CHAPTER III

INADEQUACIES IN IMPORTANT AREAS
CHAPTER III

INADEQUACIES IN IMPORTANT AREAS

We have discussed the dominance of idealism in the contemporary educational scenario that tends to over-emphasize the development of the cognitive component of the *anthropos*. Also, we have seen that one of the drivers of contemporary education is a materialistic motivation rather than learning. There are destructive effects because of these two causes. We shall consider some of these issues closely in this chapter. First, we look at the inability to cope with adversity brought about by a one-dimensional, cognitive focus in education. Next, we shall study how clueless a narrow orientation in education makes us about life, which is rich and varied in its vicissitudes—that education should be generalist in nature where it embraces all dimensions of being human. It will be taken up under the title, ‘Bafflement at the Novel’. Next, we look at the vanity, which a highly intellectualized educational pursuit can generate in the student, resulting in the devaluation of the human person in others. We consider this in the Section, ‘Poverty of Relationships’. Finally, we spend some time on the ill-formed person who is the child of an overly cognitive-materialistic educational focus.

3.1 INABILITY TO COPE WITH ADVERSITY

Securing top grades in all subjects but not being able to deal with life’s real issues like failures does not augur well for our students. India’s
former President, Dr. Abdul Kalaam articulated that academic examination results are not the ultimate. We could analogize here in the following manner: education must facilitate one to skillfully negotiate the challenges of life just as a skilful mariner negotiates the rough seas. Life is not easy as a cakewalk for anybody. Not a single person can make that claim. The mariner who negotiates the rough seas is a person who deeply engages his/her world. S/he is someone who faces reality where life and death are just a breath away. One’s life is riddled with challenges. Everyone is severely tested. The ancient Spartan infant had to crawl across the ice-slab to be allowed to live. In the Ramayana, we have Sita having to go through the Agni Pareeksha or ‘trial by fire’ to prove her chastity. And Jesus himself cautions that the way to life is not an easy one. It is a hard road that few find. How naive it is to think that one has made it in life if one has secured good grades! The objective measures of scholarly achievement may be quick and simple, but they are only partial and do not predict with any great precision the chances of success in life. Goleman is eloquent:

Yet even though a high IQ is no guarantee of prosperity, prestige or happiness in life, our schools and our culture fixate on academic abilities, ignoring emotional intelligence […] Much evidence testifies that people who are emotionally adept – who know and manage their own feelings well, and who read and deal effectively with other people’s feelings – are at an advantage in any domain of life (Goleman, 1995, p. 36).

55 Matthew 7:14, NRSV Bible.
Soren Kierkegaard’s three stages of life – the Aesthetic, the Ethical and finally, the Religious stage and the call to march on from a life dominated by reason to one dominated by faith perhaps provides a clue – not everything is rationally apprehended; there must be room for mystery and revelation in our lives; only then can we find meaning in suffering and perhaps joy in the midst of pain. These abilities are outside the purview of a cognitive-materialistic outlook, but are important nonetheless in the educational process because they produce a person who is better equipped for life. Relying solely on cognitive ability can thus lead to incomplete comprehension and render him / her unable to cope with adversity. This is borne out by even a cursory study of psychiatric wards in hospitals – many inmates may be well-endowed cognitively but have not been able to cope with life’s unfortunate side.

The popular Reader’s Digest magazine once carried a remark in its Quotable Quotes section: “A gem is not polished without rubbing, nor a person perfected without trials.” Trials and tribulations are a great fact of life. Almost all religions and spiritual Gurus teach the importance of facing trials and passing through difficult times. The result is a person who is tempered, has the dexterity to handle tough situations and bounce back with resilience. Where in the curriculum do we teach this? The key attribute a person should have is resilience in the face of adversity. Michael Neenan (2009) articulated that a resilient response to adversity engages the whole person (p. 4). Such a person will be able to face, endure, overcome and be transformed by the struggle. The question is, “how is it done?” Here’s where spirituality helps – s/he can tap into resources far beyond his/her own capacity by opening up in prayer.
However, we are not suggesting that there is an effortless bouncing back with hardly a hair out of place. It is a struggle that demands that every fiber of the person be strained. Walsh (2006, p. 5) argues that there is no automatic and effortless recovery to overcome adversity that is privy to some people. He says: “We must be careful not to equate competent functioning with resilience.” The ability to bounce back from adversity may be thought of as a rapid and effortless recovery (Neenan, 2009, p. 3), which suggests an unruffled and perfectly poised person in the face of adversity. But this is not true. A desperate struggle to overcome adversity is more-often-than-not the norm.

Adversity is understood subjectively. An invigorating challenge like an opportunity for debate may be welcomed by a person, whereas, for another, it may spell dreadful embarrassment. No two individuals face adversity in the same manner. A subjective view of adversity will allow a person to discover what his/her particular vulnerabilities are and what steps are to be taken to overcome them (Neenan, 2009, p. 4). Vulnerabilities are not a sign of weakness. They are areas that need to be addressed by the right kind of care, and if properly dealt with, can serve as a wellspring of energy. Sometimes that could be in the form of professional medical attention, while in other cases, it could be psychological training under a competent coach. There is perhaps no one who is fully protected against adversities. Resilience cannot be a fixed attribute for anyone. When circumstances change, resilience alters (Rutter, 2010, pp. 316-331).

This is how resilience is forged—one becomes tougher by facing challenging situations and triumphing over them. However, Nietzsche can be argued against—sometimes, what I’ve been through can leave me shattered (Neenan, 2009, p. 6), an emotional wreck, a physical cripple.

Sam Goldstein and Robert Brooks in their book, *Handbook of Resilience* say that resilience is not privy to some people (Goldstein & Brooks, 2006, p. 14) but can be learnt and practiced by all—we just need the right training. Today’s fast-paced, stress-filled world can be a negative factor inducing pressure on all children as they go through the pangs of school life (Goldstein & Brooks, 2006, p. 14). Therein lies the importance of inculcating a resilient personality. Goldstein and Brooks say that every child can learn emotional skills that will help him/her deal effectively with stress and pressure, to cope with everyday challenges, to bounce back from disappointments, adversity and trauma, to develop clear and realistic goals, to solve problems, to relate comfortably with others and to treat oneself and others with respect (Goldstein & Brooks, 2006, p. 4).

Emery Cowen suggests a method of achieving wellness in children based on four basic ideas—competence, resilience, social system modification and empowerment. Cowen makes the case for a system that predicts the strength and power of an individual’s resilience in the face of adversity based on a person-environment interaction (Goldstein & Brooks, 2006, p. 6).

Resilience means the ability to bounce back from life developments that may appear to be totally overwhelming at first. Such individuals allow feelings of anger, loss, confusion, revenge etc. when hurt and
distressed, but they don’t allow it to linger and become a permanent condition (Siebert, 2005, p. 5). The story is the same – they stop, take stock, and rebuild their lives and come back, displaying resilience.

To conclude, resilience also helps to build communities that support human development based upon a caring and a humane outlook. The negative forces from others can be absorbed by the resilient person. Second, resilience allows people to experience stability and belongingness. Learning to face adversity with resilience is an important precursor to enjoying success. Just intellectual development alone cannot be enough for developing resilience. In the recruitment criteria of the Indian army, it is not intellectual competence alone that matters—those with a balanced temperament who keep their ‘cool’ in the face of adversity are more likely to make the grade. When faced with an overwhelming situation, all the resources of the human heart\textsuperscript{56} can and should be called upon—this is different from mere intellectual problem solving. Similarly, the conative dimension of the person, which deals with the exercise of volition, must be used as a resource. And finally, a person stricken by extreme misfortune is especially favored\textsuperscript{57} by God. The spiritual resources of our religions can be tapped into to find solace and therapy.

\textsuperscript{56} The ‘Heart’ is discussed in Chapter 6, ‘The Affective Dimension’.

\textsuperscript{57} ‘The LORD is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit.’ Psalm 34:18, NRSV Bible.
3.2 BAFFLEMENT AT THE NOVEL

There is a tendency in educational circles to overspecialize around extremely constricted areas. Instead of growing up as a full person that involves a broad-based education with a wide set of skills, the tendency is to gain expertise in just one or two narrow specializations. This is because of materialism in education. The student sees no point in studying areas outside his/her immediate purview, considering it irrelevant to his/her material pursuit. The generalist perspective is lost. Research (Bode, Mosteller, Tukey & Winsor, 1949, p. 555) shows that in conceiving of the education of a scientific generalist, those working as generalists distinguished themselves from the specialists, who found themselves baffled and uncomfortable when confronted with unfamiliar and ill-defined issues (Bode et al, 1949, pp. 553-558). Likewise, there is danger of “hard vocationalism” (Weinstein, 1975, pp. 419-420) in education, whereby educational content is decided by its utility in the job market immediately after college. In Weinstein’s words, “there are technical weaknesses in manpower planning for higher education, especially when long-run forecasts for a wide field of skills and jobs are involved. All sorts of assumptions about future social and technological changes have to be made and may not turn out to hold, and the margins of error widen as the mix of variables increases in number and complexity” (Weinstein, 1975, pp. 409-428).

With too much specialization comes the tendency to ‘pigeon hole’ oneself. A direct fallout of this tendency is that the person will know very little outside his/her area of specialization and will find himself/herself ill at ease in new situations. The stark implication is that such a person
would be all at sea when change is in the air. An example may be the work of a farmer, who knows how to grow a few crops, but will find it extremely difficult to adapt to conditions where other crops need to be grown. S/he is totally baffled by the new and the novel. A generalist farmer, on the other hand, knows his/her trade beyond the narrow confines of his/her cyclical crops and can confidently experiment with new varieties and technologies. S/he can thus weather the storms of poor climatic and market conditions.

Such specialists are inflexible to changing circumstances and see the world only from their frame of reference. They easily go out of vogue and quit their business because they cannot read areas that are unfamiliar under the new scheme of things. The generalists on the other hand, have broad peripheral knowledge and can withstand unclear, nebulous and confusing situations. They have a tolerance for ambiguity and work through them to finally emerge as winners.

We look at two problems, in particular, due to bafflement at the novel: ‘Focus on Narrow Specializations’ and ‘Loss of sight of the whole’.

3.2.1 FOCUS ON NARROW SPECIALIZATIONS

David Kearns, the former chief of the Xerox Corporation, makes the following statement with respect to narrow specialization in education: “The only education that prepares for change is a general education. In periods of change, narrow specialization condemns us to inflexibility – precisely what we do not need. We need the flexible intellectual tools to
be problems solvers, to be able to continue learning over time.”

The nature of change in any field is the unpredictability of circumstances already touched upon by Weinstein in the previous topic (Bafflement at the Novel).

John Dewey, too, is very vocal against narrow specialization. A general education is what he predicates for training of the *anthropos* and he suggests staying socially relevant by bringing subject matter to bear on human problems.

For this is what “general” means; broad and flexible. In practice, education meets these conditions, and hence is general, in the degree in which it takes into account social relationships. A person may become expert in technical philosophy, or philology, or mathematics, or engineering, or financiering, and be inept and ill-advised in his action and judgment outside of his specialty. If, however, his concern with these technical subject matters has been connected with human activities having social breadth, the range of active responses called into play and flexibly integrated is much wider. Isolation of subject matter from a social context is the chief obstruction in current practice to securing a general training of mind (Dewey, 2009, p. 58).

Over-specialization has got a great negative side to it. The depth acquired in one or two areas of knowledge is had necessarily at the cost of a broad-based holistic knowledge that helps one understand and work on problems with a ‘bird’s eye view,’ on the one hand and at the boundary of disciplines on the other. It comes at a very high cost and is very risky –

---

58 Quotes from business leaders on aspects of generalist education may be found at http://ge.calpoly.edu/studentsandadvisors/what_employers_want.html
all eggs are put into one basket! Such people plumb so deep in one or two areas that it is difficult to stay relevant to the myriad and diverse problems of life. They become cripples when change is in the air. In some cases, these people lack basic skills and breadth which would make it possible to be part of an effective classroom. Intense specialization fashions one’s point of view in life, way of thinking, way of learning and way of approaching problems and situations to emphasize increasing depth and focus on details, and to de-emphasize a holistic way of looking at things, often ignoring relationships between different subjects, problems or ideas\textsuperscript{59}.

The danger of overspecialization is “in going too far.” There is a necessary opportunity cost incurred in adopting this strategy. The more specialized one becomes in an area, the less time and energy there remains to develop connections with other disciplines. Without some overlaps between disciplines, it is difficult to channel communication between them. A theoretical sociologist may find it difficult to talk about his/her work with a practicing computer scientist. The area of knowledge at the boundary is nonetheless very important. At first sight, the two may not seem to have much in common. But imagine a situation where the scientist must develop new technology – s/he must make his/her work compatible with societal mores and norms to be useful. Similarly, the sociologist must have some facility in working with modern communication devices including the internet and a personal computer in his/her domain of expertise.

\textsuperscript{59}For an interesting discussion on overspecialization, see http://cazort.net/topic/overspecialization.
In some respects, we shall all be specialists with our pet domains. That’s perhaps the natural order of higher education, but the world also demands what Thomas L. Friedman calls the “great synthesizers,” people who specialize in interacting between disciplines and ideas. Communicating complex ideas that incorporate multiple bodies of knowledge is the skill that graduates and students need to have today. On the other hand, generalist practitioners are equipped with a repertoire of skills to help them identify and examine problems. They then make choices about where their efforts can be best directed (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2011, p. 5).

Let’s take social work as an example. Knowledge, skills and values in social work appear in tandem. For a generalist’s practice, these include the broad categories of professional values and ethics, client empowerment, understanding and appreciation of human diversity and advocacy for human rights along with the pursuit of social and economic justice. The generalist is required to work with this eclectic knowledge-base for competent social work practice (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2011, p.

60 T. L. Friedman conceptualizes ‘The Great Synthesizers’ as those who are neither the originators of knowledge nor the ultimate users of it, but are those who work in the interstices of disparate domains, making important connections between non-comparable pieces of data. The further the boundaries of knowledge and innovation get pushed, the more compelling will be the need for those who can see the value of and can build unusual connections. Companies may no longer hire chief information officers but instead will need chief integration officers. See https://www.acui.org/publications/ bulletin/article.aspx?issue=444&id=1392

61 Overspecialization and its negative influence is discussed in http://www.stanforddaily.com/ 2009/07/10/the-dangers-of-overspecialization/
Lehmann and Coady say that even for direct social work practice, where one is specialized to some extent, one is required to be firmly grounded in the generalist’s perspective. The values, principles, generic processes and holistic perspective are integral to generalist social work practice and are a necessary foundation for direct specialization practice (Lehmann & Coady, 2007, p. 3).

A related phenomenon in narrow specialization in education is what Boyles calls the hyper-particularization of schools as social institutions that attracts big businesses and to narrowly train students for those businesses (Boyles, 2000, pp. 4-5). Since the ultimate goal is only to land a job, these students get training only in a few technologies while in college, thereby closing the door on the fundamentals of a discipline from a broad-based perspective, besides all other avenues for greater personal growth and fulfillment.

We conclude this section with an observation on the immensely popular Multiple Intelligences theory (MI theory), proposed by the educational psychologist, Howard Gardner. His essential thesis is that humans are differently endowed with particular intelligences—it is the responsibility of schools to focus primarily on each of these special abilities and develop them. He offers an admirable array of evidence from the medical world and the socio-historical situation of various subjects in his study. MI theory has been widely acclaimed since the early nineties. However, there is a strong criticism. With this theory, we have the propensity to monotonously develop a few skills. It necessarily restricts the breadth and possibilities outside a narrow confine of a few abilities. Dewey would disagree with that and point out that one may be an
authority in a particular field and yet be of poor judgment in others. Training in one field has to ramify into the subject matter of other fields (Dewey, 2009, p. 57). Time and again, Dewey has been calling for cross-disciplinarity, which offers rich possibilities for education and human development.

3.2.2 LOSS OF SIGHT OF THE WHOLE

Along with narrow specialization comes the inclination to gloss over the ‘big picture’ and be engaged with nitty-gritty of highly specialized aspects of some component of the whole. This is sometimes apparent in the attitude of heads of organizations, both in corporations and public institutions. Imagine the head mistress of a school, whose predominant experience is with nursery classes. For such a person, the necessary attention required for higher classes could be missing because s/he comes with a strong background of nursery student-care and its peculiar problems. The head mistress would cease to be the leader of the whole school and perhaps continue to nurse the nursery section alone because of familiarity and direct experience. On the contrary, the new job requires her to accustom herself to a broader and newer set of issues.

To touch upon another example, let us consider the work of an architect. On first glance, the work content may be understood as that of a specialist, who limits him/herself to the drawing board and aesthetic imagination. However, on keener observation, it will be clear that the architect has also to be fairly conversant with areas such as economics, structural engineering, material science, sociology, law, psychology, philosophy and ecology to make a winning project for the client. Yet,
s/he is neither an economist nor a structural engineer. Whilst s/he is rooted in architecture, s/he must have sufficient knowledge in these diverse areas to deliver a well-conceived and relevant design. In other words, s/he must be a specialist architect with a generalist perspective – that’s when s/he meets the whole problem from both the macro and micro-perspectives. A holistic view can be had only by a person having a holistic outlook in his / her personal life. To perceive the external world in its many dimensions requires one to be internally variegated and healthful in the various dimensions of being human. And that would mean a person who is well developed cognitively, affectively, conatively, spiritually and in the embodied dimensions of being human.

This is diametrically opposed to what Joseph Payne says: “In order to train the mind usefully, concentration and not accumulation must be our guiding principle. In other words, we must direct the most strenuous efforts of our pupils to the complete and full comprehension of one subject as an instrument of intellectual discipline” (Yocum, 1913, pp. 10-20). That concentration and not accumulation is preferred is justified, but limiting oneself to a narrow area is open to debate. This is a clear case for taking up education through an intellectual obsession in a narrowly focused area – just what we argue against. Without complementariness, contextuality and connectedness, education becomes uni-dimensional, with very little meaning (Dewey, 2009, p. 170) and the student emerges stunted. S/he ‘does not flower fully’.
3.3 POVERTY OF RELATIONSHIPS: THE PERSON, AN END IN HIMSELF/HERSELF, KANT

The word ‘person,’ is much grander in meaning than just being a synonym for the term, ‘individual.’ It stands for how we construct our way of life and signifies those attributes that represent our humaneness; it tells about our moral values, our spiritual, political and religious beliefs, how we relate to others and our emotional make up (McCormack & McCance, 2010, p. 5).

Kant articulates that humanity is an attribute of a person. By ‘humanity,’ Kant understands a rational nature. And because humans have the dimension of rationality, Kant asserts that they are ends in themselves. Kant held that every rational being is an end to himself/herself and not a means to be arbitrarily used by another will. Kant calls for conditions that do not subject anybody to forcible acceptance of their will. In other words, a person is not to be ‘used’ for someone else’s purposes. Further, the American philosopher, Lionel Ruby says: “The law of rationality tells us that we ought to justify our beliefs by evidence and reasons, instead of asserting them dogmatically” (Ruby, 1968, p. 271). However, the human person is more than rationality! There needs to be room for emotion and faith as well, both of which are different from reason. John Stuart Mill said: “Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign.”

Kant sees the goodwill offered by a person as a legitimate end. Christine Korsgaard identifies Kantian humanity as the power to set ends

---

Allen Wood identifies humanity as the power to set ends plus other powers associated with this end-setting (Wood, 2002, pp. 118-119), whereas Thomas E. Hill identifies humanity as a wider range of rational abilities including the capacity to legislate and act on moral laws (Hill, 2002, p. 77). Treating others as ends in themselves means that people have value because they are free and rational. They are not objects of knowledge or ‘phenomena.’ Instead, they are authors of their own thoughts and choices as ‘nomena’. Therein lies the sacredness of the person, which ought not to be trifled with. In addition to considering others as ends, Kant strongly feels that each person must consider himself or herself as an end as well. Kant concludes that each person has a duty to raise himself or herself more and more toward humanity, by which s/he alone is capable of setting ends for the self.

Kant urges moral education and encourages the development of the moral dimension of a person. Kant’s principle of morality states: “Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end” (Kant, 2013, p. 38). There is good reason to avoid moralistic judgments of others and to treat each person with dignity just because s/he is a person, who can reason. Dignity is the term given by Kant to a kind of intrinsic worth. Dignity is absolute, incomparable, and with unconditional worth – the supreme moral value. It stands in contraposition to price, which is conditional and relative. Looked at in one way, familiarly from Hobbes, human beings have a non-moral price which depends on our usefulness; but looked at the Kantian way, we are
beings possessed of morally practical reason, and therefore, all humans have dignity. As rational beings, we are ends in ourselves: our nature has value in its very self. This sets us apart from everything else and gives us a special status, which is marked by calling us persons (Dillon, 1994, p. 14).

If a person is an end in himself or herself that person deserves our best consideration. No person is to be a tool for someone to employ for one’s manipulative ends. A mere cognitive development of the person in a materialistic milieu of life is apt to consider others as tools. The Kantian sacredness of humanity is trivialized. In school, it often happens that students who have scored higher grades are valued more. This does no justice to the intrinsic worth of the person as articulated by Kant. Here is one sphere where there is great poverty in relationships - we fail to understand the other as a person. Only the full-flowering of the person is likely to help one to understand a person as a person and enable valuing relationships.

When we think of the person as an end, we also associate with it the notion of autonomy. Since we can think for ourselves, value certain things and pursue a particular course of life, we can be said to possess practical reason. And autonomy is closely bound up with that idea. When we say that we should abide by autonomy of people or give respect to the autonomy of persons, we implicitly mean that we are to limit certain ways of behaving with them and perhaps demand certain ways of behavior by others. Autonomy means honoring other people’s ability to govern their own lives. It also means abstaining from interfering with their choices and imposing heavy duties on others that they would not endorse for
themselves. Autonomy is the ground of the dignity of the human being and of every rational nature (Guyer, 2000, p. 436). Concern for autonomy should enable us to allow people to choose for themselves and decide whether they ought to take up sacrifices for the greater good. If they choose otherwise, a healthy respect for their autonomy will lead us to leave them alone (Parfit, 2011, p. 36).

According to Kant, since rationality is at the heart of human nature, rational capacity is present in everybody, even if a person may at times be irrational. And since a rational nature makes all persons ends in themselves, all persons have equal dignity irrespective of social rank, privilege of birth or personal merit. In particular, morally deficient individuals have the same dignity as the most virtuous. By virtue of our common humanity, each person has dignity by which s/he exacts respect from all other rational persons in the world, and can value himself or herself on a footing of equality with every other person (Dillon, 1994, p. 15). We are therefore obliged to respect all persons and to value ourselves equally. The duty of self-respect obliges us never to degrade, defile or disavow our dignity. The ability to be moral towards others springs from the way one considers oneself, i.e., self-respect of the person enables him/her to respect others (Dillon, 1994, p. 17).

The nature of self-respect has been studied by scholars extensively. Elizabeth Telfer (1968) qualifies self-respect along two dimensions – ‘conative self-respect’ and ‘estimative self-respect’ (pp. 114-121). Conative self-respect is a kind of attitude one has about oneself when one considers objective standards of behavior. With this kind of attitude about the self, one would not behave in a manner unworthy of oneself, because
one is held accountable to oneself. There is a strong inner voice acting as a sentinel. On the other hand, there is Estimative Self-Respect, which is a ‘favorable opinion of oneself’ that is more ephemeral and fleeting. Estimative self-respect is less durable because it ‘changes with the wind.’ One can lose estimative self-respect and yet have conative self-respect. With respect to our basic thesis statement that argues for a well-rounded person rather than just a cognitively endowed one working in a materialistic educational milieu, we can say that self-respect is more likely to be found in a healthy individual whose affective, conative, embodied and spiritual dimensions are properly developed in addition to the cognitive dimension. Going back to Kant, without the attribute of self-respect, one cannot respect another person, and hence relationships are of poor quality. A cognitive-materialistic outlook with a drive only to gain knowledge and no regard for people engenders these inadequacies.

The recognition of a person as an end in himself or herself requires growth as whole persons ourselves with well-developed cognitive, affective, conative, embodied and spiritual dimensions of being human. This is because the cognitive dimension alone does not explain everything. There are other dimensions of being human and it takes more than just reason to understand a person. This ability to value others as ends is an ability that is patiently inculcated through a lifelong process, and is the result of good nurturing, as Nettleship wrote: “A gifted soul in corrupt society is like a seed planted in strange soil; it grows crooked and unlike itself, loses its proper virtue, and sinks at last to the level of its surroundings” (Nettleship, 1935, p. 6). School-going years are a particularly beneficial time for instilling this attitude. The culture of the
school and its policy can be instruments through which such lessons are instilled – the teaching and learning communities can become practicing communities where these values become the norm. On the other hand, lessons learnt through the hard knocks of life where strong convictions and truths are appropriated help become more ‘well-rounded’ human beings with gentleness being the cornerstone of nature. A Kannada saying goes: “Greater the number of knocks of the chisel on the stone block, the smoother the statue turns out.” The experience of the hard realities of life go to transfigure all faculties of being human and will render a person capable of appreciating the other as an end. A diversity of experiences tempers and builds up a person from within and along the various dimensions of being human. They nurture for deep respect for the other.

3.4 ILL-FORMED PERSONALITY

This thesis contends that there are different dimensions of the *anthropos* standing in need of development in order that the diverse and complementary faculties of the *anthropos* work together and find expression as s/he engages with the business of living. These dimensions are categorically different faculties: the embodied, the affective, the conative and the spiritual dimensions in addition to the cognitive. Just as a meal requires several components to meet standards of balanced food, there are several components to the *anthropos* that need to be developed for him/her to be a healthy person in all respects.

However, different people, cultures and eras have selectively emphasized just some parts in the human person. For example, the
ancient Greeks and Indians valued the intellect and reason above the emotions. The Chinese greatly value the body and don’t even have an equivalent word for the mind. In our own time, people called to different professions have selectively developed some faculties and neglected important others. Some over-compensate the intellect and under-compensate the physique. Others refuse to undergo conative maturity, while many others are stunted spiritually. Overall, we have the widespread situation where there is only suboptimal development of all faculties in a person. And these have led to faulty paradigms about human development.

The first implication of the above is that there is insufficient fulfillment for the *anthropos*. With the simultaneous employment of the embodied, emotional, cognitive, conative and spiritual powers, a person would be making a more comprehensive attempt at engaging with life – and that would lead to better fulfillment with multiple connections and meanings. A harmonious orchestration takes place.

To understand this, let us consider a student preparing for examinations. All during the preparatory period leading to the examination, the student works at individual parts of the curriculum, but during the actual examination, the student is working simultaneously with all diverse elements. S/he is pulling together concepts from various areas of the subject matter. There is an integrative approach here. The examination is just the ideal place to bring all learning together. This leads to overall satisfaction because all diverse faculties are engaged and get expression. The contrary situation of a dimension not finding expression is somewhat like a person who trains all his life to play
football and does not or cannot play it at the height of his/her game. Satisfaction is minimal.

Second, individuals who have undergone only partial development of the diverse human faculties will remain functional experts and never reach the summit as leaders. The person at the very top is more-often-than-not a generalist, who needs generalist skills and has to make judgment calls by pulling together claims and evidences from categorically different departments. No wonder then, that the leader of the army is called ‘General’, who is not particularly competent in a special sphere, but is one whose overall judgment is sound and sagacious. And one becomes a General through a life-time of training and development, consisting of exposure to tough situations. It is through a patient nurturing that we can have a full and complete person.

Third, it is perhaps a culpable waste of human abilities to leave important faculties undeveloped or underdeveloped. Psalm 139 catches the idea perfectly: “For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made...”\(^63\) The psalmist here refers to the enormous complexity of the human being. Although the human being is the grandest of God’s great creations, owing to faulty paradigms, we systematically neglect his/her comprehensive development. We end up nurturing persons who are not completely formed, or remain ill-formed.

\(^63\) Psalm 139:13-14, NRSV Bible.