



Art Of Teaching: An Anthology Of Innovation And Hope

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“Education is not the amount of information that we put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested, all your life. We must have life building, man making, and character making assimilation of ideas”

by
Swami Vivekanada

ABSTRACT

As our country is celebrating 75 years of Independence, the yearlong celebration is termed as “Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.” It also shows how we have progressed over the years towards an “atma nirbhar bharat” (self – reliant India), which has proved itself in the field of commerce, industry and other infrastructural areas including education. In today’s challenging scenario especially after the re-opening of school, colleges, institution after the Covid lockdown for nearly 2 years, all of us are still finding ways and means to cope and understand each other’s behaviour and expectations. Realizing the importance of values in our life, it is crucial to inculcate empathy, tolerance, inclusion and acceptance in our everyday lives to be a healthy and successful individual.

For inculcating values, we must follow the UGC document of *Mulya Pravah* focusing on the righteousness, love, compassion, peace, and non-violence of any academic leader. While producing graduates’ universities must focus on not only making them successful but also on what moral character they bear? The role of students must be useful to the societal fraternity and even to their own institution and nation-building. We must build patience and tolerance among them. Students must be trained to behave and formulate decision-making power in extreme situations. They must be taught the qualities of perseverance and persistence, kindness, the value of service, and mental strength along with physical growth. Engendering morality among academicians cum students provides the basis for honesty, loyalty and social responsibility needs to be implemented in their everyday lives. This morality then impacts our society and nation through our respective actions. In current scenarios, where we are dealing with the moral, cultural and mental crisis it is necessary to ensure the mental and physical well-being of academic community for their holistic development.

INTRODUCTION

Constitution of India (86th amendment) Act of 2002 under the Article 21 A provides the provision for right to ‘free’ and ‘compulsory’ education from the age of six to fourteen years. The right to education is considered to be the fundamental right in our country. Afterwards, the RTE Act of 2009 represents the elementary education of equitable quality to all the children of the country. Education under the Constitution of India considered to be given ‘free’ and ‘compulsory’ corresponding to certain measures, norms and standards¹.

As defined by NEP (2020:3) ‘Education is fundamental for achieving full human potential, developing an equitable and just society, and promoting national development’. Indian government is always keen in providing access to the uniform and equitable opportunities for holistic development and making India as a leading example in national and global sector. The role of Indian government is unique in providing a platform for universal high-quality education along with focus on culturally preserving our heritage as well as technological cum digital advancement. Government of India in 2015 adopted the Sustainable Development Goal that ensures inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. It states that the ‘education liberates the intellect, unlocks the imagination and is fundamental for self-respect²’.

One of the most significant objectives of the NEP 2020 is to adopt the approach of not only to make the pupils learn but to establish an innovative pedagogic frame for producing effective results in the current scenario. The learning approaches must reflect the practical implementation of science, history, art, and humanities in the everyday world. It is to make our upcoming generations cope with the social and economic changes under the industrializing and capitalizing forces. We

¹ <https://www.education.gov.in/en/rte>

² https://www.globalgoals.org/goals/4-quality-education/?gclid=CjwKCAjwiJqWBhBdEiwAtESPaEilEF5L_OmHmFouplw_SNO4UYM74GHZeiKkWRvA6dLQYSgPuC4Yo1vRoC2FYQAvD_BwE

must focus on how the students must develop a rational cum critical thought process that is responsible for making them creative and multi-disciplinary in nature.

What is a classroom and how can we nurture young minds?

A classroom is an exhilarating experience where knowledge germinates and reciprocates. It is a space that dwells in dynamism and time constraints where we need to do so much in a scheduled frame. For being an excellent performer, teachers must learn to utilize their full concentration and knowledge of a subject in the present moment they are performing in a classroom. A teacher must know to control their burnout in the classroom. We as teachers must feel compelling and passionate to enter the classroom every day. Our positivity reflected through our bodily actions and verbal attitude will impact our classroom teaching.

There is a need to transform our pedagogic practices to cater to the needs of our students. As Palmer (1997) argues that good teaching depends on the identity and integrity of the teacher. As a teacher, we need to connect to ourselves first and understand our inner selves in order to replicate the correct meaning of self-reflexivity in our classrooms. The teaching is an exercise where teachers are capable of insinuating the web of connectivity with their disciples, the subject, and most importantly with themselves.

In the current times, the conventional mode of teaching must revolutionize in accordance with the need of an hour. Education at school serves an important role in socializing pupils and enhancing their physical and mental well-being to perform better in society.

Nurturing young minds would need a much theorized and practically implemented knowledge system. S. Radhakrishnan has advocated a life-centric approach to school education. He proposed to utilize leisure time properly and purposefully. His methods of teaching include learning by doing, discussion methods, meditation, and teaching through interaction. He also advocated the use of mass media by the teachers which will help in updating our knowledge and reciprocating the same in our classrooms. This mass media knowledge must then be inculcated through cross-checking the facts before disseminating them. S. Radhakrishnan also introduced the idea of the usage of 'three language formulas' where the local, national and international language must be used in order to have an equitable engagement of individuals having different language backgrounds.

One of the most effective methods of nurturing young minds is through effective interaction. Manocha (2017) argued that in current times the growing digital age reproduces a number of challenges for young minds and as teachers, we have to establish a safe and secure environment in our classrooms that will ensure the mental well-being of our pupils. The students must feel flexible enough to share their feelings in the classroom and the teacher must not take things lightly on their own ends too. Our classroom interactions must not be limited to our subject-specific knowledge but we must ensure conversations about the socioeconomic world, and the vulnerabilities one might face in current times. We must open up conversations about cyberbullying, the implications and consequences of misuse of the internet and managing the stress and anger in our everyday life.

We must inculcate the role of effective leadership among students and we must focus on these pointers. The Characteristics of leadership are as follows: Collectivity, valuable information, social interaction, problem-solving, reducing gossip time, inclusive development goals, emotional intelligence, controlled behavior, rewarding, talking less and listening more, scripting of emotions where they can be powerful and weak, balancing situations, decision making power, self-reflexive, self-evolving, creating vision, how to communicate with others, reducing language barriers, communication must be considered as an important concept in our socialization process, inspiring and motivating.

A leader must work on internal and external win-win relationships where he/she must be capable of implementing skills and process-driven execution of plans. We should work on a system of execution of plans and must have SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures). We must work with core values such as customer-orientedness in our goals and spreading awareness about our policies and procedures, service with a smile, and speeding up procedures. Similarly, in our classroom experiences, we can effectively manage our interactions and provide them feedback on their assignments. We should work on our strengths and weaknesses. Introspection at a needful time is a quality of any leader where he/she must be clear in their objectives and work with full social responsibility. Creativity and brainstorming of ideas followed by discussion must be the spirit of any leader. As teachers, we need to think beyond our own subject and specialization. While entering the class we must think about every aspect of our behavior and interaction and how it is impacting the lives of our students. As a learner, we must not forget about updating our knowledge on an everyday basis which is forming an essential basis of our education system. We must control our emotional intelligence to connect better with our students, colleagues, and other people. We need to know how to control our stress while understanding better the part of our brain named 'AMYGDALA'. We must work on our listening abilities and try to control our emotions by shifting our focus to positive things, taking deep breaths, and then working on ways to control our emotions and change facial expressions. We must take challenges while saying repeatedly the things we cannot afford doing but we are going to try the same no matter what.

Innovative pedagogy

Teachers are like diamond cutters and they must be encouraging. The Quality of a teacher is to be a good orator, interactive and good listener. There are some examples of great teachers of the world such as Peter Dunkard, APJ Abdul Kalam, Chanakya, and Aristotle. We should follow our dreams that then follow strong desires, direction, dedication, determination, discipline, and deadlines. Dreams must be realistic to follow and avoid any discouragement. We must adopt the SMART strategy i.e. be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. We must compete against ourselves and break records constantly. Our communication skills must be based on accuracy, brevity, and clarity. Ineffective communication will lead to anger, confusion, misunderstanding, and alienation. We must work on the 8 C'S formula: C- communication, courtesy, culture, common sense, confidence, collaboration, concentration, and consistency. For better communication, there must be an effective relationship between people, processes, and technology. Academic excellence is reflective of personal, public, and professional life where we must infuse productivity. Our attitude as academic leaders will decide our journey in our profession. We must use our mental binoculars and must be ready for any change. We must adopt commodities of work ethics such as promptness, speed, quality of work, punctuality, smart attire, urge for learning, accommodative, integrity, and honesty, letting others perform and achieve results, utilization of resources, and quality of work. Pillars of leadership are based on competency, character, and enthusiasm. A teacher is never ordinary and we must as Swami Vivekananda says 'Arise, Awake and Stop Not: Till the Goal is Reached'.

We must initiate project-based learning where the students can go beyond the topics specified in the particular textbook and will enhance their knowledge based on real-world issues. It also will take us to the non-conventional means adopted by any educator to utilize the time in practically imparting knowledge applicable to everyday life. The project-based learning can also provide better opportunities for discussion among students and their teachers.

Burke (2007) argued that the integrated model could also be adopted while using many forms of language, expression, and skills in order to broaden the canvas of our teaching-learning methods. We can also make effective use of graphics, color, music, and motion for making lectures more effective. The learning in the school environment must reach the students in such a manner that they are able to explore their relationship with the outside world.

As per the NITI Aayog we need to adopt the more inclusive strategy where the uniform pattern of educating the masses with the best quality education must be ensured. The report submitted by NITI Aayog focused on the preparation of the Learning Outcome Framework (LOF) such as the state of Haryana has created a unified LOF called Saksham Taalika. Jharkhand adopted the Learning Tracking Format for tracking the student centric learning level from classes 1-8th. The report of the NITI Aayog focused on the assessment process and the need for learning enhancement programmes. Along with this, the five key areas that needs intervention is strengthening human capacity and administrative systems, academic reforms, enhancing accountability and creating a shared vision for change. The major focus is to provide quality education to the pupils³.

Drawing from the ideology of Vivekananda, one can focus on the cultivation of virtue, the disciplining of the mind, the strengthening of the moral will, or the formation of positive character. Modern education needs to inculcate the values of how self-control or how to formulate harmony with our family, friends, and neighbors. Swami Vivekananda's philosophy focused on the reformation of the education system through the popularization of mass education. For him, education provides liberation. Vidya is an anti-thesis to Avidya and it ought to culminate in 'Atma-Vidya' for its completion. In our ancient texts, Yajurveda has emphasized the pursuit of worldly and spiritual knowledge for holistic living, and for gaining immortality. Learning must be considered as the means to help a person grow into self-consciousness.

Swami Vivekananda has foreseen how mankind is passing through a crisis. Conflicts of ideas, manners, and habits create anomie and chaos in our society. He not only focused on the role of religious cum moral education but emphasized physical education, scientific education as well as education for the marginalized sections of society along with a major focus on women's education. This holistic model of education is further replicated by our NEP 2020 model where the current government is involved in providing the access to education for all.

J. Krishnamurti is a philosopher who is concerned with the right-based education. For him, education and philosophy are the two main tenets where the human mind could be set absolutely free without any conditions. The 'right education' approach of Krishnamurti will help our students to understand the nature and limitations of thought and help them go beyond. The right education will enable them to perceive the truth. For Krishnamurti, 'Right education cultivates your whole being, the totality of your mind, and gives your heart and mind, a depth of understanding and beauty'. Our main objective for education in contemporary times is to build a society that is sane in nature and to control the negative feelings of our minds and soul. We as educators must not force our own will on the students rather we should germinate the seeds of decision-making and choice-making among them for their own betterment. The role of true education in schools must be imparted through the inculcation of the skeptic attitude of discovering by inquiry. "Education is not learning from books, memorizing some facts, but also learning how to cook, how to listen, to what books are saying, whether they are saying something true or false".

³ <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/nitiaayog-lists-11-measures-to-improve-school-education-system-101637090070184.html>

We must focus on the function of language and the non-verbal and verbal cues we must know about as an academician. Training is required for communication and we must know how to communicate in order to interact and make our things understandable to others. He also focused on the importance of the vernacular language and how practical communication skills are crucial for various reasons? Communication is rooted in culture and there are specific rules of grammar that one should know in every language and we must be aware of this. The speaker or orator must be comprehensible in nature and language is something that is expressed at the societal level to connect with each other. Orality is significant as well as writing and we as teachers must put emphasis on the skills of listening, speaking, and writing. We must make our students understand the role of language behind every connection we make in our society.

The value dimension model is based on the trait, behavior, situational and charismatic aspects. Leading a class needs functional and pedagogical skills. We must focus on building an effective way of teaching and as UNESCO states we must focus on 'Learning to Care'. We must follow the UGC document of *Mulay Pravah* focusing on the righteousness, love, compassion, peace, and non-violence of any academic leader. While producing even graduates in our universities we must focus on not only making them successful but also on what moral character they bear? The role of students must be useful to the societal fraternity and even to their own institution and nation. We must build patience and tolerance among them. Students must be trained to behave and formulate decision-making power in extreme situations. They must be taught the qualities of perseverance and persistence, kindness, the value of service, and mental strength along with physical growth.

Therefore, the teachers must adopt the following strategies:

- (1) To provide stimulating and effective teaching resulting in pushing each child to his/her potential.
- (2) Developing relationships between children and adults based on honesty, respect, resilience and self-control in the current scenario.
- (3) Providing a calm, secure, caring environment through establishing routine and discipline
- (4) Developing inquisitive cum creative mindsets and engendering awareness for the environment and the ability to cope with the changing environment.
- (5) Ensuring equity and opportunities to each and every student.
- (6) The school's role as a part of the community for the mental and physical development.

Conclusion

NEP is focusing on the multidisciplinary nature of our education that will impact the lives of teachers and students in a positive manner. The future outlook of institutions is going to change in the coming years and we in the academic sphere must prepare for this while understanding the nuances behind this policy document. It is focused on holistic development. 15% of the entire content of the NEP talks about **Indian Ethics and Culture** where the academics will focus on enhancing knowledge about Indian traditions at the national and international levels. The implementation of NEP will have a positive impact on the concretized mode of learning and teaching. We as teachers have a great role and responsibility in educating children and bringing out a new and sorted generation of human beings who are rational, spiritual, moral, and sane. We should not try to force our desires and ambitions on them. We as teachers need to be self-reflexive in nature where we transform our thought processes before we transform our pupils. Teachers must not only be educators but should be philosophers too who must reproduce their deeper connections with their inner selves and also try to make students learn the same. As Palmer (2017) believes that enlightened teaching evokes and invites community. We need to focus on building a community of great teachers, parents, and pupils. Education is the only source to equip our students for facing the challenges and difficulties of the social world, especially in the digital age.

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