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Many Sri Lankan migrants arrived to Australia express their happiness for reaching this country as they think that they have migrated to a lucky country where the people can enjoy many benefits, advantages and resources. Australia is a large country with tremendous economic resources with a small population quite similar to Sri Lanka. The most significant resource contains in Australia is the opportunity to empower through education and training. When compared to Sri Lanka, Australia has tremendous opportunities for education and training. In Sri Lanka such opportunities are rare and sometimes they are not available to rural people and poor

fied such education and training as good or bad because education and training become normative acceptance to them.

It is regretted to note that some parents who migrated to Australia from Sri Lanka attempt to class arts, commerce education, and technical vocational education from TAFE colleges as lower grade education and learning natural sciences is a superior education perhaps this type of exclusive conclusions happens with knowing or without knowing the philosophical view of classical religious realism. This type of classification of education and training reflects the stupidity or narrow or bigoted decision making of certain Sri Lankan people who are lacking apprehension on education and training that could not be assessed on making bigotry approach or statement. People who are working in Australian public administration services apparently known fact is that a person who gained a degree in economics has better chances to gain a promotion

justice from different points of view because social justice of education related to education distribution and the ability to gain education in a country, other it could be expressed in Australian terms as equal opportunity to education and training or equitable opportunity for it. These two factors are working different ways from one country to other. The social justice of education in Australia is quite varied from the social justice of poor African countries or Latin American countries or Pacific Islanders countries or many instances the quality of justice could not be compared as the justice of education distribution in Australia deviates the opportunities gaining education and training. In poor countries social justice of education could be interpreted as the ability to gain literacy and numeric skills in spite of this situation while social justice of education and training in Australia could easily define as the ability to gain essential knowledge and competencies for engaging in a preferred profession or employment to achieve financial independence.

education policy in such countries stands quite far from the concept of social justice. International education statistics clearly indicates that literacy rate in many resources rich nations is lower; sometime it peaks to 50%.

The concept of social justice in education and training is a complex notion that is difficult to analyse hanging on a static point of view because the concept is involved in personal and community attitudes, politics and different attitudes on moral values. Values are generally defined as good or things in the society and certain countries do not still recognize indubitable values though other countries like Australia critically recognized. Many countries in the world make different approaches towards the people who are disadvantaged in the society and policies and procedures in countries like India or Sri Lanka towards disadvantaged people in the society have no clear guidelines and when analysing the critical aspects of social justice in education and training it is necessary to consider the point that how education and training can help to eliminate the suffering and pain of disadvantaged people in the society through empowerment of such people enduring knowledge and skills. Many developing countries like in Sri Lanka have no clear policy guidelines on how to

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

in the country. Michael Foucault a French educationist expresses that education is a way of gaining power that could be utilized to achieve economic and social advantages and experiences of Sri Lankans in overseas and even within Sri Lanka display that education and training supported them to achieve economic power to have a good life. Therefore, education provides knowledge and skills, which are sources of economic and social power and to think right way to contribute for equity and justice.



John Dewey, an American educationist, who was communicating about democratic education, which directs how to think in solving problems or sense of research based education stated that education supports individuals achieving self control, which is the best power that any person could be gained in his or her life. Prof Milton Freedman, an eminent monetary economist and an adviser to President Richard Nixon asserted that skills gained through education and training is an asset that could procure returns investing in the market like gaining interest or profits from investing money in the market. The education and training enhance the productivity of human labour as well as attract the higher price for human labour at the market. Wealth divided as human wealth and non human wealth.

than a person who gained a degree in natural sciences. Such a practical experience proves that narrow decision making on the nature of education and training is harmful or injustice to people who genuinely pursues to gain education and training.

Although many denounce Australia as a lucky country many people do not know that two million of population are living under the poverty line in the country and more than 40000 of people in Australia have no houses for living. From the total population of Australia 30000 of people are millionaires and per capita net asset of the country is \$ 365000, but only few people who migrated from Sri Lanka can claim such volume of assets. There is a huge disparity in income and asset distribution of Australia and many people are unemployed or sole parents depending on government benefits, which is generously maintained by the government as it represents 20% -25% of aggregate demand of retail market of the country.

In this environment, education and social justice is a significant talking point for everybody, who are interested in education and training. When analysing education and social justice significant factors that should be considered is finding a more accurate definition for social

However, social justice in education and training in Sri Lanka could be interpreted with further deviated views because many people aware of that rural people in so-called boundary villages in the country lost opportunities for education and training during the intensive civil war conditions and also groups of people in rural and urban areas are in a difficult situation lacking abilities to gain education and training entirely due to poverty and ignorance of facilities available. Providing opportunities to gain knowledge and skills to such people could be possibly considered as social justice in education and training in Sri Lanka. After three years of winning the war, how far government has taken actions or is being taking actions for these victims to give opportunities in education and training is a totally complicated issue in the country as there is no evidence that the government has focused on right policy directions than sticking in revenge based politics in formulating education policies.

treat disadvantaged as well as disable people in the society and education policy in such countries never address the issues incorporating the concept of inclusive education to the active policy framework. However, Australian education policies willfully included the right of disadvantaged and disable in the society and inclusive education is an integral part of education policy of Australia.

According to available evidence in many countries of the world, resource richness in a country would not enhance the ability to gaining education and training. For example, a large number of countries in Africa, Latin America and even Pacific Rim have tremendous volume of natural resources but the distribution of education in those countries appears to be negative and the

Australian education system has incorporated value education, which includes care, compassion, inclusion, doing the best, respect and values related to an egalitarian society. Despite the ugly politics in Sri Lanka, respecting to common values in day to day social, political and economic operations is a nature of the Australian society and the political administration has recognized social justice in spite of the philosophy of political parties and the notion of humanity take priority in social and economic operations irrespective of aligned to a political party. In Sri Lanka's society, it is visible that the notion of humanity and the rights is corrupted by political administration and education and all other day to day activities of human life is controlled by the administration on the basis of alignment to political parties. Social justice in Sri Lanka's society is a remote concept despite religious values (SARA DHARMA) of repeating rhetoric of Sri Lankan people.

It seems that many western countries like Australia have been operating a fair go society for a long time. The labour government elected after 1970 strongly believed on social justice and Mr Whitlam, the leader of labour party without trade union background but with experience in public administration contributed lots for social justice in education and training, which included free university education and policy implementation for aborigine community and their education. However, it is regret to note that Mr John Dowkins, the Minister of Education under the labour leader, Mr Bob Hawks has turned back the social justice in education introducing HECS and further deteriorated by higher education loan system. Currently Australian education system has become a business, which undermines the social justice of education distribution or equal opportunity to education and training.

There is no question what kind of education or training should be gained by a person as it is a question related to the preference of a person, which is entirely the choice determined by independent thinking. The education and training could be classed as good education or not so good education using certain type of criteria which supports assessing the magnitude of market demand for the labour that depends on the form of competency acquired through education and training. When different people gained education and training based on what they preferred, nobody can classi-

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Voice of Lanka 97.7FM 3SER

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