Abstract

Education in India is not only an insurance against the uncertain challenges of the future; it is also a daring adventure into unknown possibilities. It should basically aim at awakening and developing the pupil’s diverse dormant faculties of observation, experimentation and speculation. It should provide the energy of the body, alacrity of mind, and especially the deeper poise of the spirit. The educational process would simply be the flowering of the human consciousness, ever more intimate and far reaching till it becomes knowledge, action and realization in one. In education, therefore it is the utmost importance to awaken the veiled and withdrawn soul within. The entire world is a school and all life is education. The educational institution could be a place of high concentration of aspiration and effort—even as a Temple, Church or Mosque is a house of God charged with an immediacy of presence, power and grace. The two terms in education are: (1) the pupil, who seeks knowledge, and (2) God or Truth, the source of all knowledge. The teacher himself is but the link between the two, the channel of communication, the willing Paraclete. A real teacher, enacting the power of divine love, helps the child’s bud of consciousness to open out petal by petal, and to achieve environment of the academy. There is a personal, a social or national and a global or racial dimension to education and these three should promote a living, evolving and progressively realizing dynamic of puissant consciousness. The essential postulates of education would be the unity of matter and spirit in the universe, the unity of matter and spirit in the men, and the role of man to enact a visible efflorescence of the internality, the wholeness, the light and puissance of unity. The attempt to give an inner orientation to education may be expected to achieve is an accession of keenness, freshness, vitality, open-heartedness and clarity of vision. With the new Seeing Eye, the pupil moves with a poise and purpose, sees more and understands more, and finds all knowledge and experience, marvels of revelation, illumination and affirmation. This is the key for quality enhancement of our modern Indian education.
1. INTRODUCTION
Facing various catastrophes and turmoil India has been taking unique leadership in the field of education for the ages among other countries in the global context. It embraces all the philosophies in her lap without any hesitation. Mother India is well aware of her messages of scriptures (The Vedas): “Let noble thoughts come from all sides”, “Let all men live in peace and harmony”, and “Let all people be happy in life”. This is the foundation of her culture. According to a pioneer commission of Indian education (Kothari Commission of 1964-66), “Indian culture has strong and honorable tradition of International Understanding of valuing of the whole with an open mind, the contributions of different countries and races to human civilizations.” Here human being is constantly aspiring, learning, discovering, growing in knowledge, acquiring new skills, rising on the wings of contrivance and complexity and trying to rise higher and higher. There have been setbacks and disasters, yet the unfailing spur of aspiration and fresh effort sustained by abounding hope.
Since time immemorial it has been observed that the education system of India is very much enriched in respect to wisdom, love, truth, peace, beauty and harmony. From ‘Gurukula’ system to modern age it has enshrined the noble thoughts of its valuable scriptures. Education here is not only an insurance against the uncertain challenges of the future; it is also a daring adventure into unknown possibilities. It should basically aim at awakening and developing the pupil’s diverse dormant faculties of observation, experimentation and speculation. It should provide the energy of the body, alacrity of mind, and especially the deeper poise of the spirit.

2. THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF EDUCATION
The present system of education has length and breadth but no depth. We have gone a lot of distance to reach at the Moon. But we have not crossed a single step towards our inner being. Today, the evils of the educational system infect the children, and they presently become a prey to the same pettifogging calculations and schizophrenic self-torturing. Between the home and the academy there lie the political market place, the main street and super bazar of extravagance and waste, and the by lanes entertainment and abuse. There is the threatening bulge of the children and youth coming to school and college, and there is threatening bulge of information and technological invention. We have somehow to contain the two bulges, prevent their bursting, and there by safeguard the future.
The present system of education is stereo type, mechanical, IT based. It merely concerns with stuffing information and accumulated data to pass the examinations. At any rate getting higher degree with excellent marks is the motto of education. Each institution is competing with others to have latest techniques in their institution to attract more number of students to earn more and more. The present education systems are techno based and oriented to outer life only, or structured to produce a limited academic product, take no relation with the inner potential of the individual. In present times pursuit of material success is the main objective in the minds of young students. The super school-wallas, the major-varsity products and the
advanced centre paragons are apt to feel alienated by the bleak prospect around them, and are only too ready to make a bee-line to one of the more effluent countries. Factory-schooling is most detrimental and injurious to our diverse wisdom traditions; it only promotes a world of fragmentation, competition, jealousy, dependency, negative individualism, selfishness, purposelessness, and consumerism. It creates gap between theory and practical, word and deed, outer and inner, and reading and becoming. It does not cultivate the heart of human being. It generates more isolation alienation, frustration and helplessness rather than community and communion. It creates confusion rather than belief. It is making them more and more selfish and intolerant to others in the race to be winners. Everybody wants ‘preya’ rather than ‘shreya’. With the rise in life expectations, there is a quickened mental obsolescence, and age has more worries and frustrations than delights and realizations.

3. COMPARISON BETWEEN WESTERN AND EASTERN IDEAS

Before coming to core point let us have a glance at the psychological ideas of Eastern and the Western mind. Human beings born and living both parts of the world have many areas of common potentials, but some of them preferentially manifest in a particular geographical and cultural milieu and become the pre-dominating nature of that populace.

Table 1: Nature of Mindsets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western mind</th>
<th>Eastern mind</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enquiry and doubt</td>
<td>Shradhha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissection and Analysis</td>
<td>Integration and Synthesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrovert</td>
<td>Introvert</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fulfilment of material life</td>
<td>Spiritual achievement</td>
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The first aspect of Western mind starts the enquiry with doubt and questions probably inherited from Socrates and Descartes. The eastern mind seeks knowledge with ‘shradhha’. ‘Shrddhaban lavate param’ means Grace comes to them, or they achieved wisdom, who loves Him (God).

The second aspect of the Western enquiring mind is that it proceeds by dissection and analysis based on logic and deduction. The Eastern mind on the other hand predominantly uses then tool of integration and synthesis based on logic of induction. The third aspect of the western mind is external oriented, and hence seeking knowledge is gadget based. On the other side Eastern mind, especially the Indian psyche is inwardly and concentrates on development of consciousness. Hence, Western mind is more operational and the Indian mind is more classical. As a consequence of the above differences between the two mindsets, the West is more materially successful and the East is poised more for spiritual fulfilment. In Indian spirituality, material pursuits (avidya) have not been abandoned, it is a pre-condition for spiritual (vidya) growth.

“Vidyaam cha avidyaam chajastadvedovayam saha
Avidyaam mrityum teertva vidya amritamashnute”

(Isha Upanishad/11)
The classical economist of the Western world like Recardo and Adam Smith identified three basic factors of production—land, labour and capital. In ‘Brihadaranyak Upanishad’, the Rishis identified three basic aspirations of human beings to fulfil three basic needs. Those are: i) from transient to eternal, ii) from darkness to light, iii) from death to immortality. As Indians we remember that this truth was found much before Maslow’s great grandfather was born. If we draw an analogy between production system and educational institution, land, labour and capital should correspond to Course content, the student and the teacher respectively.

4. QUALITY OF MODERN INDIAN EDUCATION ON THE BASIS OF PHILOSOPHY

For India to emerge in effulgence, India must remain faithful to her inner essential nature and develop in line with her core competence of our country. Any other method, howsoever successful elsewhere will not work in our country? The Bhagabad- Gita says:

“Shreyan svadharmo vigunan paradharmat svamushhitat
Svadharme nidhanam shreyah, paradharme bhayavahah”

(The Gita-III/35)

When we look at the psychophysical core competence of our country, we can easily identify two areas:

a) Bio-diversity, which on the physical plane can attract tourist from all over this world and on the knowledge plane, India becomes the hub for biotechnology and other life science research.

b) The second area is education. To the best of our information, no other country in the world can offer such a cost effective and quality education as India. With many thousand years of culture and civilisations, our country is rightly geared to be the centre of knowledge creation and knowledge management. India’s success in IT all over the world has great significance. Management education works towards positively impacting the communities. The business managers enjoy the economic power. Power without a framework of values can have very damaging consequences and this is evidence in the experiences with Enron, World Com etc. The actions of the managers wiped out the earning of thousands of shareholders including lifesavings, apart from loss of jobs for thousands. Hence, the management education has to build values and ethics to enable managers to run their business wisely.

In one of the top business schools in India, a course is offered with the following outline, which summarises:

- There is an invisible order that governs the universe
- Sensing that order is the beginning of spirituality
- Respecting that is the beginning of learning
- Understanding it is the beginning of self-development
- Flowing with it is the beginning of good management
- To be animated by it is the beginning of leadership.
In ancient time in our country, the guru/teacher has been eulogised a superior to ‘paras pathar’ or the touch stone is capable of converting iron into gold, but cannot reproduce or replicate another touchstone. A good teacher or guru can himself manifest as many good teachers and gurus through his students. So, the product of excellent education for shaping future India must necessarily become good teachers, capable of effective communication. Good teachers through their behaviour and the personality should be able to infuse life into the people around them.

The world of today has developed a binary (0, 1) mindset, that means good or bad, white or black, rich or poor. But human consciousness cannot be framed in a binary mood. Violence is reigning everywhere. We are now living in a dangerous world. Shakespeare, Byron, Wordsworth, Tagore were put into corners of our modern Hi-Fi education system. The inner human spirit is craving for a new approach, i.e. the approach of love. Would we create a lovable atmosphere!

Indian Philosophy is based on spirituality. A leader in this approach:

- Must be a spiritual leader.
- He must have faith, dedication, introspection, and aspiration for a harmonious life and living.
- He must form a positive attitude to develop his consciousness.
- He must aspire to invoke Divine grace towards progress & welfare of his institution.
- This education does not believe in either success or failure. It believes in excellence and perfection.
- It does not fear to anything or anybody, rather it loves everything. This new attitude gives him a new dimension to life and work.

Education is a continuous process. It aims basically at awaking and developing the pupils divers dormant faculties of observation, experimentation, and speculation. We should craft for learning with application of our knowledge in upliftment of down trodden and betterment of society. Noble values of caring and sharing, of service and sacrifices have kept the Indian society away from Western effect and made it vibrant at all times. Indian society is known for having great values for life and deep concern for human development. We should intensely aspire for deepening and broadening our knowledge, learn to experience the power of cooperation, collaboration and team spirit, and always be guided by supreme values we believe in.

Education is very important for development of civilization. Educated and trained manpower is major input for economic and social development. It is the demand of people that the education should prepare the masses to face the unpredictable and uncertain challenges of the future. Education is the pathway to progress, empowerment and engagement. Hence our educational environment should be healthy and vibrant. Education makes the development of personality in the enhancement of knowledge. It inspires for humanism and peace in the integration of tradition and modernism with advancement of science and technology. Its purpose should be to prepare everyone to acquire the knowledge, the talents and resources and make them available the task of nation building.
It is not enough to read Botany in relation to Zoology, or Economics in relation to History, or Linguistics in relation to Sociology; but everything has to be seen in relation to the whole, the very ground of Reality. Education should be related to each branch of knowledge to Reality. The strivings of today being grounded on the achievements of all our yesterdays are pointing to the summits of future.

The Mother (26th July, 1965) in Sri Aurobindo Ashram says:

“India has or rather had the knowledge of the spirit, but she neglected matter and suffered for it. The west has the knowledge of matter but rejected the spirit and suffers badly for it. An integral education which could, with some variations, be adapted to all the nations of the world must bring back the legitimate authority of the spirit over matter fully developed and utilized”.

It means-the essential postulates of education would be the unity of matter and spirit in the universe, the unity of matter and spirit in the men, and the role of man to enact a visible efflorescence of the integrity, the wholeness, the light and puissance of unity.

The goal of education is verily to help the pupil to evolve into a noble specimen of the race, a witness to Truth in the four fold aspects of Love, Knowledge, Power and Beauty. The educational process would simply be the flowering of the human consciousness, ever more intimate and far reaching till it becomes knowledge, action and realization in one. In education, therefore it is the utmost importance to awaken the veiled and withdrawn soul within.

Let us be clear as to what will be the right education in fast changing global situation today. A partial, personal or parochial view of education has to be replaced by an integral view comprising the needs of individual, nation and all humanity on the one hand and addressed, on the other. To utmost but harmonious development of body, vital, mind and soul, and the mobilization of the enduring gains of the past, the thrust of the present and the possibilities of the unfolding future.

The individual should be helped to realize his utmost potentialities, he should be enabled to find his proper relation with his social group and his nation; and he should be encouraged to find his true place in the global human community. There is thus a personal, a social or national and a global or racial dimension to education and these three should promote a living, evolving and progressively realizing dynamic of puissant consciousness.

Without the light of ‘Para vidya’, the higher spiritual wisdom all ‘Apara vidya’, the lower knowledge gained through the normal academic curriculum in art and science, is mere ‘avidya’ or false knowledge. Humanism itself, unless it undergoes baptism in the waters of spirituality, must prove a partial and limiting, and ultimately falsifying, experience. The education should not deal with other man just a brother, a fellow human being; rather the other fellow is myself, ourselves-lit by the same spirit within, and marked for the same destiny of transformation from the human to the divine. The best approach to mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, history, geography, poetry, music, art is to see them all as petals of one flower, notes of a single piece of music, tints of the same apocalyptic rainbow arc or rays that feed the same illumination. Para Vidya is in essence that constant reiteration.
and perception of the great bass sustaining the polyphonic symphonies. It is the soul of education without which the body, however attractive in form and rich in raiment, is no better than show piece model.

Man, society, community, nation, race-have a soul, an evolving soul within, and as like to like, rapport at the level of the soul is easy to establish, whether between man and man, man and society, or nation and the global human family. On this foundation, and fed from this power-house of illumination, all other super structures and communication systems could be safely reared. In this approach education is not isolated from life. If education were verily progressive self-knowledge, self-gathering, self-discipline, self-unfoldment, and self-realization than education must be co-extensive with life. All life is education, and with right sense of education and ascent of sincerity and dedication all life could be yoga. Life: Education: yoga—they are the same, only differing in the intensity of conscious effort, and the determined drive towards individual, collective or global perfection.

The whole of the discredited education of our time deserves to be thrown overboard. In this place let us encourage the pupil to exploit his innate buoyancy and curiosity and learn rigorously by his own efforts; to embark upon projects formulating his own objectives and seeking his own solutions through self-regulated programs of work experience; and to engage in group activities or co-curricular work with his fellow, alike for gaining knowledge and skills and for community involvement and service. Flexibility and dynamism, rather than rigidity and uniformity should be the governing law of educational process; and teacher–pupil confrontation should be ended by making them both participants in the educational adventure.

The entire world is a school and all life is education. The educational institution could be a place of high concentration of aspiration and effort—even as a Temple, Church or Mosque is a house of God charged with an immediacy of presence, power and grace, because the entire universe itself is the House of God’s omnipresence, organize by his power and glory. The two terms in education are: (1) the pupil, who seeks knowledge, and (2) God or Truth, the source of all knowledge. The teacher himself is but the link between the two, the channel of communication, the willing paraclete. A real teacher, enacting the power of divine love, helps the child’s bud of consciousness to open out petal by petal, and to achieve environment of the academy.

According to Iyengar(1976), “the school atmosphere with intimations of the divine presence, the dedicated love of the teacher that gently opens the windows of the pupils’ psychic self, the stimulating fellowship of the other pupils, the unending romance of life, the constant play of curiosity, the thrilled satisfaction of doing things on one’s own or by spontaneous co-operative effort-these are among the elements of educational engineering that will temper and transform our children in to the ‘hero warriors’ of the tomorrow’s world”. Living in psychic, enlargement of consciousness, realizing the sense of the others and the living perception of the deeper unity are of great significance for developing the education system.
5. IMPROVING QUALITY OF MODERN EDUCATION IN INDIAN CONTEXT.

In addition to the above aspects the following points may be very helpful for improving quality of modern education in Indian context.

(i) The Aim of Life:
Aim less life is miserable life. Hence, everybody should have an aim in his life. This aim should be loftier, wider, & deeper. Life depends on this aim. According to one’s aim the life will be greater, generous & loftier. Once Rishi Yagyanvalka offered a lot of things i.e., elephants, horses, coins, gold, jewels etc. to Rishi Maitrei. But Maitrei asked, he rishi! What shall I do with these articles which do not provide me amrita (nector). “Yenaham na mrutashyam tenaham kim kuryam!” Yah bhuma tat sukham nalpe sukhamasti.” Where there is greatness there is bliss. In mere things there is no happiness. So one’s aim should be higher deeper & wider.

(ii) Love to Profession:
The word love means ‘shraddha’. The word ‘shraddha’ (the pious ritual done for ancestors) comes from ‘shraddha’ (love). Love to work, Love to learn, Love to everything. Moon light as well as the mother earth is the epitome of love, a believer of infinite potential of her child and above all a forgiver for all the mistakes or errors her child may commit. She is an incorrigible optimist. Even when the father gives up in anger and agony, the mother never shuns her child. We have seen this love in the life of Jesus. He excused them, who nailed him.

(iii) Be Brave
Fearlessness is a divine quality. The philosophy of fearlessness is the philosophy of death. Sometimes we feel nervous, weak. Hence, the mother in Sri Aurobindo Ashram says,” I have seen eighteen years’ old & eighty years’ young”, and future learners will be hero warriors. Hence, The Mother taught in Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education: “Make of us the hero warriors we aspire to become. May we fight successfully the great battle of the future that is to be born against the past that seeks to endure; so that the new things may manifest and we be ready to receive them.” Socrates, Spinoza, Pascal also provided the same message. Our Upanishad says;

“Utisthata, yagrat, prapyabarannibodhat”

“Arise, awake, and not stop until to reach your goal.”

- Swami Vivekanand

(iv) Learning the Values at Insects
When we move in our path we can learn from everything. Many insects teach us good values. Ant teaches us planning. Bees tell us about virtues of hard work. Grasshoppers sing about the pure joy of living. The cockroach, living quietly & minding one’s business makes him live 350 million years.

(v) Learning from the Sun
We aspire to the Sun to become like Him, & pray to radiant us with your light. “Udeti sabitastamra tamraneba stame- ticha. Sampataucha bipataucha mahatamekarupata.” It means at the time of the sun sets & rises its color is same as copper. Likewise the great men
appear similar at the time of happiness & sorrow (sampad & vipad). The sun teaches us to move tireless. In our scripture it is written that “chareibeti.” It means to move forward. The Mother says, “forward ever forward, at the end of the tunnel there is light, at the end of the fight there is victory.” ‘Yah gatah sah eba jagat’. Everything is moving upward & upward. We are also moving upward. So there is no question of frustration. Becoming happy, following the steps of nature will move us forward.

(vi) Learning from the Nature:
According to Rousseau, ‘Nature is the best teacher’. Nature teaches us many things in the Universe. We learn from the Sun, from the moon, from air, water, fire, forest and sky. Everybody loves to get out into Nature. Nature teaches us that for everything there is a season and the right timing. In Mother Nature’s natural cycles of weather and seasons, there is an all-important flow – the bitter cold of winter is followed by the blossoming beauty of spring. It follows the warmth and light of summer, followed by the colorfull changes of autumn. Nature teaches us to be humble. There is a quiet strength in humility. A tree embodies the quality of self-offering. It provides homes and shelter for animals, birds and insects, as well as offering shade and fruit to us humans. To be self-giving in your own life and to offer things, services, smiles to others unconditionally will make you happy. There is so much beauty all around us. Take time out to be in nature and experience the vastness and depth of the blue-green ocean. Enjoy the beauty in the simple and natural things in our environment. Nature teaches us much about how to renew and restore energy in ourselves.

(vii) Changing Attitude:
Changing attitude is very helpful in path of progress. According to S. Khera, “Winners do not do different things, but they do the things differently.” Steady effort always brings great results. Let the past be past, concentrate on the future. Develop one’s “swadharma”. Swadharmaṃ nidhanam shreyah, parodharman bhayabhayah”. We have crossed a lot of distance in the outer world. But, we have not moved a single step in inner world. We have to start an inner journey, i.e. swadharma.” Then individuality will be developed. A lighted candle can light other candles. It removes darkness. Darkness cannot remove darkness. Hence, it is wise to follow the light, the positive side of everything. We will discuss everything in positive way. The things will be positive. It will enrich us. Let us keep hope and create a positive environment.

6. CONCLUSION
The attempt to give an inner orientation to education may be expected to achieve is an accession of keenness, freshness, vitality, open-heartedness and clarity of vision. With the new Seeing Eye, the pupil moves with a poise and purpose, sees more and understands more, and finds all knowledge and experience, all information and indices not just negotiable instrument in examination mart or employment exchange, but marvels of revelation, illumination and affirmation. The pupils who have crossed their Rubicon and cracked their ego-shell will shine with the flame of freedom in their source and the light of knowledge in their eyes. And they will also be ready to engage in a God’s labor of danger
and difficulty for the sheer joy of it. Have with this experience, growing it within, we can serve the society. Whatever we will do, doing it happily, quietly, consciously, and persevere it. Victory is sure. At last, it is felt to quote the great message, “Let us come together, let us enjoy together, let there be light, let there be no hatred or poison of misunderstanding.” (Taitreya Upanishad). This is the key for quality enhancement of our modern Indian education.

7. REFERENCES


