

Conference on Education, Modernity and Development 12th-14th June 2007

SIDH's primary mission is to use education as a tool for social change and to encourage a more meaningful exploration and dialogue, not only in the social and political spheres but also within individual mindsets. As part of this process, **we invite you to join us for a three day conference on "Education, Modernity and Development" from 12th to 14th June, 2007 at SIDH, Bodhigram Talla campus near Kempty village (11 Km from Gandhi Chowk of Mussoorie).**

What are the relationships between education, modernity and development?

Every model of education has certain philosophical foundations; it has certain assumptions built into it, whether one is aware of them or not. This conference is an attempt to recognize this, and to explore the assumptions behind the system being followed by us. Education, modernity and development have strong inter-linkages; they are related and not independent of each other. Education gives shape to modernity and development. All programs of education entail a vision of ideals that they are striving towards, and methods of working towards the ideals —of modernity and development— whether we recognize these linkages or not. For example, the mainstream schooling model of education is linked to a European/Enlightenment notion of modernity. This notion of modernity is centered on individual rights and freedom within a set of universalized norms (i.e. nation-state centric democracy), accompanied by a technological and profit-centered notion of social and economic development. If educators are unaware of these linkages, then they may inadvertently get influenced by forces representing the dominant model of development and modernity. So there appears to be a need to recognize this link and understand the underlying dynamics. We feel that the multiple models of education that currently exist in our society provide fruitful grounds for thinking about the linkages to diverse visions of modernity and development, and whatever these entail as ideals and processes.

As educators, we also need to be aware if the model of education being represented by us is sustainable or desirable. Having made the linkages between education, development and modernity explicit, we therefore also wish to consider a second question: **are the development models represented by various educational systems sustainable?** If we are unable to come up with an answer that has widespread acceptability, do we keep supporting an unsustainable model? Or do we recognize that though in practice we may face constraints and limitations in implementing our visions, we need to continue seeking solutions which are desirable and sustainable. These are concerns that apply to education as a whole —from pre-primary to the highest levels— and yet these often tend to get lost in the compartmentalization of education at different levels.

If these issues are of interest to you and you would like to participate in the Conference, please contact us: sidhconference@gmail.com