CHAPTER SIX

LEARNING FROM THE MARGINS: IMPLICATIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

This study has dealt with the concerns of the gram vidyapith network about the broad future directions its curriculum should take. To that extent, the discussions regarding factors affecting the achievement of curricular aims, the reconciling of the conflicting expectations of different stake-holder groups, the skills and areas of knowledge that the vidyapith model of education needs to develop, the role of the Samaj and individual institutions in this process etc., are of immediate relevance only to the vidyapith network. However, in the context of the "social failure" of higher education (chapter one), certain implications of the curricular experiences of the vidyapiths for higher education in general, are indicated in this chapter. This discussion will focus on the action that appears appropriate at the macro-level (where the state plays a dominant role) and at the institutional level (where individual institutions may attempt to innovate within the constraints imposed by centrally-determined syllabi and examination processes).

6.1 Higher education and social equity

The introductory chapter has highlighted three aspects of the "social failure" of higher education: an aspect relating to concerns of social equity and the deprived sections' access to education; another relating to superfluity of graduates, many of whom may be "unemployable", and a general slant towards certification; and a third aspect concerning pessimism about the role of
higher education as an instrument for implementing social policy (Shukla and Kumar 1985). These have also been concerns of the gram vidyapiths in as much as they too are institutions within the higher education system and function within the same broad social context. To a greater or less degree, the gram vidyapiths have attempted to evolve ways of addressing these issues. The equity orientation in this context, has been virtually a raison d' être for the gram vidyapiths. Some would probably link this slant directly to so-called 'low' academic standards and these, in turn, to the marginal nature of the institutions. The debate between 'excellence' and equity considerations in the mainstream higher education arena is discussed below.

While social equity has been accepted as an important goal in developmental planning, a consideration of the social justice and equity concern in education has often called forth the response that equity and excellence are antithetical to each other. One well-publicized debate on this issue, in the context of the United States, is the controversy surrounding the education reform movement of the 1980s, initiated by the 1983 report, Nation at risk. "Our nation is at risk. . . . [The] educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future . . . " (quoted in Apple 1988: 273). The apocalyptic hysteria of this utterance is equalled in the Indian context by opponents of the official reservation policy who hold it "responsible for lowering educational standards . . . impinging on efficiency, merit, and equity . . . and sometimes [accuse it] of standing to 'mortgage the future of India'" (Vasavi 1995: 41).
However, as Bacharach (1988) points out while analyzing the terms of the *Nation at risk* debate, the equity and excellence arguments are rooted in entirely different philosophies. While the former is rooted in concern for all, in an interest in redressing the imbalances in the life chances of the marginalized (Apple 1988), the latter is rooted in basic capitalist values: education, it is said, must generate 'human capital' to enable the nation to maintain its edge in the world market. Secondly, the 'excellence' argument in the United States, like the anti-reservation argument in India, occludes the "failure of the educational system in general, and of the institutions in particular, to cater to the requirement and specific needs of students whose educational, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds are markedly different from those of the majority and dominant students" (Vasavi 1995: 42, emphasis in the original).

However, from an overall justice and equity perspective, excellence and equity need not be seen as mutually exclusive. Equity may be "viewed as a means for delivering education with excellence cast as the end goal of education" (Bacharach 1988: 489. It is a similar understanding of the relationship between social equity and educational standards that the vidyapiths seem to have been trying to approach.

Equity considerations, as reflected in reservation of quotas in educational institutions and differential admission criteria, are largely subject to the state’s perceptions about the directions of social change and to political considerations (Beteille 1988). However, insofar as the curriculum is concerned, two responses are possible.
Provisions may be made, within the curriculum, for support through remedial classes, vacation courses and counseling. This point has been made earlier in chapter four in the context of the vidyapiths' large intake of students from Basic-school backgrounds. Vasavi (1995) studies another marginal instance (a Jesuit-run college) and analyzes additional curricular and extra-curricular programmes which serve a similar purpose. Since such efforts are primarily in the domain of individual institutions, concern at the level of institutional policy for social equity is a prerequisite, for individual teachers to be involved in them.¹

A second trend, not so evident in India, is a realization of the need for educating for diversity. Two specific directions in which curriculum has moved are (Aronowitz 1994: 27-28): (a) "multicultural curriculum", an innovation designed to "broaden the canon" by including women's and other cultural experiences,² (b) a "new pedagogy" which emphasizes the "classroom [as] the heart of the learning process" (ibid.: 29). Smith (1995: 222-228) discusses four dimensions of educating for diversity, each succeeding dimension encompassing the previous ones: the issue of representation, the response to intolerance, reconsideration of the educational mission and organization/ intellectual transformation. Such a curricular perspective (see also the discussion of critical approaches to curriculum theory in chapter two) is a possible response to Vasavi's (1995) comment, noted above, on the

¹. This is especially important in order to avoid the failure noted by Chitnis (1988: 163) of curricular interventions like extra coaching for students admitted under the reserved category, to an Indian Institute of Technology.

². This conception is discussed, from another perspective, in section 6.5 below.
inability of institutions to cater to students whose "socio-economic and cultural backgrounds are markedly different from those of the majority", and also at another level, to the conceptualization of attributes and indicators like aptitude, quality, testing etc. (Smith 1995). It may be noted here that the gram vidyapiths' parallel learning structures indicate the directions that developments in this area may fruitfully take.

6.2 Learning from the "margins"

One of the main motivating forces of this study has been an emphasis on learning from marginal initiatives, both in terms of the mainstream educational system learning from marginal institutions (gram vidyapiths), and the mainstream of the gram vidyapith movement learning from its own margins. Becher and Kogan (1992: 6-17) propose a model of higher education which has four structural components: the individual, the basic unit (department or school of study), the institution and the central authority, each of which functions in two modes: (i) the normative (monitoring and maintenance of values), (ii) the operational (practical tasks). Further, each mode has an internal aspect (features deriving from the nature of higher education), and an external aspect (features deriving from outside higher education). In terms of learning from the margins, the 'institution' component of this model perhaps needs to be modified to include development of networks of institutions with common goals and interests (like, for instance, the Gujarat Gram Vidyapith Samaj) through which lateral learning may take place. Such learning assumes importance in the light of Altbach's comments about the bleak
prospects for mainstream systemic reform in India, and therefore, the need to learn from the occurrences taking place in the margins (Altbach 1993).

Learning from the curricular diversity and innovations in the margins implies that opportunities and motivation for such learning are created. This can best be done when central authorities themselves are open to promoting learning from the margins and play a supportive role through funding and facilitating specific initiatives for lateral learning. Still, individual institutions may have to play a more active role in learning through such networks than has been evident up to now. Learning from the margins also implies that institutional autonomy and capacity to respond to diverse pressures on curriculum are ensured. At a broader level, this issue is linked to the question of financing of higher education.

6.3 Financial crises and curriculum

As noted in chapter one, the "crisis" gripping higher education has triggered off debate on not just issues like quality and equity, but also on fundamental issues like the roles of the state and the "markets". The rationale for centrally-determined curricula is usually based on certain value positions taken by the state regarding the social utility of different areas of higher education. Such a rationale is compatible with a dominant

3. The University Grants Commission-supported newsletter, Kayakalp, brought out by the Ravi J. Matthai Centre for Educational Innovation, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, is an effort to network college teachers, who may have some interesting curricular and pedagogic innovations to share.
role for the state in granting and allocating resources. However, in the context of the squeeze on central funds and the consequent need for diversification of sources of funding, institutions will be forced to locate the curricula they offer in a wider "market" which may comprise prospective employers, industry, donor agencies, research institutions etc. in addition to the state. In other words, central determination of what is worth learning is bound to weaken, and the curriculum is more likely to be determined by a variety of sources and interests. This pressure, in future, is also bound to affect the vidyapiths.

An important implication of this shift is the institutional preparation and the adaptation that institutions and those who teach in them have to undertake. It is on this score that the outlook may be rather pessimistic. For instance, Singh (1995, 1989) and most of the chapters on academics in Singh and Sharma (1988, 1989) underline the disregard for academic productivity in the Indian higher education system, and the inability of the majority of teachers to respond to academic challenges from the environment. Some of the reasons cited include structural factors like the persistence of the affiliating system, the resistance of teachers to the concept of autonomous colleges, the clubbing together of college teachers and university teachers in 1973 for purposes of salary, and the failure to abide by stipulations regarding upgradation of qualifications of working teachers.

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4. In the case of the gram vidyapiths, even though the state assumed a dominant role in funding, its participation in curricular matters was minimal (see chapter one). This, however, is not the case with mainstream higher education.
Many of these factors are not amenable to change in the immediate future. However, as noted in chapters four (study of teachers) and two (development of self-regulation in the vidyapith network), reframing the issue in terms of enabling individual institutions, or groups of institutions, to undertake professional development in the context of teacher responsibility and autonomy, may help revitalize the large number of teachers who are perceived to be in need of such interventions.

A second implication of the diversification of the sources of pressure on the curriculum is that the regulation and assessment of the different curricula and accreditation of institutions, may assume greater relevance (Loder 1990; Frazer 1991). A beginning has been made in the field of higher technical education through the National Board of Accreditation (Chandra 1991, 1995). A similar initiative for general higher education is yet to find wide acceptance. Such assessments of curricula and institutions (peer group appraisals), are bound to introduce greater transparency in matters of rating of institutions, and may bring into the public domain, issues related to "consumer" (in this case students and parents) "choice" or "client-orientation". These are new territories for Indian higher education and need to be researched urgently.

6.4 Social and economic demands on "curriculum"

One of the crucial features of the vidyapith model of education is its focus on education for self-reliance. Notwithstanding the limited extent of success the vidyapiths have achieved in
this respect, the self-reliance imperative has assumed widespread importance today. At a more general level, this development may be seen as the result of two sets of apparently contradictory global trends: demands to respond to the vocational-economic function of education, and the shift from 'vocational' education towards enterprise education, with the latter indicating a convergence of the vocational and the liberal imperatives in education (chapter five).

While professional education curricula may be better placed to respond to these trends, areas of education in the humanities and science (first degree level arts, commerce and science) may need to evolve appropriate curricular responses. Official policy took the shape of a set of University Grants Commission's (U. G. C.) guidelines for the restructuring of first degree courses (revised guidelines formulated in 1983). The response to this policy was poor (Takwale 1989: 39-40). A more ambitious experimental initiative of the U. G. C. is the attempt to vocationalize first degree education in 100 colleges and universities (University Grants Commission 1993b). Under this initiative (now under implementation), 35 vocational courses have been proposed in the disciplines of arts, science, engineering and technology, and commerce. These will be combined with existing courses in order to introduce the world of work into the present curriculum. While evaluation of this initiative may have to wait, it may be noted that such initiatives depend on the ability of institutions themselves to become entrepreneurial (chapter five).

The vidyapiths, as seen in chapter five, because of their original stress on self-reliance and the mix of pedagogical tools
in use, appear to be better positioned to respond to the "enterprise" imperative than mainstream educational institutions which will face more fundamental challenges. For the latter institutions, responding to the enterprise imperative while ensuring the necessary "breadth of perspective" (Bridges 1991), and building up institutional capacities to understand and respond to the pressures implied by this imperative, are tasks which are bound to become more important.

The capacity to respond to these pressures also implies that institutions develop within themselves the ability to achieve a balance between the "skill demands" of a changing market and broader developmental trends underlying these changing demands. For example, as Drèze and Sen (1995) contend, in the current context, liberalization *per se* is not important, but responding to social gaps and opportunities is. A similar challenge has to be faced by educational institutions. As Richardson (1993) argues, building up institutional capacities implies not just understanding what the demands of the work place are, but also recognizing the role of the curriculum in creating supply pressures which will deploy pupils at a higher level than employers' demands. This argument is particularly important in the context of the roles of education highlighted in chapter five: a predominantly reproductive role in which case the curriculum is subordinate to the demands of the work place, or a role which promotes a more active agency for the curriculum, in which case, education tries to transcend its labour allocative role.

Undertaking these tasks is bound to be difficult for mainstream institutions since the value versus skill dichotomy is
profoundly entrenched in their thinking, while the value component (humanities, liberal-arts) itself remains a fossilized version of the colonial system. Thus, along with curricular initiatives like "vocationalization of first degree education", policy needs to respond with measures which facilitate development of institutional capacities. These may include supporting training for building networks with the client and stake-holder groups, teacher development, and learning from institutions which have managed to respond positively to the challenge of building self-reliance in students and in themselves.

6.5 New 'relational ideas' in the social utility perspective

One of the value positions with which higher education has to contend is the set of values related to social utility (Becher and Kogan 1992: 186-187). This position is usually transmitted through the central authorities and reflects the state's interpretation of what it considers are socially-determined and desirable educational objectives. Hitherto, the impact of this position has been mainly felt in non-curricular areas like entry requirements in higher education, expansion of educational facilities etc. However, in future, central authorities may be called upon to elaborate and to attempt to diffuse new 'relational ideas' (Bernstein 1971) in the higher education system. In terms of Becher and Kogan's model, this function may result either from the normative mode (when the relational ideas are deemed to be socially desirable), or the operational mode (when the necessity of such ideas may be the result of international trends or politically-powerful influences). Two instances of such relational
ideas -- sustainability of development, and the issue of gender bias -- deriving essentially from the social justice and equity imperative to which the gram vidyapiths are explicitly committed, were discussed in chapter five.

The emerging global concern about human survival and sustainable development (Haq 1996) is bringing to the fore questions regarding its incorporation into the curriculum of the future. A specific manifestation of such a move is the incorporation of "environment" as a subject in the primary education curriculum and the discussions on ways of linking environmental education with sustainable development (Schneider 1993). While developments like these may not, strictly speaking, indicate the emergence of new relational ideas, they may be the initial and necessary steps signifying the emergence of sustainable development as a concern informing various fields of higher education.

The experiment reported in the previous chapter drew upon the philosophical underpinnings of vidyapith education which stress the Gandhian concern for correlated action and sustainability of human development. The most obvious immediate application of this paradigm within higher education is in areas dealing with natural resources, environmental education, economics, food production and commercial agriculture. One route for incorporating sustainable development concerns is through the study of sustainable, local practices of people at the grassroots. Initiatives taken at the level of individual institutions can build up appropriate learning mechanisms like project work to study people's practices, experiments in adding value to local innovations, and activity-based collaboration with local communities.
Concern has also grown about the application of this paradigm to other areas of higher education like engineering and business as well (Charter 1992; Schmidheiny 1992). Here the dimensions of environmental conservation, pollution control, business ethics etc. may be more relevant. In other words, within the broader framework of sustainable development, different disciplines may emphasize different aspects of the framework.

Some of the areas in which policy interventions and support are needed include the following: establishment of a commission for this purpose (for instance, along the lines of the Yashpal committee which produced the Learning without burden report for primary education); initiation of curriculum review exercises (along the lines of the work of the curriculum development centres of the University Grants Commission); specific support to research and publication in these areas; facilitating linkages between research institutions (including the public-sector laboratories) and teaching institutions; sponsoring of vacation courses and workshops for teachers. A related implication is that concern about sustainability needs to be introduced at the lower levels of education, including elementary education.

The second relational idea which has been touched upon in chapter five has to do with the growing impetus of the women’s movement all over the world and the increasing awareness that all knowledge systems, academic disciplines, scientific enterprises hitherto evolved have been male-directed and have perceived the world from a male point of view which is then universalized as human. This implies that a gender perspective is a crucial epis-
temological requirement in any form of educational planning, especially curriculum planning and orientation.

In the discussion about the dimensions of educating for diversity (Smith 1995, see section 6.1 above), reference was made to issues of representation as a primary, or lower-level, dimension. Many of the early policy initiatives regarding the education of women (see compilation in Agrawal and Aggarwal 1992: 29-82) were concerned about increasing the participation of women in education. The National Policy on Education (1986) gave the impetus to move into broader concerns like responding to curricular representations of women (for instance, the special cell on women in the National Council of Educational Research and Training which is supposed to review school curricula and textbooks with the aim of removing gender-insensitive representations of women), and for curricular innovations like women’s studies. The U. G. C., since 1986, has pursued an "active policy of sponsoring women (sic) studies departments in universities" (Chitnis 1988: 168-169), and women’s studies as a subject in existing curricula.

This approach by itself, however, is not ultimately sustainable, because it continues to treat the feminist perspective as an appendix or a marginalized alternative viewpoint. "A feminist perspective, with its roots in the politics of everyday experience, questions the criteria by which orthodox knowledge is constructed, disclosing as problematic such categories as the 'scientific' or the 'objective'. It calls for the reconceptualization of each discipline and breaks down the boundaries dividing traditional subject areas" (Aaron and Walby 1991: 179).
Abbott (1991) discussing the feminist challenge in the discipline of sociology, describes three ways in which issues of gender have been addressed in theory and research (this framework may be usefully applied to all disciplines): (i) integration: attempts to remove the sexist bias of the discipline by reforming existing ideas and practices, such as, for instance, the changing of examples in text-books, referred to earlier. The main problem with such an approach is that the feminist perspective will continue to be a tacked-on appendage and therefore marginal; (ii) separatism: this position argues that the need is for a sociology "for women by women". It is concerned with developing a sociological knowledge seen from women’s points of view and designed to intervene in women’s lives. This approach also is likely to perpetuate the marginality of women while ‘malestream’ sociology continues to be the central mode; (iii) reconceptualization: this position attempts to position women "within social structures and social relationships as a whole" and demands a recasting of sociology to make it compatible with women’s concerns. This approach evokes resistance on the part of male sociologists who deny that such a reconceptualization is needed. It is such a reconceptualization across disciplines that needs strong policy and institutional support.

However, such a prescription is easier said than implemented. The threatening of interests and the resistance implied by the reconceptualization process will make the creation of gender-aware systems of knowledge difficult. In these circumstances, institution-level curricular innovations, however limited in
scope, may have a role to play in raising the issue of alternative conceptualization of knowledges. The initiative reported in the previous chapter—women students exploring the local women’s own knowledge systems in order to incorporate these knowledges into curriculum as part of what is worth learning—indicates a crucial direction in which learning must move if it is to address the problem of social equity.

Many of the papers presented at the Eighth International Conference on Gender and Science and Technology, (Satwac Foundation and GASAT Association 1996) highlight the fact that science and technology as they are taught at present all over the world use teaching methods and situations which centre the male students and which women students find irrelevant to their own experience and situation. Therefore, one of the responses to this problem is that a future for science which would incorporate both men and women equally, would have to explore traditional and indigenous knowledges, work which women do, practices which are frequently written off as superstition, in order to see the "science" underlying these and to integrate them with the science curricula taught in educational institutions.

At the policy level, many of the contributions to this conference list certain curricular and pedagogical requirements in order to enable the marginalized (particularly women) among the students to learn science: (i) a concept of ownership: i.e. a sense of connection with or relevance of the information to be assimilated, (ii) a feeling that the learner can have an influence on the practice to be learned, (iii) a chance that the students must have to negotiate how the learning process takes
place, (iv) a sense of the student's own responsibility for the outcome, i.e. learning that takes place.

Very clearly, these recommendations are in line with the non-authoritarian, non-hierarchical modes and practices that have been emphasized in chapter two as a necessary aspect of a radical approach to both research methodology and curricular practice and advocated in the experiments during this study. One implication of this similarity is a clear equation between the gender status of women and diverse modes of socio-economic marginality. It follows, therefore, that in the ultimate analysis, what is necessary is something that may be called a feminization of learning structures and practices. 5

6.6 Language of instruction

One of the fundamental principles of vidyapith education is that all curricular transactions have to be in the mother tongue (in this case Gujarati). 6 This principle derives from the insistence in the Basic education model, on instruction in the mother tongue at the elementary education level. The principle was justified on pedagogical and ethical grounds (Gandhi 1951). At a more general level, the language question in higher education has remained an "unresolved dilemma" (Jayaram 1993). On the one hand, English is still generally seen as a route to socially-valued

5. Moi (1985: 164), discussing the work of Julia Kristeva, stresses that Kristeva "does not have a theory of femininity. ... What she does have is a theory of marginality, subversion and dissidence. In so far as women are defined as marginal by patriarchy, their struggle can be theorized in the same way as any other struggle against a centralized power structure".

6. As noted earlier, the student intake is restricted to Gujarat, and so Gujarati happens to be the 'mother tongue'.

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positions of power and prestige, and thus finds a place in the scheme of social equity, perceived from the point of view of the aspirations of newly emerging social groups in India (Scrase 1993; Swaminathan 1993). On the other hand, regional, political assertiveness has resulted in a marginal shift towards "selective bi-lingualism" or regional mono-lingualism — with Hindi becoming the alternative language in areas where it is dominant. This trend is not so evident either in the case of non-Hindi regional languages or in subjects other than arts and education.

The language policy will remain "for decades to come as a dilemma between . . . rational choice with a development objective . . . (and) an emotional choice with a narrow political objective. . . ." (Jayaram 1993: 111). However, regardless of this dilemma, marginal initiatives like the vidyapiths perhaps need to reconsider their ideological insistence on the mother tongue, in order to open up avenues of empowerment for their socially deprived client group and to make available opportunities (curricular or extra-curricular) for the students to learn English and/ or to have access to relevant material in English. Keeping in mind the existing lack of attention to developing quality material in the local language through original work or translations, policy support is necessary in the areas of facilitating competent academics to develop such material through incentives like leave and recognition, autonomy to publication sections of universities and interlinking of institutions or universities which follow the same language (ibid.: 110).
6.7 Pedagogical diversity

The vidyapith model of education explicitly recognizes the need for diversity in teaching methods (chapters one and four). This need stems from (a) Gandhiji’s explicit theory of the organic unity of mind and body which makes structuring intellectual learning around manual activity crucial. Implicit in the theory is also a taken-for-granted notion of autonomous learning along with the much-emphasized tradition of learning from the teacher (guru); (b) a realization of the multiplicity of the available sources and means of learning -- manual work, teachers, community life, fellow students, farmers, placements in organizations, project work, experiments etc.

Formal higher education in general has hitherto relied on the traditional elements of teaching like the lecture and laboratory instruction (Knapper and Cropley 1991: 72-75). These modes are intrinsically structured in such a way as to create a mental cast of passivity and dependence in the learner, as well as deference to the authority of those who know, of "experts". In the long term, they maintain and reproduce authoritarian structures in society in general (Freire 1972). If the enterprise imperative is recognized as a crucial direction for the future, then what the students need to generate are initiative and self-reliance in their learning processes as much as learning about taking initiative or being self-reliant. Also, recognition of the importance of the "learners' curricula" (chapter two) implies that the traditional pedagogical modes need to be balanced by student-centredness which draws upon recent advances in under-
standing maximization of "the learning productivity of the classroom" (Cook 1992: 16). White (1992) makes the same point from a slightly different perspective. In his view, traditional teaching methods have led mainly to "shallow learning"; "real" learning implies developing in the students a commitment to learning, through a flexible student-centred approach (ibid.: 159-161).

Another reason for the desirability of pedagogical reform is the multiple sources of learning that curricula of the future will need to draw upon. Some of these, indicated in earlier chapters, are the emerging linkages between education and the world of work, learning from grassroots developments, experiential learning, technological advances (most clearly illustrated by the developments in the notion of 'computer literacy') etc.

Underpinning these trends is the growing recognition of the need to move towards student-centred pedagogies (Boomer et al. 1992; Bridges 1991) and of the notion of students as autonomous learners (Boud 1988). In other words, the quality of enterprising learning is seen as worth inculcating. This makes the emerging pedagogical diversity consistent with the goal of educating for self-reliance and with the principles promoted by the concept of lifelong learning (Wain 1987). (See Knapper and Cropley [1991: 94-128], for a review of promising approaches in instructional innovations.) Such "lifelong" learning assumes that the products of education systems need to pass out from formal education institutions with skills in learning or 'how to learn', or "metacognition" (White 1992), in order to keep pace with developments in their socio-economic environments.
Moving in this direction will need considerable effort and is likely to meet with resistance from traditionally-trained teachers whose "classroom regimes . . . represent microcosms of the kind of society/society which they value" (Boomer 1992: 279). The implication is that education of college and university teachers -- who generally do not receive instruction in methods of teaching and learning (Knapper and Cropley 1991: 74) -- should be a priority intervention through teacher development efforts.

Policy formulation has responded with initiatives like the academic staff colleges, 48 of which were set up in various universities all over India during the seventh five year plan (1985-90), in order to provide orientation and refresher courses to teachers. While some of these are reported to be functioning well, many of them have not achieved the desired results (Indiresan 1993: 317). Similar central initiatives need to be conceptualized with a view to involving teachers themselves in a "collegial" or the "ecological" (Hargreaves and Fullan 1992) approach to teacher development. Such an approach draws on the strengths and innovations of teachers, while also drawing upon expert inputs. Networks of teachers can play an important role in implementing such an approach.

In this chapter, some areas of learning provided by the gram vidyapith experience, have been outlined. The common theme holding these areas of learning together is an overriding concern for social justice and equity within the educational environment of an institution, and through it, in the wider social system.