

Enriching Human Resources, A Leap Towards a Humane World

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Abstract - Every 6th person in the world today is an Indian. Our country supports more than 17% of the world's population. This is one of the biggest challenges but also contains a hidden opportunity for our country. If this large manpower is converted into human capital i.e. human resources it can prove to be an asset for the country rather than a liability. Human resource means the size of the population of a country along with its efficiency, educational qualities, productivity, organisational abilities and farsightedness.

India has been categorised by the Human Development Report of 2020 as a medium human- developed country. There is an urgent need to take care of our large manpower otherwise the problem of hunger, malnutrition, poverty and unemployment will multiply. These chronic problems can be tackled to some extent by providing proper health care facilities and adequate educational facilities. Unfortunately, our education system has become a factory of producing degree holders. There is a dire need to reconstruct our education system. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan said: "The three things-vital dynamism, intellectual efficiency and spiritual direction together constitute the proper aim of education. Moral and spiritual training is an essential part of education." The education we provide should help them to appreciate our cultural heritage and values to develop their values and the value system will guide them in their personal and social life and will form the foundation of the society we dream of. This paper attempts to highlight the importance of education more specifically value education in making this world a better place to live in. By enriching human resources in this way a humane world can be created where we can realise universal sisterhood and brotherhood i.e. Vashudhaiva Kutumbakam.

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INTRODUCTION

The role of education in the process of development and social progress is wide and critically important. It has a powerful effect on our quality of life: the freedoms we have to understand the world, lead an informed life, communicate with others, and be generally in touch with what is going on. In the modern world being uneducated is like being imprisoned, and education opens a door through which people can escape incarceration.¹

India's economy is growing at a significant rate but its performance on Human Development Index (HDI) remains very poor. According to the Human Development Report of 2020 published by the United Nations Development Programme, India ranks at 131st position in the Human Development Index, among 189 countries in the world.

The HDI is an average measure of basic human development achievements in a country. It is a summary measure for assessing long-term progress in three basic dimensions of human development -- a long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a decent standard of living. India ranked 130th among 188 countries in Human

Development Report 2015 as per the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The ranking is for the year 2014. India's HDI rank between 2009 and 2014 has risen six positions."India's HDI value for 2014 is 0.609, which puts the country in the medium human development category, positioning it at 130 out of 188 countries and territories. Whereas India's GDP growth during the January–March period of 2015 was at 7.5% compared to China's 7%, making it the fastest-growing economy.²

The Status of Education in India – Only 74% percent of the Indian people are literate. While close to 90 percent of children in the 6-11 age group are formally enrolled in primary schools, nearly 40 percent drop out at the primary stage. The enrolment ratios of Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST) and Muslim children (especially girls) remain far lower than the national average. Half of India's schools have a leaking roof or no water supply, 35% have no blackboard or furniture, and close to 90 percent have no functioning toilets. The official teacher-student norm is 1:40, yet in some states, the class average is one teacher per 80 children. The prescribed norm of a school being available within a radius of one kilometer is still not being fulfilled. Malnutrition, hunger and poor health remain core

problems, which comprehensively affect attendance and performance in classes. The added burden of home chores and child labour influence a large number of children, especially girls, to drop out of school.

A Status Report on Health & Education has been published in support of the efforts of the 'Nine Is Mine' campaign by presenting an overview of the challenges that face the country backed by data and outlining some important recommendations from experts and activists to meet the challenge of ensuring Universal Access to Health & Education. Both health and education are rights under the Constitution of India, the latter being a fundamental right. The Indian government therefore must deliver these services to the citizens. Health, education and water and sanitation are neither commercial services to be delivered nor charity to be given to citizens; citizens are neither customers nor alms seekers when it comes to basic human rights. The responsibility to ensure that each citizen receives a good education and health care lies squarely with the government.²

However, to date, the total investment in Health and Education in India remains dismally low. Less than 1% of India's GDP is spent on public health and less than 4 percent of GDP on education. The latest report of the Economic Survey reveals that yet the expenditure on education has not reached the targeted level of 6 percent of the GDP. The expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP during the last 3 years is as follows: 2.8 percent in the year 2019-20, 3.1 percent in the year 20-21 and 2021-2022(as per the revised budget estimate.⁴

The Mechanism Adopted in Other Countries for Better Human Development

The experiences of Europe and America, which have been extensively studied, bring out most forcefully the pervasive role of education, led typically by governmental initiatives, in facilitating and sustaining economic and social development.⁵

By 1910 Japan was almost fully literate, at least for the young, and by 1913, though still very much poorer than Britain of America, Japan was publishing more books than twice as many as the United States. The concentration on education determined, to a larger extent, the nature and speed of Japan's economic and social progress.⁶

The Asian Tiger economies did not compromise on education and health to build strong human capital. By 1965, all four nations had achieved universal primary education.⁷ South Korea in particular had achieved a secondary education enrollment rate of 88% by 1987. There was also a notable decrease in the gap between male and female enrollments during the Asian miracle. Overall these advances in education allowed for high levels of literacy and cognitive skills.⁸ Compared to BRICS nations, India's literacy rate is only 74% while

that of these economies is equivalent to that of the developed world. Expenditure on education in India has been slower than the world average. Globally, 4.9% of GDP was spent on education in 2010 while India spent only 3.3% of GDP, according to World Bank data.⁹

As per the revised budget estimate only 3.1 percent of GDP is spent on education in India. "Social opportunities in the form of education and health facilities, facilitate economic participation. Economic facilities can help to generate personal abundance as well as public resources for social facilities. Freedoms of different kinds can strengthen one another. With adequate social opportunities, individuals can effectively shape their destinies and help each other. They need not be seen primarily as passive recipients of the benefits of the development programmes. There is indeed a strong rationale for recognising the positive role of free sustainable agency and even of constructive impatience.¹⁰

Value Education--- According to Upanishads the entire world is one family popularly referred to as *Vasudhaiva kutumbakam*. **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam** is a philosophy that inculcates an understanding that the whole world is one family and further explains that entire humanity is made of one life energy.¹¹

Yet today we fight among ourselves in the name of religion, region or race. The temples, churches, mosques and gurudwaras or any other religious structures are sought to be made more important and focus of attention by vested interests than the acute poverty of the Indian people, low standards of nutrition, and social injustice. We may resort to fast unto death, for example, to get cow slaughter banned but remain unconcerned or unmoved by the acute suffering of our people resulting from death due to starvation, disease, malnutrition and even communal hatred.¹²

A value-based education system can solve such problems to some extent. An education system that is rightly conceived and properly implemented and practiced. It is almost axiomatic that value education or more so moral education constitutes the sine qua non of education as such. Without a moral base, education is nothing but literacy. If we wish to live in peace and harmony then value-based education system becomes imperative and inescapable.¹³

Way Forward --- Education for Transformation

Swami Vivekananda, an exponent of modern India, had proclaimed: "We must have life-building, man-making, character-building education." According to Shri Rabindranath Tagore "Education must aim at the development of moral, spiritual and ethical values and we should seek them in our heritage as well as in other cultures and civilizations...It should be such that Indians do not lose sight of their rich heritage –

their thought must be rooted in the ideals outlined in the great writing and works of our sages, poets and philosophers. The noble goals and high values outlined in our precious culture must be adhered to."

Education brings about transformation in one's personality. Real education liberates. Thus the education of those times led to enlightenment. As a result, the educated ones in that system were men who were not merely men of knowledge, but also men of great character. The system of education produced the best human beings full of love, compassion, self-confidence, self-reliance, fearlessness and a spirit of service. Thus, in ancient India, education was indissolubly connected with such a culture.

Unfortunately, in the present times, education is assessed only based on marks scored and ranks achieved in the examinations. It is observed that students identify their whole efforts at educating themselves with marks secured in the examination. The marks obtained and ranks achieved cannot reflect the character and personality of a student. Values one upholds are far more precious than mere marks obtained in the examination. But these important facts are neither explained and nor informed to the young generations.

The present education system is examination-oriented. It is a ticket to get a job nothing more nothing less. Values and character formation have no significant place in our education system. The students are interested in getting a degree only. This slowly snatches away the essence of the academic system. One has remained of Eliot's apprehension of a world where knowledge is overtaken by information. Similarly, passing an eligibility test never means he/she will become a worthy, capable, successful, self-actualizing teacher. A teacher's personality is not merely a collection of testimonials and certificates he or she produces. Professional competence is given priority but a professionally competent man without humanitarian values within him cannot contribute to the cause of a healthy nation.¹⁴

A year after gaining independence, in 1948, the Radhakrishnan Commission reported: "If we exclude spiritual training in our institutions, we would be untrue to our whole historical development". In 1964-66, the Kothari Education Commission Report (renowned as the Magna Carta of Indian Education) pinpointed the truth: "A serious defect in the school system is the absence of provision for education in social, moral and spiritual values. A national system of education...cannot afford to ignore this purposeful force."

In 1985, 'Challenge of Education-A Policy Perspective' (Government of India) spotlighted the progressive erosion of values and resultant pollution in public life. "The fact that this crisis of values is as pervasive in schools, colleges and universities, amongst teachers as well as students as in other walks of life - a highly dangerous development." Next year, in 1986, the

'National Policy on Education' document stated: "In our culturally plural society, education should foster universal and eternal values oriented towards the unity and integration of our people. Such value-education should help eliminate obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition and fatalism."

The National Policy on Education of 1986 has very strongly recommended the need for value education due to the following reasons. The tremendous advance in science and technology has resulted in a complete change in the lifestyle of people. Science and Life in the future are going to be faster and more complex. The students of today have to face such moral situations in the future in which instead of depending on others, they may be required to make their own decisions. The present youth has special problems. It has begun to question the conduct of elders, especially leaders. They do not see the relevance of the values preached.¹⁵ As per New Education Policy 2020 mother tongue is accepted as a medium of instruction in schools and is widely appreciated.¹⁶

CONCLUSION

The time has come when we should reconsider, evaluate and strengthen value education in our institutions. There is an urgent need to take concrete steps to improve the quality of education as our younger generation is facing value crisis, and value conflict.

The educational policy of India, despite its many drawbacks, insists that values, heritage and culture should be promoted through education in schools and colleges. Educational institutions should set new trends in this area and be a model to others. One of the ways to impart values through education is to design a course on human values and make it a part of the curriculum as well as make it a part of the evaluation system.

Since teachers have to play a significant role in the value development of students, to all those who choose to be teachers, there is an urgent need to impart a strong and relevant value system. If the teacher has no sense of values, where shall the student seek guidance and direction from? The teachers should be given adequate training to make them competent and effective value educators. And the institutions should provide the time and resources necessary so that value education classes may not be a burden for the teachers and the students, but a significant and beautiful part of their whole educational experience. Value education cannot be restricted to the few minutes spent every week in the classroom. What matters is the whole setup of the institution – what it stands for, its policies, the values it upholds, the priorities chosen and the life and example of the staff members.

As we are looking forward with hope and optimism to the new decade and as we are

considering the priorities in higher education in this decade, let us remember it is our responsibility to prepare our young people to meet the unknown challenges of the future. The education we provide should help them to appreciate our rich cultural heritage and values, to develop their values and the value system which will guide them in their personal and social life and will form the foundation of the society we dream of. It is better to build children and youth than to repair people.¹⁷ An extract from the Speech of Union Minister for Human Resource Development, Dr. M.M. Pallam Raju Delivered on National Education Day “We firmly believe in “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam”. We are eager to share knowledge and culture with the world community to develop an environment of peace and sustainable development. It is with this spirit that the Government of India had proposed to UNESCO to establish the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development, as the first Category-I Institute of UNESCO in entire Asia. Our vision is that India should become a knowledge power in the coming decade. This will mean that every Indian must have access to affordable education of good quality. I am sure the thinking of Maulana Azad and his visionary perspectives on education will continue to spread their fragrance and guide us to build knowledge and a learning society; a society that aims at creating citizens equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and values to build an inclusive, just and progressive society.

Each of us has to take the responsibility to make this world a better place to live in, especially those who are blessed with real education and who are more aware and more knowledgeable, otherwise we will not be able to breathe properly not be able to survive as a human being on this planet. We can hope to live in this world with peace and harmony only when a man or woman will behave as a human being.

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