Emile. According to Rousseau humans are naturally good but corrupted by
civilization. Therefore the child should be kept away from society and learn through exposure to natural influences.

**Educational Implications of Romanticism Child Centred Education**

Unlike the technical rational model which places the teacher at the center of the education process, romanticism is child centered. Rousseau’s Emile was the foundation for many current theories of child centered educational. Steiner teaching methods emphasize an education that balances head, heart, hands.

Montessori methods of infant teaching emphasize learning through natural materials and natural environment.

**Educational Implications of Child Centered Education**

The purpose of education is the development of whole person.

The child’s experiences are the central elements of education.

Children should be free to choose what to learn and how to learn.

Individual experiences and expression, creativity are encouraged as part of the curriculum.

Individual learning plans can be used to recognize the unique characteristics of every child.

All learners are different and their individuality is unconditionally prized. Teachers extent minimal control but act as facilitators of learning experiences.

Teachers provide an appropriate and rich environment.

**Development**

Development is shaped by the idea that human growth involves the unfolding of some innate human, cognitive or biological potential towards a final destination. Education provides conditions for the full expression of this development.

**Teleology**

The philosophical strand that emerges from development category is teleology, the study of purposes, which has its origin in Aristotelian thinking. Aristotle was conscious of the development of living things as a process. Characterized by stages
from seed or embryo to plant or animal. He identified three types of animating principles or souls in living things. These are cumulative, with higher souls incorporating the characteristics of lower one. Aristotle saw human nature made up of the various components related to soul and each having some unique features.

Diagram showing Aristotle’s animating principles:

- An irrational element shared with the animal kingdom and concerned with bodily appetites and passions.
- A rational cognitive element, unique to human and capable of governing the irrational elements.
- It is believed that the highest and most fulfilling form of human activity is directed towards acquisition of knowledge and rationality.

Educational Implication of teleological thinking

Aristotelian thinking has been influential in curriculum design. It is important for the curriculum to set clear aims and objectives. Students need to know why they are learning a topic. Students are motivated by goals. Goals or learning outcomes should be used to indicate what students will be able to do on completion of the learning.

2.6 PRE MODERNISM, MODERNISM AND POST MODERNISM AN OVERVIEW

Understanding pre modernism, modernism and post modernism first requires us to understand how these terms are used. Each of these can be talked about as periods of time and as philosophical systems. When viewed them as philosophical epoch, it is apt to regard them as ‘isms’ in the sense that within each epoch there were many different approaches.
**Pre modernism (1600-1650s)**

The primary epistemology of the premodern period was based upon revealed knowledge from authoritative sources. In pre modern times it was believed that ultimate truth could be known and the way to this knowledge is through direct revelation. This direct revelation was assumed to come from God. The church being the holders and interpreters of revealed knowledge were the primary authority source in pre-modern time.

**Modernism (1650-2950s)**

Two new approaches for knowing became dominant in the modern period. The first was experience (knowing through the senses) which gradually would into scientific empiricism or modern science with the development of modernist methodology. The second epistemological approach of this period was reason or logic. Often science and reason were collaboratively or in conjunction with each other.

**History of modernism**

Modernism describes a series of reforming cultural movements in art and architecture, music, literature and the applied arts which emerged in the three decades before 1914. Modernism encompasses the works of thinkers who rebelled against nineteenth century academic traditions believing the traditional forms of art architecture, literature, religious faith, social organisations and daily life were becoming outdated. They directly confronted the new economic, social and political aspects of an emerging fully industrialized world.

This process was further endorsed by two thinkers i.e. Charles Darwin in biology, in social science Karl Marx. Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection undermined religious certainty of the general public. The notion that human beings were driven by the same impulses as "lower animals" proved to be difficult to reconcile with the idea of an ennobling spirituality. Karl Marx seemed to present a political version of the same proposition that problems with the economic order were not transient, the result of specific wrong does or temporary conditions but weren't fundamentally in contradictions within the "capitalist" system. Two important movements originating in France that had an impact on modernist thought were impressionism and symbolism Impressionistics ideals were largely exhibited in art
Symbolism was largely a reaction against naturalism and realism, movements which attempted to objectively capture reality. Symbolism was marked by a belief that language is expressly symbolic in its nature and that poetry and writing should follow connections that the sound and texture of the words create.

**Social and economic changes**

During this period many social, political and economic forces were at work that would become the basis to argue for a radically different kind of art and thinking. Industrial urbanization brought with it many problems and changes in the ways in which people lived their lives. With the invention of the telegraph offering instant communication at a distance, the experience of time itself was altered.

The explosion of modernism, 1910 - 1930 on the eve of World War I, created a growing tension and uneasiness with the social order, manifested itself in artistic works in every medium which radically simplified or rejected previous practices. These developments began to give a new meaning to what was termed as 'Modernism'. It embraced disruption, rejecting or moving beyond simple realism in literature and art. World War I and its subsequent events were the catalysmic upheavals that shaped much of modernism. First was the failure of the previous status quo, second the birth of a machine age changed the conditions of life - mechanized warfare created new horrors to be dealt with massive injuries, large number of deaths etc. Finally the immense traumatic nature of the experience dashed basic assumptions Moreover the view that mankind was making slow and steady moral progress came to seem ridiculous in the face of the senseless slaughter of the Great War.

By 1930, Modernism had entered popular culture. With the increasing urbanization of populations, it was begining to be looked to as the source for ideas to deal with the challanges of the day. One of the most visible changes of this period is the adoption of objects of modern production into daily life. Electricity, the telephone, the automobile the need to work with than and live with them - created the need for new forms of manners and social life. Themes of modernist literature is marked by the appearance of various typical themes, such as questioning the reality of experience itself, the search for a ground of meaning and hope in the modern world and an exploration of how this loss may be faced. Modernism is marked by a re-structuring of literature and the experience of reality it represents.
Modernism is marked by a break with the sequential development, cause – effect relation of the reality.

**Use of language**

Language is no longer seen as transparent rather language is seen as a complex and its multiple meanings are essential to our multiple complex sense of reality.

The word Enlightenment refers to a change in outlook among many educated Europeans that began during the 1600s. The new outlook put great trust in reason as the key to human progress. In the 1700s this way of thinking became widespread in Europe. Enlightenment thinkers were inspired by the example of scientists such as Galileo and Newton. Scientists used observation and logic to understand the physical world. Their methods were rapidly transforming old beliefs. Now thinkers wanted to take a similar approach to problems of human life. A similar approach was adopted to solve the problems of human life. The thinkers and social reformers of that age opened that a new age of reason is dawning. In this new age government and social institutions will be based on rationale understanding and n't on the "errors and "superstitions" of earlier times.

**Enlightenment and Scientific Revolution**

Enlightenment thinkers wanted to examine human life in the light of reason. Rational understanding they felt would lead to great progress in government and society.

Some of the major aspects of the Enlightenment period are mentioned below.

Enlightenment thinkers grew out of scientific revolution. In science observation and reason were revealing laws that applied throughout the physical world. The thinkers of the Enlightenment wanted to apply this approach to human life. They raised certain questions like what natural laws govern the way people should live? How well do our institutions agree with natural law? Does natural law give all people certain rights? What is the best form of government?

**The Renaissance and the Reformation**

The Enlightenment also had its roots in the renaissance and the reformation. The humanists of the renaissance questioned accepted beliefs. They celebrated the dignity and worth of the individual. During the reformation, protestants rebelled against the
catholic church. They put individual conscience ahead of the authority of the church. Enlightenment thinkers went even further in rejecting authority and upholding the freedom of individuals to think for themselves. Like the humanists of the renaissance, many enlightenment thinkers were inspired by classical culture.

Trust in reason goes all the way back to the ancient Greeks. The idea that people should have a say in their government had been endorsed by the philosophers of that period who had been influenced by the idea of democracy of ancient Greece (Athens) or the Republic of ancient Rome.

Christian ideas also colored Enlightenment thinking. Enlightenment philosophers preferred rational understanding to faith based on the Bible. The thinkers of the Enlightenment prized reason over authority. They questioned the basis of religion, morality and government. Everything they had been examined anew in the light of reason. This outlook led to many clashes with accepted beliefs in christian faith for example was based largely on trust in the Bible as God's word. Enlightenment thinkers believed that humans were perfectly able to discover truth for themselves. Some of them even questioned the existence of God and others sought a natural religion based on reason. The Enlightenment helped to shape modern views of human nature, society and government. The most influential thinkers of this period were Hobbes who propounded the idea of Absolute Rule by kings. John Locke's Natural rights concept was also propounded during this period. Montesqueu separation of powers and Voltaire's Religious tolerance and free speech was also a part of this Enlightenment theory.

Enlightenment is described by the historians as the age of reason. It was premised upon a belief in the universality of reason and the universal character of scientific explanation. Modernity emerged out of this nature of human society. The emergence of modernity thus traces back to enlightenment. Modern science came through enlightenment and it was during this period that the tradition of theology was questioned by scientific reasoning. The hegemony of traditions was so strong in Europe during this period that it received its first blow from modernity. The scientific shift to modernity was given by Voltaire whose model was Isaac Newton. It was the advent of Empiricism is modernity. Thus rational systems of thought had taken precedence our empirical science.
All these developments in the structure of enlightenment influenced the emergence of modernity.

**Postmodernism (1950s to current times)**

Post modernism brought with it a questioning of the previous approaches to knowing. Instead of relying one approach to knowing, they advocate for an epistemological pluralism which utilizes multiple ways of knowing. This can included the pre-modern ways (revelation) and modern ways (science and reason) along with many other ways of knowing such as intuitional, relational and spiritual. Post modern approaches seek to deconstruct previous authority sources and power. Because power is distrusted, they attempt to set up a less hierarchical approach in which authority sources are more diffuse.

**Meaning of post modernism**

Post modernism as a term arose in architectural circles in the 1970s but only came to popular sage after the publication of jean. Francois Lyotard’s 'The post modern condition, A Report on knowledge in English in 1984. He defined postmodernism as incredulity towards meta - narratives. He is particularly referring to the meta - narratives offered by science which has become so specialised and fragmented that it cannot possibly speak with a united voice. Because of the triumph of capitalism and the emphasis on efficiency, management is more important than truth because of the influence of computerisation, performence is more important than value. The collapse of communism has re-inforced the post modernist's denial of meta - narratives because Marxism claimed to be a monolithic system which explained everything. The post modernist denies that there can be such a thing as a meta - narrative - a big story which can gives an over arching explanation of the world as we know it. Instead each of us constructs his or her own narratives or reality depending on our own community of knowledge. There are two competing metanarratives, the Christian one, which consists of the revelation of God in the scriptures and the humanist, rationalistic one of science evolution and progress. The Christian metanarratives has been discounted by the world for a long time. And it is only in the last quarter of the 20th century that the humanistic, rationalistic one has been radically questioned by the post modernists. The Jewish, Holocaust, the Stalinist Regime, ecological crisis, global warming, the Aids epidemic and the abuse of political and military power all brought deep seated
disillusionment. No belief system is to be trusted. Indeed one belief system seems as valid as the next. This attitude has encouraged total relativism and bred a fine aversion to claims of absolute truth. Thus simply stated the essence of postmodernism is that there are no fined absolutes. Gradually beginning in the 1960s and the 1970s the western world has moved philosophically from modernism to post modernism. For about 200 years thinking has been shaped by the Enlightenment with its emphasis on human reason and its optimism about human ability and human achievement. Christian scholar Thomas Oden maintains that the modern age lasted 200 years from the fall of the Bastille in 1789 to the fall of Berlin wall in 1989. The enchantment of modernity is characterised by technological messianism, enlightenment idealism, quantifying empiricism and smug fantasy of inevitable historical progress. Postmodernism as a concept is multi-dimensional in nature. At the first instance it is regarded as a language game which is termed as deconstruction. Second there is moral relativism. Third there is pluralism which is allied to relativism. Fourth there is existentialism in which feelings rule.

**Deconstruction of language**

The writings of Roland Barthes (1915-1980), Michel Foucault (1926 - 1984) and Jacques Derrida have had far reaching influence. The crux of their idea is that human language whether spoken or written does not refer to an objective world but is instead a system of linguistic signs referring back to itself. There is no objective world beyond one's interpretation. Words only refer to other words. Meaning itself is endlessly deferred. According to Barthes talk of an objective world is really an attempt by the bourgeois to maintain power by manipulation. For Derrida a text has no point of reference outside itself. Fixed meanings are generated by 'a mobile army of metaphors'. In the strongest form of deconstruction not only is all meaning bound up irretrievably with the knower rather than with the text, but words themselves never have a referent other than other words and even than with an emphasis on irony and ambiguity and plain meaning of the text subverts itself. Language cannot in the nature of the case refer to objective reality. Derrida is credited for developing the theory of deconstruction. According to him deconstruction discovers hidden assumption about a text. The crux of Derrida's argument is that the things donot have a single meaning. Instead the meaning embraces fragmentation, conflict and discontinuity in matters of
history identity and culture. The essence of Deconstruction is based on discontinuity plurality, fragmentation rejection of progress and totality which again forms the basis of post modernism. Deconstruction views cultural life as intersecting texts, deconstructing cultural analysis is concerned with reading texts by deconstructing them or breaking down the narratives to show how it is composed to different textual elements and fragments. Spibak (1974) interprets deconstruction as "to locate the promising marginal tent to disclose the undecidable moment to pry it loose with the positive lever of the signifier, to reverse the resident hierarchy only to displace it, to dismantle it in order to reconstitute what is always already inscribed". Thus through all these explanations deconstruction may be characterised as

1. Method of enquiry

2. Deconstruction is post structural blend of philosophy, linguistics and literary analysis

3. Meaning and texts can be plural and unstable. Deconstruction rejects the surface meaning and tries to find out the hidden meaning

4. Deconstruction means critical reading of texts. The texts are open for new critical discoveries any attempt to arrive at truth must be carried out within textuality because there is nothing outside the text.

5. A text gives several meanings. Like any other form of grammar, graph or writing, it transcends its authors and points to its origin.

6. Deconstruction implies that the reader and analyst must approach the tent with the awareness of the arbitrariness of signs and meanings. This implied that the search for a unified co-herent meaning within the tent must be given up. According to this idea of deconstruction one shouldn't see the tent as a unified single whole. Instead the focus should be on the inconsistencies and contradictions of meaning in the text.

Moral Relativism: It refers to a concept which isn't modifiable by factors such as culture, individual psychology or circumstances but which is perfect and unchangeable. An absolute is the anti - thisis of relativism and nihilism is "a denial of all objective grounds for truth". Post modernism is nihilistic. There is no ground for absolute truth.
Pluralism

The fact of pluralism is seen in the growing diversity of race, heritage religion and value system post modern pluralism is a theme which is beyond mere diversity. It has cultural, ideological, intellectual and religious dimension. Philosophical and hermeneutical pluralism entails that any particular ideology or religious claim is intrinsically superior to another is necessarily wrong. The only absolute truth is that there is no absolute truth post modern pluralism is its denial of the existence of truth. Philosophical pluralism is the approach to cultural diversity that is supported by post modernity. In post modern philosophical pluralism tolerance is no longer a virtue while modern thinkers believe in objective knowledge that the human mind can discover, post modernists have adopted a more relativistic approach to truth. Post modernism depicts that one's socio-economic, ethnic, gender, and educational statuses exert such a dominating influence on his or her interpretation of the world that there can be no abstract universal statement of truth that applies in every circumstance or to everyone. Such a concept of truth reflects the post modern idea of pluralism. Pluralism is a philosophical ideology that only recognizes the diversity of our multi-cultural world but affirms that such plurality is inherently desirable. Philosophical pluralism rejects the idea that any particular ideological or religious claim is intrinsically superior to another.

Existentialism

Soren Kierkegaard (1813 - 1855) is viewed as the founder of existentialism. Essentially existentialism is a revolt against rationalism with its stress on reason alone. Existentialism focuses on the inner experiences of will, emotions, beliefs, imagination and intention. Existentialism believes that there is no meaning in any one thing or in everything put together. The world is absurd and pointless. To be a human is to choose in the light of the absurdity of the world. Choice is the centre of human existence. Self-conscious being is being which chooses. We are what we choose. We make ourselves by our choice. Choices have no rational basis or purpose. Existentialism is concerned with the nature of being and existence. Existentialist thinking is intended to evolve the whole person. The objective realm is absurd and void of any human significance. Existentialism focuses on the inner experiences of the will and emotions and is essentially subjective. Both post modernists and
existentialists have made comments about their movement being difficult to define. It is likely that the difficulty and resistance in defining what existentialism and post modernism have helped prevent them from developing as many of the fundamentalist tendencies inherent in so many theories. Inside each of these movements both unity and diversity can be seen. The early phase of post modernism was primarily a reaction to modernism which focused on deconstructing modernist philosophy and myths including the myths of self. Although postmodernism seems to be rather indifferent or even proud of this accomplishment existentialism is concerned about the radical deconstruction aspect of early post modernism.

During the twentieth century the advanced technological societies of the west and some in the east experienced a decline in the number of people who practiced their religion and accepted a morality based upon natural law theory.

There was a decline in the belief that

1. There is a single reality and that humans can have knowledge of it.
2. There is objective truth.
3. There are absolutes

This decline can be attributed to a number of factors

1. The increase in information about other cultures and their various practice beliefs and values.
2. Advances in what science and technology could provide for humans in improving their basic living along with an appreciation for material goods.
3. The spreading influence of ideas from the existentialist and pragmatist movements.
4. The spread of democratic ideals.

2.7 IMPLICATIONS

From the above discussion it is clear that philosophy of education studies the purposes, processes, nature and ideals of education. It explains how educational theories arise and how they complement or oppose each other. Idealism holds that ideas represent ultimate reality. Development philosophies emphasize the purpose of
human activity and the nature of such development. The purpose of education are articulated and expressed at practical level through the curriculum, philosophy sets the ground for the development of education. The inherent and interpretative meaning of education can be realized only through philosophy. The three branches of philosophy i.e. metaphysics, epistemology and axiology influences the aims and objectives, content, methods, curriculum of the entire educational process. The diverse schools of philosophical thought prescribes the functions of education in society, Another important aspect of this relationship is the impact of various philosophical epochs in the field of education like pre modernism and post modernism on education. Both modernism and postmodernism have brought drastic revolution in the field of philosophy in general and philosophy of education in particular. The rapid changes in the social and economic spheres were thus paralleled by equally dramatic changes in the world of theory and ideas. Especially in the post world war era the intellectual scene was dominated by Marxism, existentialism and phenomenology as well as by attempts to synthesize them. By the 1960’s however these theories were superseded by the linguistically –oriented discourses of structuralism, post structuralism, critical theory constructivism and deconstruction. The structuralist revolution thus described social phenomena in terms of linguistic and social structures, rules, codes and systems which had shaped the social and human sciences. The structuralist critique wished to eliminate the concept of the subject which had dominated the philosophical tradition stemming from Descartes through Sartre. Post structuralists on the other hand criticized the claims of structuralists that the mind had an innate universal structure and that myth and other symbolic forms strove to resolve the invariable contradictions between nature and culture. They favored a historical view which sees different forms of consciousness, identities, signification as historically produced and varying in different historical periods. The critiques of structuralism were articulated in a series of texts by Derrida, Foucault, Kristeva, Lyotard, and Barthes which produced an atmosphere of intense theoretical upheaval that helped to form postmodern theory. Unlike the structuralists who confined the play of language within closed structures of oppositions, the poststructuralists gave primacy to the signifier over the signified, and thereby signalled the dynamic productivity of language, the instability of meaning, and a break with conventional representational schemes of meaning. In Derrida’s words ‘The meaning of meaning is infinite implication, the indefinite referral of
signifier to signified. The new theories of language and discourse led to radical critiques of modern philosophy, attacking its root assumptions. It was claimed that modern philosophy was undermined by its impossible dream of attaining a foundation for knowledge, absolute bedrock of truth that could serve as the guarantee of philosophical systems (Rorty 1979). Derrida termed this foundationalist approach to language and knowledge ‘metaphysics of presence’ that supposedly guaranteed the subject an unmediated access to reality.

Many later poststructuralists and postmodern theorists followed Derrida in concluding that a thoroughgoing deconstruction of modern philosophy and a radically new philosophical practice were needed. Nietzsche, Heidegger, Wittgenstein, and Dewey, may be regarded as the precursor of postmodern critique of philosophy. In particular, Nietzsche’s attack on Western philosophy, combined with Heidegger’s critique of metaphysics, led many theorists to question the very framework and deep assumptions of modern philosophy and social theory. Nietzsche took apart the fundamental categories of Western philosophy in a trenchant philosophical critique, which provided the theoretical premises of many poststructuralist and postmodern critiques. He attacked philosophical conceptions of the subject, representation, causality, truth, value, and system, replacing Western philosophy with a perspectivist orientation for which there are no facts, only interpretations, and no objective truths, only the constructs of various individuals or groups. Nietzsche scorned philosophical systems and called for new modes of philosophizing, writing and living. He attacked the pretensions of reason and defended the desires of the body and the life-enhancing superiority of art over theory.

Both Nietzsche and Heidegger also provided thoroughgoing critiques of modernity that influenced later postmodern theory. Nietzsche saw modernity as an advanced state of decadence in which ‘higher types’ are levelled by rationalism, liberalism, democracy, and socialism, and where instincts go into steep decline. Heidegger (1977) developed a critique of the modern, representational subject and analyses of the corrosive effects of technology and rationalization. Like that in the realm of critical theory, constructivism and deconstruction postmodernism describes and champions imputed breaks in knowledge, culture and society thus attacking modernism. Postmodernism calls for new categories modes of thought and writing.
and values and politics to overcome the deficiencies of modern discourses and practices. Some postmodern theorists like Lyotard and Foucault focus on developing alternative modes of knowledge and discourse and emphasized on new forms of economy, society culture and experience.

All these revolutionary changes can be exhibited through the ideas of the theorists of the particular philosophical epochs. These ideas and thoughts need to be discussed in a broader framework so that a clear vision can be developed through which the field of philosophy of education can be further enriched and rejuvenated to put forward its relevance in the present social context. As has been endorsed by all involved in the field of education that philosophy is the foundation upon which the entire educational structure is framed throughout the world. In each study of various postmodern theorists, it has been examined how they: (1) characterize and criticize modernity and its discourses; (2) postulate a break with modernity and modern theory; (3) produce alternative postmodern theories, positions, or perspectives; (4) create, or fail to create, a theory of postmodernity; and (5) provide, or fail to develop, a new postmodern politics adequate to the supposed postmodern situation. There is a need to compare and contrast the various critiques of modernity, the characterizations of the basic trends of postmodern culture or postmodernity, and the development of postmodern theories by thinkers like Nietzsche, Habermas, Derrida, Foucault, and Lyotard. It is also important to analyse whether Indian thinkers for example Tagore, Gandhi and Vivekananda, have anticipated certain trends of modernity as well as postmodern theory through their ideas and visions. It is also essential to know is postmodern age still continuing or is it an age beyond postmodernism and how it is related with other disciplines like sociology, history and education.

References


