

This is also a challenge since the unorganised sector encompasses a wide range of occupations that remain vaguely mentioned in the book.

Reference

Parsons, T. (1951). *The Social System*, England: Routledge and Keegan Paul Publication.

Krishna Kalita*

IVAN ILLICH. *Deschooling Society*.
 London: Marian Boyars Publishers Ltd., 2002 (Reprint)
 pp: i-viii+116, Price: US\$ 14.95, ISBN: 0-7145-0879-9, 978-07145-0879-5

Deschooling Society by Ivan Illich is essentially a collection of essays that also includes an afterthought by the author. The book is set in the American society of the 1970's which remains relevant even after 50 years, in which the author delves on the fact that the school system is ultimately the same everywhere. The book is a document that serves as a good reference for those who particularly argue against institutionalisation of society. The philosophy that the author desires to establish through the essays is that 'institutionalisation leads to global degradation and modernized misery'. Although, the book takes up 'school' as the paradigm, yet it indicates all kinds of institutionalisation, whether it is health, defense, religion, media or any other sub-system of society. According to it, education is not, and cannot be, confined to schooling and various other significant aspects of life should be the means of education. Unfortunately, schooling influences various aspects of our lives through its 'curriculum' and all the more through its 'hidden curriculum'. The author strongly opines that schooling only forces us to accept ideas which are shaped by others.

The book, thus lays the ground on which the role of the school and the teacher is established more as a factor of discrimination rather than a factor for uplift of the poor. The age-specific schooling only limits the education of the people. The author compares the students to consumers and indicates that development of a nation cannot be gauged by the 'number of hospitals and

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schools it has'. The society has conditioned acquiring certificates to the level of learning, which in actual is a far-cry from reality. Schools make people dependent and actually teach them the need to be taught. According to Illich, schools offer something other than learning—they act as institutions that require full-time compulsory attendance in 'ritualised programmes' based around awarding certificates to those who can consume the product in the 'ritualised' way. An interesting explanation of the types of institutions with a spectrum has been presented in the chapter "Institutional Spectrum". The two extremes of the spectrum being the 'manipulative institutions' and the 'convivial institutions'.

Manipulative institutions are engaged in promoting compulsively repetitive use of ways to achieve set aims while negating other ways of achieving the same. In convivial institutions, there are rules only to promote accessibility and not to produce an effect in people. The author places school in the manipulative side of the spectrum and provides relevant examples to prove his point. Illich highlights that education provided in schools are designed by technocrats and that they serve the goals of the teachers. He mentions that as long as the education is posed as a supplier-consumer model, the problems, as well as, research in education will be a 'circular process', basically leading to nowhere. Instead of that, we need independent persons who will 'defin[e] learning by themselves'.

The author confidently proposes that 'the inverse of school is possible' and that there is no need to channelise education only through the teachers in a rigid institution like school. Illich is also sure that there will be many people interested in 'learning' rather than in 'schooling'. Thus, he finely establishes a clear distinction between schooling and learning. Also, he clearly mentions the general characteristics of the type of educational institutions that should exist and considers the de-institutionalisation of resources as necessary together with the importance of making the existing resources in the society available for learning. Illich envisages non-hierarchical networks of learning, where learning will not remain isolated from the real world. Therefore, it can be said that Illich has proposed for a convivial kind of institution, for which, he also understands, that changes in the political and economic policies will be necessary. Illich traces Greek mythology to describe how we have become totally dependent on institutions to solve any problem of our lives and have gradually, alienated ourselves from our natural and creative development. He justifies his argument by the fact that—as more and more production does not solve the problem of poverty,

more and more schooling does not solve the problems arising due to lack of education.

The book is a well-argued document and a critique on the modern social institutionalisation. It is made all the more interesting and convincing with relevant examples through the course of its explanation. The work bears the potential to incite new thoughts or perspectives as to why the modern society is unable to reduce the complexities of life. Since, it is a reality that we are being 'schooled' to follow certain rules set by various institutions of the society and that this schooling does not seem to help us in any way, his arguments seem to be more relevant at present times. However, the book and the author may be questioned with regard to his arguments and proposals; on whether these are practically implementable and whether the reforms that he suggests require huge reformations in all the aspects of social system. The book in its entirety provides much food for thought and particularly for those who may reflect on various alternatives of reforming education system or the entire social system itself.
