

Purpose of Lifelong Learning: Analysis from a Single Participant Interview

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(March 2012)

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Abstract

What should be goal of education in general? What type of education are we practicing in the name of lifelong learning? What perspective of lifelong learning is becoming more dominant? Should the education system of a nation fulfill the demand of the market or the demand of the society? In this short single participant interview research I have explored the issues associated with these questions. Four themes generated out of interview – economy and lifelong learning, knowledge discrimination, lifelong learning in Canada, and Education-Job mismatch – have been discussed in particular. The report concludes that: objective of lifelong learning shouldn't be limited to economic gain; knowledge shouldn't be discriminated on the basis of the value given by the market; lifelong learning policy must allow spaces for indigenous, traditional and other forms of informal knowledge that are often left unrecognized and neglected; and as both market and education are the parts of nation both of them should work towards the fulfillment of the demand of the nation.

Interview Contexts

The interview was conducted as an assignment for the completion of a course in the Department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia. The topic of this interview was 'lifelong learning'. For the completion of this interview assignment I sent a consent form to one of my colleagues studying educational studies in the Department of Education in UBC. He returned the signed consent form and told his convenient time. Through exchanges of a couple of emails we also decided the venue and time for the interview.

We – my interviewee and me - studied a couple of course together. I had shared my research topic and the issues I was trying to explore were not completely new for him. Actually he was familiar what my agendas were not only through the perusal of Consent Form but also frequent meeting and discussion, nevertheless, I had never asked for his views on all of those my issues before the interview.

On the stipulated day and time we met and had casual conversation for a while. With his permission I turned on my recorder and asked first question – a grand tour question (Westby, 1990) – and the conversation started unfolding. At first we were a bit serious because I was not able to articulate what I really wanted to know but gradually I was accustomed to his way of answering and dealing with the issues I raised.

On the process of preparing interview questions I had read some literature in the area of lifelong learning. I was particularly interested in exploring the dominant notion of lifelong learning, which is more often understood in the economic terms. From the very beginning of our discussion I understood that he was against this notion of lifelong learning. Thus we started discussing different aspects of lifelong learning that are either directly or indirectly related to the goal of lifelong learning for enhancing economic growth for the development of a nation.

The list of interview questions didn't work properly. They were just the guiding protocol. I improvised the questions and prompts at the time of interview; however, I tried my best not to go far from the mainstream discussion but without limiting the freedom of expression. Reading the interview transcript again and again makes me realise that I was not interviewing him but involved in a profound discussion and trying to find the best aim of education: whether it should be used for getting economic gain or respecting human and social values.

One of the interesting parts of this semi-structured interview cum discussion is that my interviewee started asking questions in a friendlier manner. I have taken this experience in two ways: first it shows vividly that I was not acting as a questioner or an interviewer who just wants to get the information from the participants in order to serve his academic purpose but also a co-producer of knowledge. Secondly, as my interviewee and I were from the same cohort of students so it was normal that he wanted to know what I would think in such issues. His counter-questions made me a bit uncomfortable at first but when we started creating “conversational space” (Owens, 2006) it turned out to be a kind of “platonic dialogue” (Kvale, 2006) helping to each other in the discursive way of producing new knowledge.

After the interview I came to my residence, downloaded the audio file from my recorder to my computer and started to listen. I listened for five times and started to transcribe verbatim - “the

procedure for producing a written version of the interview” (Hancock, 2002, p. 14). Finding exact words to express his emotions and prosodic features – such as non-verbal means of expressions was really difficult. I had to listen several times to get the right words that he exactly spoke when his tempo went faster than expected. I was often wrong in rendering some of the grammatical words into written transcript. That is why I had to correct my transcript for 10 times by listening and reading the draft-transcript simultaneously. Some of the non-verbal sounds, especially the ‘fillers’ he repeatedly used as his banal clichés were difficult to transcribe. I have used the terms such as ‘hun’, ‘um’, and ‘ah’ to denote those fillers of his speech. His silences and pauses are denoted by three dots (...) and his laughter is transcribed as ‘hahahaha’ as the forms of onomatopoeic expressions. I have italicised his speech and bolded the utterances spoken by me to make it readable and distinctive (see Appendix for complete transcript). It took me about 8 hours to transcribe the interview but that was only the first draft.

Methodology

After the completion of the interview transcript I brainstormed for the effective methods for analyzing and interpreting the data. My task was shifted from the act of asking ‘right questions’ and obtaining information to organizing the information obtained from my interviewee. I read some articles on qualitative data analysis including the required readings - Rubin and Rubin (2005) and Kvale and Brinkman (2009) – and came to the conclusion that I would use thematic analysis for drawing findings from my single-participant interview.

I started reading to find out significant words, bits, and chunks in the transcript. Those bits and chunks were underlined and extracted and a list of extractions was prepared in a separate sheet of paper. There were 18 extractions from the 8-page transcript. Then those extractions were grouped into possible themes or “conceptual categories” (Sipe & Ghiso, 2004) of the interview. There were six categories altogether including the extractions that didn’t fit in any categories. I again read those categories and merged them if they were found to fall in the same theme. I read the transcript again and matched the expressions with the codes generated. I made minor revisions on the code-phrases.

Having enough thoughts and with adequate rationalization (heuristically) I started to find themes on those categories. I followed the “data collation technique” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87) to generate themes. Earlier I had kept “outliers” (Sipe & Ghiso, 2004) in a separate theme assuming that they could be of use while analysing the data but at the end, I virtually decided to discuss by merging them in selected few themes rather than dealing them separately. The following themes were constructed as final ones.

- a. Economy and Lifelong Learning
- b. Knowledge Discrimination
- c. Lifelong Learning in Canada
- d. Education – Job Mismatch

Analysis

As I delineated in the preceding section, the themes were generated through “careful reading and re-reading of the data” (Fereday & Cochrane, 2006, p. 4). I analysed the data using thematic analysis technique (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87) that follows the following steps: familiarizing with data; generating initial code; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining and naming themes; and analyzing the data. As the five steps are completed, the following sections deal with data analysis. The feelings, opinions and experiences of Jack (pseudonym used to denote the interviewee) are analyzed and discussed in relation to related literature. Substantiations are made to discuss but not to validate the meaning of researcher’s, neither solely of participant’s.

Theme 1: Economy and Lifelong Learning

Why do we need lifelong learning? What is the ultimate objective of education in general? These are some of the questions often dealt in the literature of educational philosophy. Out of many perspectives, two paradigms have been highlighted in current discourse of lifelong learning policy and practice. The first paradigm is guided by human capital theory, which asserts that investment in human in the form of education would return into more skilled and educated human resources that help for achieving economic prosperity of individuals and society at large. Many countries including the countries under the auspices of Organization for

Economic Cooperation (OECD) and European Union (EU) have been following this economic paradigm of lifelong learning. For example, through two reports – Education and the Economy in a Changing Society (1989) and Lifelong Learning for All (1996) – OECD has made its stance clear that investment in lifelong learning is inevitable for “keeping up with technological change and maintaining competitiveness” (Rubenson, 2011, p. 413).

The second paradigm of lifelong learning is guided by more humanistic notion such as the type of education as espoused by Paulo Freire. In this paradigm of lifelong learning, the goal of education is for gaining personal freedom and making people understand what personal freedom is. Freire advocated for the liberation of oppressed through education. More recently this notion of education has taken a form of a new social movement and has gained a global momentum through World Social Forum (Torres, 2011).

Jack – my interviewee – is found to be favoring the second notion of lifelong learning. In a couple of occasions he mentioned this in the interview. For example, highlighting the overall purpose of education he opined that,

(Jack) Whatever the purpose [of education] is – may be to better themselves in their economic situations, to get into a different program in higher education, or to learn a new skill, or just to learn a new hobby. There are many aspects. I don't think lifelong learning should be for only economic betterment.

In my curiosity whether development of a country – which is regarded as developing one because of its status relatively low in economic index – is possible without economic gain through education, he claimed that development shouldn't be limited to economic gain. For him the present definition of development – which is often associated with economic prosperity – is very much limited. To quote his own speech,

(Jack) I think economic perspective is one of them to talk about development. It could be termed as in terms of emotional, spiritual or even professional development. You know, a country could be termed as economically prosperous country but if nobody is happy and what type of development it is...

In literature I found many scholars talking about different aspects of development. For example, Amartya Sen – 1998 Nobel laureate – have provided alternative form of development that has widened the meaning of ‘development’. Sen argues that development is something that a person could have as a capacity to make good choices. Development can be seen “as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy” (Sen, 1999, p. 3). From Jack’s point of view and Sen’s capability approach it is justifiable to conclude that the tendency of limiting educational goal to only economic prosperity is inadequate and often wrong. As Jack pointed people may not be happy even if they are the citizens of a developed society and such type of development is always questioned and criticised.

In another conversational turn, Jack explicated some of the consequences of limiting the goal of lifelong learning to only for economic gain.

(Jack) When you limit it to... economic growth is that you limit the opportunity for the people because you are structuring the system solely for the benefit of some type of economic gain. So you will be losing other types of education...learning values that is not given same values because they are not for economic gain.

He further claimed that when we limit in such way we will be privileging certain type of knowledge over others so those people who don’t have that type of knowledge are marginalized. This type of structuring can create barriers for certain type of people because education system will be based on market system and with that more competitive and price driven society.

Thus from above discussion I would like to conclude in this theme that the objective of lifelong learning shouldn’t be limited to economic gain. It should also aim for human and social values.

Theme 2: Knowledge Discrimination

What is true and valid knowledge? Who decides what knowledge is and what is not? And who decides the degree of truthfulness of certain knowledge? There is much discussion in the revitalisation of indigenous and traditional knowledge. In the case of investment in lifelong learning, the problem has not been in investment for the human resources development itself, as Jack pointed out the problem is valuing certain types of knowledge and discriminating others

that are not useful for economic gain. Some of the scholars – such as Linda Smith (2002) – appeal for the decolonisation of knowledge and research methodologies. Such attempts are certainly for eliminating such types of knowledge discrimination.

Lifelong learning perspective assumes that we should continue to learn. Actually learning starts from one's birth and ends at death. In this large continuum of lifelong learning people may encounter various occasions and learn different types of knowledge and skills. In the capitalistic notion of lifelong learning (Rubenson, 2011) people are not provided with options to learn, rather they are compelled to learn what the market demands. If they acquire the knowledge and skills that are not compatible with the demand of the market then their knowledge and skills are devalued and discriminated. Jack puts his views in this issue in the following ways,

(Jack) I mean, [...] should we be telling the people that they need to continue learning or giving options in learning itself, rather than forcing them to learn what we want them to learn. Learners should be given with opportunities to select what to learn and it should be the learners to make decisions whether they want to continue learning.

Furthermore, Jack contends that such discriminatory approach to knowledge will provide power to the market to dictate the type of education system they want. Market will sort everything out because checks and balance, and supply and demand, everything depends on the market. It privileges people who have access to the market but neglects the people and their knowledge that can't access the market such as indigenous and traditional knowledge.

(Jack) The whole knowledge system will be based on the market. People will value knowledge only for economic gain. I think there is a lot more than just creating economic growth. There are much larger issues that could be forgotten because economy is valued over social sustainability or environmental sustainability or all these other things. Markets tend to put just dollar sign on people and what they learn.

From the discussion above it can be concluded that discrimination of certain forms of knowledge and the market's hegemony in validating knowledge is a major problem in the lifelong learning policy and practice today. If we want to make lifelong learning goals for the betterment of poor and oppressed and for the betterment of indigenous peoples we must work against the tendency of discriminating knowledge.

Theme 3: Lifelong Learning in Canada

Canada is one of the 34 countries under OECD. As I delineated above OECD is a transnational organization that follows the capitalistic notion of lifelong learning (Rubenson, 2011). As a member of OECD, Canada follows the capitalistic notion and has been investing in human capital so as to position itself in the better acclivity of global economic competitiveness. As my interviewee was a Canadian by citizen, I had put a curiosity to elicit his views on lifelong learning status of Canada. His first concern was on the problems the students are facing in Canadian universities because of the capitalistic approach Canada is following. He mentioned,

(Jack) There are a lot of things to be done [in Canada]. I don't think it is sufficiently addressed. If you see the current mounting students' debt... that is one issue but there are many aspects like this. For example, international students who are migrated to Canada are facing the problem of doubling the tuition fees. There could be much more money available for lower tuition and universities not acting like private institutions if the country can take away the human capital or market type of component...

In my curiosity whether Canada - as a developed nation - has gained a considerable progress in liberating the oppressed, he was found not so happy. He seemed to be rather sad with the current state of affair, which I could vividly read on his face while expressing the following utterances,

(Jack) In terms of Freire's model of education and social justice our system is failing miserably. It's not breaking down those oppression and social injustices as Freire would say. It should be in terms of that ... we are doing very poor.

He further opined that oppression is not limited to economically poor countries and low class people. He told that several groups of people in Canada could be considered as oppressed at various levels. Oppression is not limited to impoverished society, economic prosperity doesn't positive correlate with oppression. In his own terms,

(Jack) Even in the developed society [...] the highest level women ... they are not "street women" you know. They are higher upper class women being oppressed by high upper class men in the economic scale. If you go further down and look, injustices are taking place everywhere. See, for example, the case of women of color, people of low income situations... layer and layer of oppression that are marginalizing people.

From the discussion above I conclude that even though Canada is one of the economically prosperous countries, the lifelong learning system is not able to address the problems people are facing at various levels. Canada's knowledge based economy has been profitable to the market rather than the people who are oppressed and marginalized.

Theme 4: Education – Job Mismatch

From the perspective of human capital theory, investment in education would return better result. The assumption behind this theory is that the market would consume the qualified and skilled graduates of higher education institutions and universities. But what happens when there is mismatch between the type of knowledge and skills acquired in educational institutions and the type of knowledge and skills required by the market? It will certainly lead to two interrelated consequences.

Firstly, the graduates who invest their time and money for attaining a degree will be in trouble. There will be only investment and no return as expected. In another words it will break the supply and demand chain that human capital theory assumes to be true. It will lead to economic deficit for graduates in particular and for the nation in general.

The second consequence of this education-job mismatch is that the knowledge and skills acquired by the graduates will deteriorate as they are no longer useful. Because in the market led perspective of lifelong learning the knowledge should be of use to the market otherwise they will be useless. It leads to educational deficit and questions arise what is knowledge and who decides what true knowledge is.

In my curiosity, Jack opined that teachers' situation in Canada is a perfect example of educational deficit. In his own words,

(Jack) teachers graduating here are unable to find job in British Columbia, yeah ... are we educating people for the job that doesn't exist? Definitely in some cases but 'why is that happening' is a better question – ah, you know, all these talks about job creation – government creating thousands of new jobs for the educated people to fill but if you look at the type of job in demand and the type of education people are getting...there is total gap...

In theory, the educational sphere should be producing the type of graduates that market sphere is demanding but there is a mismatch between the requirement of the employer and the type of graduates we are producing through investment in lifelong learning. On the one hand we are motivated towards investing in education but on the other hand we are not taking into consideration whether the output of such investment will be of any use. Jack claims that it doesn't make any sense if we [educational sphere] are producing what the other spheres [market] don't demand. One should be supplying what other sphere is demanding, if other, then it doesn't make any sense.

During our interview we went on exploring the cause of this phenomenon – education-job mismatch. Jack opined that 'the gap exists because we privatize education. We have created one sphere and there are other 'disconnected spheres'. He further claimed that the university and higher education institutions are for serving the need of the community and there is no need of higher education that doesn't match with the need of the community as a whole. He said,

(Jack) The sphere of community and sphere of economy are not working together. There is a gap so and they are not talking to each other. Important thing is why we can't have more cooperative learning opportunities? Why these two groups work together so that, you know, students would not only get real life experience but also have an understanding the needs of these two spheres. The need of the university and the need of the community are not different or separate paradigms. They should be the same, if not same, it does not make any sense. I think that's where the gap is.

In our conversation we came to a kind of conclusion that the goal of the education is to meet the requirement of society or the country in general. But unfortunately, the lifelong learning policy and practice – as it is based on capitalistic notion or knowledge based economy – has aimed that the goal of education is to meet the requirement of the market, but not the nation. In a more interrogative tone Jack contended that,

(Jack) the problems of what country needs and what the market demands are two different things. Who we are planning for? Are we planning for what the country needs or are we planning for what the market demands? Or are we planning for what we think the market demands. It is unbelievably complex issue...

Hence, to conclude this theme – Education-Job mismatch – I would like to reiterate that both market and education should match with the demand of the country. The education – job mismatch could be solved if we could recognize true demands of a country. As both market and education are the parts of a nation both of them should work for the latter. The present policy and practice of lifelong learning has been inadequate and more discriminatory because education and university had been made a tool for fulfilling the requirements of the market. Education should aim for broader purpose and that broader purpose is the fulfilling the demand of nation, not the market. When the purpose of the nation is fulfilled it automatically fulfills the demand of the market.

Conclusion

On the basis of the discussion above, this paper makes the following conclusions:

1. Objective of lifelong learning shouldn't be limited to economic gain. As economic prosperity doesn't necessarily yield development in its broader sense, the aim of education for economic gain becomes inadequate.
2. Discrimination of certain forms of knowledge and the market's hegemony in validating knowledge is a major problem in the lifelong learning policy and practice today. Lifelong learning policy and practice must allow spaces for indigenous, traditional and other forms of informal knowledge that are often left unrecognized and neglected.
3. The level of oppression, discrimination and marginalization may be different and are not limited to the level of economic prosperity a country has achieved. For example, even though Canada is one of the economically prosperous countries, the lifelong learning system is not able to address the problems people are facing at various levels.
4. As both market and education are the parts of nation both of them should work towards the fulfillment of the demand of the nation. The future policy and practice of lifelong learning should aim for this, not towards fulfilling the demand of the market as it has been done today.

Reflections

Overall, the interview with Jack (pseudonym used to ensure confidentiality) went as planned. However, while listening to the audio for transcribing I felt that I did not understand what he was telling but I acted as though I understood. Actually, I should have asked those confusions again but I went to the next question. If the same situation comes again I would definitely take a chance to ask and become clear. If I had to make a follow up of this interview I would definitely make it more specific and ask some critical questions that make him comfortable to reveal his lived experiences.

Our positionality – both of us are students in the same department and both of us are male – made us more comfortable to discuss, however, now I feel that such familiarity was limiting the scope of our interview. The reason behind this is that we happened to assume we knew some of the things so we should not bring those issues into discussion. Had he been from different background, perhaps the interview wouldn't have been so platonic rather it would have gone more agonistic (Kvale, 2006).

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Appendix: Interview Transcript

Date: March 15, 2012

Interviewer: Kapil Dev Regmi

Time: 4PM to 4: 37PM

Notes for reading:

1. The lines in bold typing are the prompts (questions) that interviewer asked.
2. The lines in italics are the responses from the interviewee.
3. The three dots (...), normally, refers to the pause

Transcript

Why do you think lifelong learning is important?

I think education should be a right for everybody, regardless of age, or background, ethnicity, whatever. Lifelong learning is a right ... should allow anybody who wants to continue learning to be able to do so. Whatever their purpose is - may be to better themselves in their economic situations, to get into a different program in higher education, or to learn a new skill, or just to learn a new hobby. There are many aspects. I don't think lifelong learning should be for only economic betterment. But I think it is very much viewed from that perspective.

You mean, in general, learning throughout life irrespective of age, time, place, ethnicity, and background is a good thing?

Right

Do you think there is any problem to view lifelong learning only for getting employment or economic gain? What is your view in this issue?

I think the problem when you limit it to...solely for the purpose of economic growth is that you limit the opportunity for the people because you are structuring the system solely for the benefit of some type of economic gain. So you will be losing other types of education...learning values that is not given same values because they are not for economic gain. You are privileging certain type knowledge over others so those people who have that type of knowledge are marginalized. There can be another problem related to this. This type of structuring can create barriers for certain type of people because education system will base on market system and with that more competitive and price driven society.

You brought an interesting issue. What happens if the market dictates education?

Market will sort everything out because checks and balance, and supply and demand, everything depends on the market. It privileges people who have access to the market but what about the people who can't access the market. The whole knowledge system will be based on

the market. People will value knowledge only for economic gain. I think there is a lot more than just creating economic growth. There are much larger issues that could be forgotten because economy is valued over social sustainability or environmental sustainability or all these other things. People tend to put just dollar sign on people and what they learn.

How do you think development is possible without investment in human? Are there other alternatives that a country can benefit from?

I don't think investing in human is a problem. The problem is what we are valuing after the investment. Why we are investing in human? It's because we want people become more knowledgeable and more productive so that they can join the labor market or the system faster. The problem lies in valuing the knowledge that the certain groups of people have and impeding the knowledge of others.

You mean that lifelong learning perspective itself is not bad but while providing lifelong learning opportunities to the people it should be done in terms of equity not in terms of equality so as every person has opportunity to learn and become competitive.

Definitely, and not just competitive in economic sense but, in general, each group should have the right to learn as much as the other group does.

How do you evaluate the present lifelong learning perspective of Canada? Is it addressing those groups who are marginalized?

You mean Canada's investment in lifelong learning?

Yes

I don't think. There are a lot of things to be done. I don't think it is sufficiently addressed. If you see the current mounting students' debt... that is one issue but there are many aspects like this. For example, international students who are migrated to Canada are facing the problem of doubling the tuition fees. There could be much more money available for lower tuition and universities not acting like private institutions if the country can take away the human capital or market type of component...ah...ah...haha. I am not expert in this field...

How do you think we can minimize the divide that the knowledge based economy is creating?

One of the biggest problems is that every issue are interconnected, educational issue can't be solved without solving other plethora of interconnected issues. There are social problems such as homelessness. All of them are highly intertwined but how do we minimize is a big question...

But there is not absolute solution. Is that what you wanted to say?

No, I don't have the solution...hun...hun...

It's alright. Let's go a bit different from Canadian context. What do you mean by development?

I think development has many different meaning for different people. For example, sustainability means different things for different people. Same thing happens to define the word development too. To me in what context this relates to is a major issue. If we see in the context of developed and developing countries I mean I guess it seems to one day somebody decided that these groups are developed and developing...it sounds me lake somebody have something and so developed and other are trying to get it so they are developing. I think economic perspective is one of them to talk about development. It could be termed as in terms of emotional, spiritual or even professional development. You know a country could be termed as economically prosperous country but nobody is happy and what type of development it is...

Why do you think lifelong learning should also aim for fighting against injustice or for democratic values?

Definitely, education should play a large role in creating freedom of expression and allowing people to develop those types of ways...ah...ah...I lost my track...

How do you evaluate Freire's approach in education? Do you think it has anything to do for the development of a country?

Our current views on development or education are solely based on economic system that is oppressing to certain group of people. In terms of Freire's model of education and social justice our system is failing miserably. It's not breaking down those oppression and social injustices as Freire would say. It should be in terms of that ... we are doing very poor.

Do you think, in Canada, people are oppressed and they need liberatory education even today?

I think several groups of people in Canada could be considered as oppressed at various levels. Right now I can't think a Canadian example but in American context, right now, there is a great debate going on whether insurance company paying for women's birth control and whether or not they should do that... should not do that...should they pay for abortion supporting promiscuous activities. It's really a bunch of men taking the issue away from women completely ...not giving them chance to give their opinion on what to do ... without their opinion and spinning it around... that's the prime example where, you know, people are still oppressed in North American context...

Even in the developed society...

...Even in the developed society...Yeah. The highest level women ... they are not "street women" you know. They are higher upper class women being oppressed by high upper class men in the economic scale. If you go further down and look, injustices are taking place everywhere. See, for

example, the case of women of color, people of low income situations... layer and layer of oppression that are marginalizing people.

Let me ask you another questions related to the previous question but a bit different, ah as we discussed already, lifelong learning perspective assumes that everybody should update their knowledge and continue learning even though they are already professional in certain job position the knowledge and skills of the people have are already much more than the market really needs. So there is a kind of education deficit. What is your perspective on this? Do you think we should still compel people to learn?

It's a good question. There is no doubt that there is not such deficit. Teachers' situation in Canada is a perfect example. There are no jobs; doctors are going other countries because there are no jobs for them here. And teachers graduating here are unable to find job in BC, yeah ... are we educating people for the job that doesn't exist? Definitely in some cases but 'why is that happening' is a better question, ah, you know, all these talks about job creation, government creating thousands of new jobs for the educated people to fill but if you look at the type of job in demand and the type of education people are getting...there is total gap...

...there is no match

....yeah, there is no match. For example, we are talking that green jobs through green industries, green technologies and clean energies but you know people are going to school to learn completely different things. So what you're going to do with them then... I mean, the other thing is that, should we be telling the people that they need to continue learning or giving options in learning itself, rather than forcing them to learn what we want them to learn. Learners should be given with opportunities to select what to learn and it should be the learners to make decisions whether they want to continue learning. I mean we have to think, then what type of lifelong learning we are talking about; we are talking about the formal lifelong learning like higher education or training required as mandatory...

You mean the country needs to give options of learning to choose rather than just forcing them to learn certain knowledge and skills?

Oh I mean ... yeah, I am not sure that it is quite simple but again forcing people continue to learn is not the best way to go about because people tend to not do ...ah... if you force to do something. If you do that you are not doing right thing for them.

To go back to the previous issue again, how do you think that the problem can be solved, for example, a country is demanding something different but higher education is producing the human power something different and how that tally or tie up can be made?

We need to stop feeding dichotomy between the public sphere and the educational sphere. That's the biggest problem. The gap exists because we privatize education. We have created

one sphere and there are other disconnected spheres. You know, the sphere of community and sphere of economy are not working together. There's a gap so and they are not talking to each other. Important thing is why we can't have more cooperative learning opportunities? Why these two groups work together so that, you know, students would not only get real life experience but also have an understanding the needs of these two spheres. The need of the university and the need of the community are not different or separate paradigms. They should be the same, if not same, it does not make any sense. I think that's where the gap is.

The demand and supply is not quite clear?

Right

You mean educational sphere should produce such human resources that the country needs?

Right, and yeah if you see it through human capital theory, then it doesn't make any sense if you are producing what the other spheres doesn't demand. You should be supplying what other sphere is demanding, if other, then it doesn't make any sense.

Do you think it is because of capitalistic way of devising educational plans? I mean, the educational plans are made to supply what market demands instead of supplying what the country needs?

Right, that the problems of what country needs and what the market demands are also two different things. Who we are planning for? Are we planning for what the the country needs or are we planning for what the market demands? Or are we planning for what we think the market demands...ha...ha that is the another problem in this issue. It is unbelievably complex issue.

Yeah

There is not definitely absolute answer. There should be a lot more discussion in this issue ... but not only discussion...there should be some type of action to be taken in this issue...

Yeah, I think we are at the end of our discussion...

What do you think?

On what...?... On how these three - market, country and educational sphere - should work together?

It's really breaking down to the theory of economics. If you really think together about these three spheres ...I think that is what Marx, or Hegel and all of them talked about. These three ... the stable society, the public, and the economy and how they relate to each other. I think that's the issue and that's what we are talking definitely about in relation to lifelong learning.

Yeah, you want my perspective?

Yeah

You are now interviewing me? Ha ... ha ...ha ...

Ha ... ha ...ha

I think from the very beginning of our history, actually, the market and the society went opposite ... because market always tried to get benefit from the society and the division was created. Economy was led by the market, human values and social values disappeared. And market started dictating what type of people they wanted to grow in the society and the society was compelled to follow what market needs because they had to depend on the market.

Then what is the solution?

I don't think there is any automatic solution but it is a matter of negotiations.

What type of systemic change is necessary to address that problem? Is it the matter of making market less powerful?

I have questions rather than solutions - why do we need money? Why people need money? You know, money is working as magnet and it is magnetizing everything. If we demagnetize social values from money and the market then the problem could be solved. For example, I need a place to rest; I need a house to sleep. I don't need money for all these things. I never eat money. I never slept in the house of money. It is human labor that creates things to eat, place to rest and place to sleep. All problems started when we started putting money in the middle and all other thing at the periphery. What we need to do is that we have to remove money from the center.

Money itself became the problem right?

Yeah.

Did you get what you wanted?

Yes I did. Thanks for your time for the interview.

It didn't sound like an interview for me. It's a good discussion. I need a copy of this [audio].

Definitely, you will get. Thanks a lot.