

# APOSTLE OF TEACHER AND EDUCATION FOR QUALITY AND HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY OF A CHILD

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## ABSTRACT

*Present day education develops the intellect and skills but does little to develop good qualities. Of what avail is all the knowledge in the world, if one has not got good character? It is like water going down the drain. There is no use if knowledge grows while mutilated desires multiply. It makes one a hero in words and zero in action. Today, when we are bewildered in this fast changing society, talking of holistic and quality education with earnest zeal of transforming education from global aspects—we are confused, as what we need? Integrity of character building or return in terms of economic profit from our children Because both are 'Interrobang', combining an exclamation mark with a question mark. So, let us variegate in the most simplest path of our ancient treasure of education relating to Teacher (Guru) and the taught (often referred to as 'Shromons', 'Bhikshuks' and 'Shishyas' as students or disciples)*

*Thereafter we see our reflection in the mirror of some of those teachers who are immortal, their philosophies on education and transpired by their thoughts in the policy framework in Indian education through different Commissions and Committee's recommendations, leaving the concluding remarks by the teacher-learner fraternity on the outcome and to measure our purpose of this seminar titled, 'Quality Teacher Education in the Era of Innovation'.*

**Keywords:** *Holistic education, character building, quality, interrobang, economic profits.*

## Introduction

A teacher is considered as an 'Apostle', one who is a pioneer or early advocate of a particular cause to the extent that he is seen as a prophet of a belief. A shift from teacher-centric education to child-centric education formulates suggestions and recommendations for policy makers in their action orientation programme. The International commission on Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century was formally established in 1993. The aim of the commission was to face the upcoming challenges of the future. Under the Chairmanship of Jacques Delors the four pillars of education are learning to be, learning to know, learning to do and learning to live together are not new concept in Indian system of education. A look in the ancient system of education transpires internalization of self, a step which is difficult to achieve in the concurrent scenario. So how was education in our ancient India?

## Teacher & Education in ancient India:

Ancient rishis termed education as 'Knowledge' and 'knowledge Supreme'; 'Gnyana' and 'Pragnyana'

'Paravidya' and 'Apara Vidya', while Supreme knowledge and 'Para Vidya' led to the self-realization:

' Sā vidya, ya bimuktayē'<sup>1</sup>. It is the truth or the knowledge or the Pragnyana that will release an individual from bondage of materialistic world was the main aim of education. -From Brihadananyaka Upanishad we find knowledge is that treasure which makes man enlighten.

*'Asato ma Sadgamaya, Tamaso ma Jyotirgamaya, Mrityor ma Amritam Gamayo'*<sup>2</sup>

Meaning – O God, O my Guru— From delusion lead me to Truth; From darkness lead me to light; From death lead me to Immortality.

That was the 'mantra' for quality of life, quality of education and quality of character. To achieve this quality a student is to offer utmost dedication which the guru demanded and preached by saying - *Chatrānām Adhyān Tapāh'*<sup>3</sup>

O learners! Make learning your meditation, your concentration your goal.

Later Swamiji said from Katha Upanishad: "Arise, Awake, Stop not till the goal is reached"<sup>4</sup>. In the

1.3.14 Chapter of Katha Upanishad, this sloka can be found when Yama is teaching Nachiketa, the methods of Yoga.

Both in Vedic and Brahmanic era 'Shishyas' or learners had to attend 'Gurukul' or the abode of the teachers where both 'Para Vidya' comprising of Vedas, Vedantas, Upanishad and holy texts were taught through 'Smriti'- 'Shruti' methodology and vocational learning was taught through Aparavidya; thus a holistic blend of personality was etched out of the pupils.

In the Buddhist era 'Shromons' or 'Bhikshuks' visited the Viharas where more democratic mode of education was imparted. The oldest University—the Nalanda Vishwavidyalaya emerged in 600 B.C. Education was teacher centric and the teacher held the highest epitome of truth who were iconized by the pupil. Teachers were revered with the Sloka—

*'Guru Brahma, Guru Vishnu,  
Guru devo Maheshwara,  
Guru Saakshat parambrahma,  
Tatsmei Shri Guruve Namah'*<sup>5</sup>

The teacher is like the Lord Brahma as he generates knowledge within us, like Lord Vishnu as he drives ideas and knowledge into our mind unto the right path, and like Maheshwara (Shiva) as he destroys the ill-conceived ideas that comes from our knowledge, while enlightening us and helping us stay on the right path. Thus, the teacher is like our ultimate God and we should pray and give respect to our teachers.

*'Agyana timiraandhasya  
Gnyaana anjana sholaakayaa  
Chakshuhu unmeelitaam yenam  
Tasmai shri guruve namah'*<sup>6</sup>

Guru can guide us to the Supreme knowledge of 'THAT' which pervades in all the living and non-living being in the entire universe (namely Brahma)—I salute such a Guru.

*'Om Akhanda Mandalaakaaram,  
vyaaptam yenam Charaacharam,  
Taipadam Darshitam yeno  
Tasmai Shri Guruve namah'*<sup>7</sup>

A guru can save us from the pangs of ignorance (darkness) by applying to us the balm of knowledge or awareness of the Supreme—I salute such a guru. Teachers were held at high esteem by the students and the society.

For holistic education in Bhagavad Gita, it is said that perform your prescribed duty, for doing so is

better than not working. One cannot even maintain one's physical body without work. This is applicable for both teachers and the learners.

*"niyatam Kuru Karma tvam  
karma jyāyo hy akarmaṇaḥ,  
Śarīra-yātrāpi ca te  
na prasiddhyet akarmaṇaḥ"*<sup>8</sup>

Today, celebrities, politicians, filmstars, and to some extent terrorist are iconized by the youth, but Shakespeare in his famous play, 'Merchant of Venice' wrote—"It is easy to teach twenty, than to be one of the twenties and follow thy own teaching"<sup>9</sup>—Act I, Scene II

But, teachers were always treated as great men and Gita quotes—

*"Yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas  
tat tad evetaro janah,  
Sa yat pramāṇām kurute  
lokas tad anuvartate"*<sup>10</sup>

Whatever action a great man perform, common men follows. And whatever standards, he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.

It is no doubt that our beloved President, late APJ Abdul Kalam did not get biopic shoot which is so very beneficial for students but a person who was convicted for a terrorist act, where hundreds of people were killed in Mumbai occupies the cinema hoarding with his bio-pic. And here we are today making desperate attempts promoting quality mind, body and soul.

Today, in the age of "Education is investment and an investment demands return"<sup>11</sup>. Newspapers make frequent headlines—"Adolescents commit suicides for being deprived of mobile phones, or refrained by parents to over usage of electronic gadgets causing disturbance to their results and class achievements".

#### **Yoga and Education :**

In Dhyana-yoga, it is quoted that from wherever the mind wanders due to its flickering and unsteady nature, one must certainly withdraw it and bring it back under the control of the self.

*"yato yato niścalati manas  
cañcalam asthiram  
tatas tato niyamyaitad  
ātmany eva vaśam nayet"*<sup>12</sup>

So, what is the solution? Both parents, teachers and students should lead a regulated life. Even the society has a moral responsibility for censorship of unethical, immoral and amoral regularities of life.

Bhagavat Gita clearly offers the solution in the following Slokas—

*“yuktāhāra- vihārasya yukta-ceṣṭasya karmasu  
yukta-svapnāvabodhasya yogo bhavati  
duḥkha- hā”*<sup>13</sup>

He who is regulated in his habits of eating, sleeping, recreation and work can mitigate all material pains by practicing the yoga system. In ancient days we find students had to be regulated in all their work, speech, sleep, wakefulness and all other bodily activities, so that there was no material misery for them.

Today, the world thrives on materialism. To some extent, materialism if kept at the tolerant level is bearable; but when the teachers and the students fraternity are too inclined towards materialism, then the element of spiritualism is lost. It is to be noted that, for one whose mind is unbridled, self realisation is a difficult work. But, he whose mind is controlled and who strives by appropriate means is assured of success.

*“asaṁyatātmanā yogo duṣprāpa iti me matiḥ  
vaśyātmanā tu yatatā śakyo 'vāptum upāyataḥ”*<sup>14</sup>

As per the notification by MHRD, “Yoga-divas is to be observed on 21<sup>st</sup> June by all schools all over India. But, why should it be observed only one day with pomp and show? Syllabus of Secondary and Higher Secondary level do give stress on practices of yoga or Physical Training or free hand exercises in the curriculum. Even in D.El.Ed, B.Ed. and M.Ed. courses has included yoga and its practices in the curriculum, so that the teachers can percolate the utility of yoga to their students.

#### Great Educators and their views on Education:

India has a rich treasure for imparting quality education for holistic growth and development of the child. Our revered teachers like Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar advocated for vernacular schools, enhanced woman education, opened 'Nari Shiksha Bhandar', wrote books in vernacular. Rabindranath Tagore established Viswa-Bharati University, which acclaimed global heights, Sriniketan for vocational studies, 'Shiksha-satra', for rural schools; achieved Nobel Prize for his Gitanjali, was an epitome of friend, philosopher and guide for his students. He has left no space where a blank emotional pursuit can be left omitted. We have Swami Vivekananda, whose famous quote—“Education is the manifestation of perfection

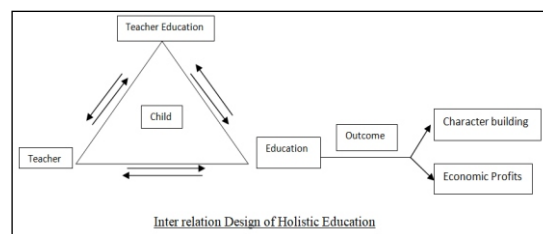
already in man”<sup>15</sup> is a complete state of holistic education where man-making, character building, mass education is translated in its simple form. He acclaimed that every man is endowed with some element of dignity and some element of satanity in him. It is the work of education to nurture and awaken the divinity in him and curb the satanity.

Mahatma Gandhi clearly stated—“By education, I mean, an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man-body, mind and spirit. He further says, I hold that true education of the intellect can only come through proper exercise and training of the bodily organs. But, unless the development of mind and body goes hand in hand with a corresponding awakening of the soul, the forms would prove to be poor, lop-sided affair. By spiritual education, I mean, education of the soul”<sup>16</sup>.

Beside the Vedantic ideology and our great teacher's contribution, we have with open arms have inducted different approaches of teaching at our school level. It is imperative to state that Project method, Heuristic method, Demonstration method, Interactive method is pursued along with the very conventional lecture method commonly through 'Chalk and Talk' method.

#### Teacher Education in Modern India :

Teacher Education is the pivot of any educational system. Its quality and efficacy depends upon the capacity to respond to the socio-economic and cultural contents of learners and communities. Teacher preparation programmes have necessarily to be in close conformity with the changing educational and social realities of a given society. The community and society determines its acceptability, credibility and character. Now, if we congregate Teacher Education and Teacher Education for the holistic development of child, then the question of success by the parents are in a confused state.



They want an integrated, dutiful child who will shoulder the responsibility of the family as well as be a vendor machine for income generation. We know that in the colonial era education was to produce clergyman, a shift from character building to

economic building. Swami Vivekananda's 'man-making' today has moved to mass education training; amalgamated with the highlighting desires created by consumerism and spread like wild-fire by electronic gadgets. The main aim of Vedic and Brahmanic education was self realization or achieving 'Moksha' and materialistic reimbursement was a taboo. In Buddhist education-attaining 'Nirvana' was more simplistic than today's non-conforming, confused, diametrically opposite aim of education.

#### **Trends of Modern Education:**

Our constitutional provision in the Article 45, states – “It shall be the responsibility of the state (Govt.) to provide free and compulsory education to all the children till they attain fourteen years of age.” Post Independence several commissions and committees recommended for the upliftment of educational system in India. Radhakrishnan Commission (1948-49) gave importance to Higher Education, rural and agricultural development which was followed by Mudaliar Commission (1952-53) streamlining secondary education. In 1958, Durgabai Deshmukh harped on the problems of education for girls. But a radical indepth study on primary and secondary education where twelve task force for different educational sector like school education, higher education, technical, agricultural etc was traversed by Kothari Commission in (1964-66) generally also known as Education Commission was based on Swamiji's philosophy – “Learn everything that is good from others, but bring it in, and in your own way absorb it; do not become others”.<sup>17</sup>

National Education Policy (NEP) was promulgated in 1968 after the recommendations of Kothari Commission and sought for radical restructuring and equalising educational opportunities to achieve national integration. This was further expanded in National Policy of Education (1986) where emphasis was laid in ten core elements of curriculum prioritising Black Board Operation Pace – setting schools. Navodaya Vidyalaya, Adult education, Accountability in education were among the targeted goal. After the 1968 Policy of Education, which was on the recommendation of Kothari Commission (1964-66), a national curriculum framework for teacher preparation was brought out in 1978 by the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT). At the conceptual level, this proposition had the potential to transform and overhaul the teacher education system in India for elementary and secondary

stages. But, teacher educators were not provided orientation to internalize the significance of change due to lack of peripheral social changes in actual practices.

After a span of several years, Yashpal Committee (1992) suggested means and measures to reduce academic burden on school children and curriculum burden due to the notion of “knowledge explosion” and 'Catching –up' syndrome. Based on this reports, National Curriculum Framework (NCF) was set up in 2005 on the four guiding principles –

- a) Connecting knowledge to life outside the school,
- b) Ensuring that learning shifts away from rote method
- c) Enriching the curriculum so that it goes beyond the textbooks, and
- d) Making examinations more flexible.

Today, Government of India has passed Right to Education Act (RTE – 2009) where education is the right of all children of the age group of 6-14 years, reaffirming Article 21A as a Fundamental Right. Although in education various tools and techniques are employed to value various aspects of learner's behaviour. It is assessed through exercises, verbal and non-verbal texts to measure the characteristics such as knowledge, skills, intelligence, aptitude, attitude, etc of an individual student or a group of students. Teachers are assessed in Teacher education courses through simulation, pedagogical analysis, practicum, knowledge through set of questionnaires and by internship. Thereafter, different assessment measures for both teachers and students are in practise. But how can one measure morality, purity and value system of our children? No law, no abetment of law, no punishment, no autocracy can solve the problem of criminal ideology and violence with terrorist activity. We are at the threshold where the issues of morality purity is degenerated in the minds of adolescence.

Here we look back to the teachings of Sri Ramkrishna who went beyond conventional morality and stressed on purity which is the real basis and aim of all moral codes and conduct. “The difference between conventional morality and purity is to be noted in this that morality is the basis of religion whereas purity is the basis of spirituality. Morality is how we appear to other people; purity is how we appear to God. Morality is conformity to codes and conduct of behaviour whereas purity is freedom from the hold of past “Samskaran” of desires and instinctual drives”.<sup>18</sup>

**Conclusion:**

At the end, a basic fact, remains “ One look is worth hundred telling” (English Proverb). So students are open to the world of discovery, inventory, news, crimes, terrorism, plagiarism, lust, sexual abuses, pornography at the click of a mouse, so both parents and teachers are at awed to search for devices to refrain the young minds from deteriorating stances to enlightened happenings-all easy to say but difficult to implement. None the less, we cannot give up hopes for the future genere. The teachers have to be the torch-bearer to lead the world to a place of tolerance, beauty, truth and solidarity. May peace behold in our country and in the world and let education help bring that peace.

*‘Om Shanti, Shanti, Shanti’*

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