

21st Century PEDGOGY- A Sad PARADOX

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We are living in a century where ethics and values are overshadowed by the Materialism and Modernism. Tradition, culture and social norms are gradually declining. Materialism with the influence of technology has dramatically revolutionized our life style, our education. MAN is in pursuit of 'Power, Pelf and Position'. The 'Means and Measures' to accomplish their 'selfish' ends have become pointless and baseless. The fault lies not in the subjects but in Institutions and Teachers who must teach and learn the real value and 'proper utilization of education'- to themselves and to the students. Today we find students are confused, they lack direction, dedication and of course 'discipline'. They know their subjects but they do not know the proper utilization of subjects, in a manner that will result in maximum peace and satisfaction. There are things beyond scientific realm, even science has failed to find solution. Our ancient teachers and 'RISHIS' have found answers to incurable diseases and human problems. Their experiments and teachings are more precise than any scientific enquiry. What they left for us are treasures house of infinite knowledge and wisdom, to make our life peaceful and prosperous. The knowledge in the Vedas and Upanishad are undisputed and immeasurable and endless. It's time that our teachers and Institutions must adopt balance ancient knowledge and modern disciplines. The former will give them the 'spiritual strength' and latter with 'professional Excellency'.

Key words:- Negative-Maturity, Vedic knowledge, Upanishads, Rishis, Karma, discipline, dedication

*“Om ajnana-timirandhasya
jnananjana-salakaya
caksur unmilitam yena
tasmai sri-gurave namah”*

“ I prostrate to that Sri Guru, who has opened my eyes and enlightened me with the collyrium stick of knowledge, from ignorance”.

Man may be a complete and perfect creation of the Almighty .Human physiology and anatomy is so perfect and well-engineered ‘product’. Every system and parts inside human are in absolute order and are ought to work in complete harmony, complementing and supplementing one another. Unless man’s carelessness and arrogance does not overshadows the reasoning ability , Man ,will undoubtedly reach the zenith of peace and prosperity .

Man has made this world a glorious place to live in . The phenomenal powers which have been threatening and persecuting mankind all long have been tamed and harnessed to serve him .People have grown from a primitive and barbarous state to be civilized and intelligent society . The comforts and amenities, and life enhancing gadgets invented ,are almost heavenly and quiet blissful. But however , sitting amidst a mountain of wealth and prosperity ,boasting of the scientific achievements and technological supremacy , exaggerating the claims Man achieved and conquered , challenging nature , nay even going beyond the sky , deep into the space, venturing into realm that are yet unknown and untouched, seeking answers to questions that are vague and ambiguous , “Man still lives a life of worry , anxiety dissatisfaction”.

On one hand Man boast of His achievements and success but on the other hand , Man has miserably failed to find answers to end conflict , inner peace

and inexplicable mental problems that have ultimately culminated into miserable destruction and decay

This sad paradox has been the subjective to investigation by the spiritual masters who dedicated their lives for the general welfare of mankind. Every human being is unhappy. He is discontented. We all feel that something is missing. We want more. No matter how much we possess, it is never enough. We are afraid to die. We want to live longer, be healthier, look younger and accumulate more wealth. We want to experience more joy and happiness.

We want to increase our knowledge and awareness, we all want to educate ourselves but what for? The education that we have received till now, has it been successful in achieving 'satisfaction' or peace. What have we learnt from the books? - make money, cheat others, suppress the weak and seize the opportunity and be selfish, to be more egoistic to be in pursuit of '**power, pelf and position**'

None of us agree that these behaviors are taught in books. Books enrich us with knowledge but unfortunately, Man has failed to utilize the knowledge in a manner that will bring virtuous enrichment to humanity. He is confused and cannot utilize the knowledge properly and orderly. He lacks clarity of Direction and Goal. In this state of confusion, He is lost and left alone, none to direct and guide him. And moreover He is not concerned about what others say, becomes listless and taciturn. In his (her) solitude, befriends with people who are less knowledgeable, ignorant and moreover persistently arrogant and snobs. These people are in majority and very commonly found among us, and on the other hand there are people who are extremely dangerous and evil, selfish and opportunist, often and always mislead and destroy others. And again we have in our midst a countable few who are visionaries and karma yogis who live an untiring life of hard-work, honesty,

strictly and uncompromising adhering to values and virtues. These “good” people care for human beings and the world we live in .

This categorization of human beings are not restricted to one profession or discipline , but they are ‘omnipresent’, competing among themselves to establish values and ethics , goodness and optimism on one hand ,and on the other destruction and demoralization.

The education that we are getting from the schools and children , is it worth? Are the children getting proper education ?Are the institutions equipping them with knowledge that are of utmost importance?

Children must be taught to handle proper “Utilization of knowledge” . Why you teach? and Why this subject /discipline is relevant to them ? ,are equally relevant question with What you teach? The teachers must equip the children with answers to the aforesaid questions. Children are getting matured but are they maturing on the right track . “Negative Majority” is what we are seeing in today’s school and college going students .They are least bothered about their parents , their life , studies ,their careers .They are least concerned about and indifferent to what their parents and teachers say .They insist and stick onto the fact that they are always right –they fail to listen and fail to understand . Ultimately when the time comes they are left alone none to help, confused and helpless, exploited by others and no individuality of their own, no self-esteem , alas! What a pitiable state , they will regret and none will be there to rescue them ,not even GOD ALMIGHTY. “The LAW of KARMA” is inevitable .

Students no longer respect their Teachers ,they revolt against the teachers . Advice and counsel for them is liking drinking a ‘bitter syrup’. World has changed ,It is not the same that used to be .The Environment has been influencing our perception and opinions . We take it for granted , and fail to brood over the intricacies and complexities of life .We fail to activate our

senses of perceptions and thinking . Especially children fail to understand the very moral and ethical values of life. They are not concerned about right and wrong , not concerned ,if their action may hurt someone . Such self-centered lifestyle , will only alienate themselves from their parents, teachers and society .Ultimately resulting in utter fiasco and failure .

But of course the children solely cannot be blamed for such behaviors. The Parents and Teachers have equal role in shaping and influencing their behavior and actions.

Today in almost all the education Institutions , the value of education has come down .Surprising and shocking indeed , the institutions are no longer interested in imparting education to the children . Education has become superficial . Dissemination of information has been limited , less influential and less effective .Institutions and academician are no longer interested in ‘serious and effective’ teaching .

Education institutions undoubtedly have become ‘money minting organization’. What we find in the institutions are so called activities and events to enhance their personality but no serious stress on imparting knowledge of the subjects . Many Institutions boast of incredible infrastructures with modern technologies to capture the attention of the students and parents – an advertising gimmicks. Many institutions boast of adopting superior technology and infrastructure for educational purpose. But answer to one is quiet essential in this context .What is the role of technology in imparting education ? Technology can only make the process of teaching more effective . Technology is like a make up article on your face , ‘enhancing and beautifying’. Technology cannot substitute the process of teaching it can only make it more effective.

It is the teachers ,who must learn the proper utilization of technology to make the concept and learning clear to the students . The Problem with

students children are they lack the fundamentals and basics . They do not know how to relate the various discipline they learn into real-life situation . They lack the ability to relate various subjects among each other . They lack the practical application of various theories and applications . A mere degree will not develop their career. The fundamentals and basic must be made clear, but how?.

- i. The Teachers must master the subjects they teach .
- ii. We Teachers must make the subjects interesting .
- iii. We must teach more than the subject ,
- iv. Develop their philosophical skill .
- v. Try to relate the subject and life :-Why the subject is useful for them ?
- vi. Give individual attention ,does not matter even if there are 100 students in the class.
- vii. Be a 'Friend , Philosopher and Guide' to them – This one attitude will inspire them and help them to concentrate on those subjects , they feel boring and dry .
- viii. Make them understand the very concepts and fundamentals
- ix. Make them understand , why they are punished .

Teachers must never forget that all students in the class differ in their lifestyle, personality , Intelligence Quotient.

<!--Some are serious in the studies and some are not .

<!--Some are serious but they lack the grasping and understanding ability.

<!--Some need help and assistance

<!--Some are very indifferent and not interested at all .

<!--Some are confused.

<!--Some lack the courage .

<!--Some behave anti-socially .

<!--Some are arrogant

<!\>Some are upset because of the family problems (parents quarrel , divorce- an important aspect /catalyst in deteriorating a person's behavior)

As a Teacher I have come across such students . It requires immense patients to study each students and understand them . To an extent, I have succeeded in building an “ healthy relationship” with them . Even when I get angry or punish the students for wrong doing , they never carry any grudge against me . They feel free to argue with me, nurtures no sinister feeling for me .

We,Indians must never forget our rich tradition and legacy. Our culture is very rich and multicolored ,and education , with its acquisition and dissemination of knowledge, had been the strength behind this culture. It has contributed to and enriched the science, the arts , philosophy, religion, and socio-political thought. But in recent decades what we have been witnessing is a “ value erosion” at an alarming and disturbing rate.

The value of education has carelessly and callously neglected by the teachers concerned and by the Authorities and Government itself. We have forgotten the fact the Education plays the greatest part in democracy .Its the duty of we Teachers ,to train and shape the minds of our young ones so as to make them worthy and progressive citizens of our motherland

The schools and institutions are places where our children receives knowledge and ideas. Everyone is born with special and exceptional talents ,but in maximum number of the students , the talents and qualities are dormant and inactive .But only in few it conspicuous and visible, and unfortunately everyone focus their energy and attention to these lucky students and divert away from the other students/children who too have an equal caliber to excel ,provided that they ought to require some attention and intensive self-exploration exercise .This is common practice seen in

families ,schools and establishments .Our schools and institutions are sanctums and places tremendous responsibility on our teachers and authorities .

The teachers have to achieve and develop an intrinsic bigness from the very narrow concept of “teaching for teaching sake”. We have to change our attitude and this attitudinal change will makes us grow internally .It all depends on the attitude ,on your philosophy of work. Swami Ranganathananda rightfully said, “..a big man does a small work and makes the work big ,and a small man dose a big work and makes that work small!”. It all about attitude and we have to impart that bigness to the functions we perform. This is character . “Vedānta considers it as the greatest energy in the world.

A teacher has to generate that energy in oneself and exhibit in educating the students. Besides instructing , the teacher has to influence and inspire the students .Furnish and prepare them with immortal values and concepts which transform them into a strong willed and productive person . The role of teacher is to shape the minds of the students into a socially responsible person, concern for the environment , built a positive-benevolent- and humane attitude. Along with the subject , every teacher must learn and must educate the students our ancient cultural spirit of tolerance and broad-mindedness, and familiarize with them with wisdom of French thinker ,Voltaire: ‘I do not accept what you say ;but I will defend with my life your right to say so’. Teacher must remove the ‘*Negative Maturity*’ in the students.Students must be made to co-operate and co-ordinate among each other – as a team.None is perfect and moreover 100%Excellence cannot be achieved by anyone , yet students and Teachers must constantly and consistently try to excel and succeed .

Sir Julian Huxley definition on 'Person' and 'Personality' is inevitable in this context, "*Persons are individuals who transcend their organic individuality in conscious social participation*". Individuality itself, according to "Vedānta, is the first step in spiritual growth. Development of individuality starts from the age of 2. From the very inception the individuality (**Vyaktitva**) of a person must be transformed slowly and gradually into person of personality (**Vikasita Vyaktitva**). A state of understanding and respecting oneself and others, seeking and sharing knowledge in a true scientific and humanistic temper. It must begin with the teachers, must transform themselves from a mere individuality to a broad-minded person of personality, and then help their students also to achieve the same. Through this transformation a divine energy gets manifested, paving way for energy resources in students and giving it a humanistic direction"¹. All this should come to the child through the teachers. Increase of knowledge makes for increase of energy. So guide the students to knowledge; make them search for knowledge beyond the text books; encourage them to go library, to acquire more and more information. Sanskrit word for student is '**Vidyā-rthi**' (**arthi**)-, seeker, of **Vidyā**-knowledge. That was the type of students and teachers lived in India, they enlightened and created a priceless and valuable culture, an immeasurable legacy for us. They emphasized a rational, questioning attitude. A divergent thinking process, where mind wanders into deep, subtle and unknown realm, to find more than one solution to a problem. The Greek Philosophers like Socrates, Plato, Aristotle practiced this methodology.

In every schools and Institutions we must teach the art of art of living to our students. It deep rooted in ancients text:

There are some elements of righteousness, the Vedic Dharma, that must be imparted to the students:-

¹¹ Swami Vivekananda .

Dhriti (Patience): Imbibe the qualities of patience, contentment, etc.

Kshama (Forgiveness): We should refrain from envy and vengeance.

Damah (Restraint): The mental fancies should be controlled

Asteya (Not to Steal): Wealth must be achieved through good acts

Shauch (Cleanliness): Cleanliness by way of our ideas, acts and behavior in a total manner, that is, in thoughts, words and deeds.

Indriya-Nigrah (Restraining the Sense Organs): To maintain control on our sense-organs.

Dhīh-Buddhi (Intellect): To function wisely. This includes avoidance of substances which are addictive and affect intellect, avoid wicked people, don't be lazy, be with good people, practice yoga etc.,

Vidya (Knowledge): To acquire true knowledge about all that exists, from the minutest particles of matter to the infinite spirit of God.

Satya (Truthfulness): To be truthful by way of our qualities, deeds and nature within. To understand the true nature of things.

Akrodh (Absence of Anger): To be tolerant

We must impart basic moral values to our students, revealed by our ancient scriptures are:

1. *Atmano Mokshartham, Jagat hitaya cha:* All work is an opportunity for doing good to the world and thus gaining materially and spiritually in our lives

2. *Archet dana manabhyam:* Worship people not only with material things but also by showing respect to their enterprising divinity within.

3. *Atmana Vindyate Viryam:* Strength and inspiration for excelling in work comes from the Divine, God within, through prayer, spiritual readings and unselfish work.

4. *Yogah karmashu Kaushalam, Samatvam yoga uchyate*: He who works with calm and even mind achieves the most.

5. *Yadishi bhavana yasya siddhi bhavati tadrishi*: As we think, so we succeed, so we become. Attention to means ensures the end.

6. *Parasparam bhavayantah shreyah param bhavapsyathah*: By mutual cooperation ,respect and fellow feeling, all of us enjoy the highest good both material and spiritual.

7. *Tesham sukham tesham shanti shaswati*: Infinite happiness and infinite peace come to them who see the Divine in all beings.

8. *Paraspar Devo Bhav*: Regard the other person as a divine being. All of us have the same consciousness though our packages and containers are different.

6. *Yogah Karmasu Kaushalam* - Excellence at work through self-motivation and self- development with devotion and without attachment.

These precepts are universal in nature ,followed by everyone .Though it is a part of vedas ,does mean that only Hindus can learn. Religion is man-made. GOD IS ONE and GOD IS NEUTRAL. The miseries, diseases , war etc., are man- made ,GOD never had and will interfere .

A teacher who does not love knowledge cannot inspire love of knowledge . In our ancient text **Taittiriya Upanishad**, an inspiring words relevant for students who seek knowledge :

“Svādhyāya-pravacnābhyām na pramaditavyam”

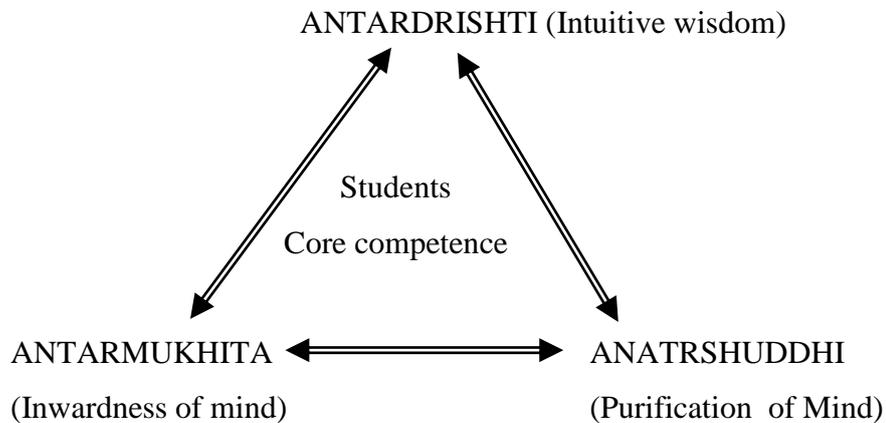
“Do not forsake Learning and teaching”

There is a beautiful word for Teacher in Sanskrit – ‘GURU’-. ‘GU’- means Darkness and ‘RU’-means **Light**. One who takes us from darkness to light ,from ignorance to knowledge and one who illumines and enlighten us with knowledge .Can we not become in a true sense- a ‘Guru’?.

It is very unfortunate , teachers are no longer teachers , they fail to teach and guide .Only a countable few are available to in the true sense justify this profession and give a divine meaning to this profession. Teaching is ‘noble profession’- a calling .If any one feel that teaching is ‘a piece of cake’ or any ‘tom ,dick and harry’ can handle , they are sinfully wrong . Never ever thing about , It requires sacrifice, tapasay,*tāga(renunciation)*, *patience and perseverance* .The teacher must transform into a student – a seeker of knowledge to teach the students .

The Government too must encourage and motivate the teachers .It is an inevitable truth that Government and authorities are not giving importance to the real education. They shy away from such issues. It is left to the students and teachers alone to care of themselves . “seek and you shall find”. Materialism is influencing both the students and teachers .values and moralities are not at all a concern for anyone . The nobility of the profession has been challenged. The Government Schools and Colleges are becoming ineffective and impotent .And on the other hand ,Management and Private Schools and Colleges are exhibiting and exaggerating their Hollowness and Hypocrisy through unscrupulous promotions and marketing .The latter has become indifferent and the former greedy .And the result -the passed-outs students, may get a good or a lucrative offer .But in pursuit of material prosperity they lose their inner peace, paving way for agony and despair leading to physical and mental diseases and fatigue. They lack the spiritual

strength to overcome such problems. Sri Aurobindo Gosh² had said , ‘*Materially you are nothing .Spiritually you are everything.*’



Give importance to the inner and mental development .Spiritual Awakening is deep rooted in us .It should be awakened .Activate your inner strength through divine power .

To conclude:

Education must aim towards:

(1) the development of inborn potentialities- Education helps the child to develop the inborn potentialities of child providing scope to develop.

(2) modifying behavior and character .

(3) All-round development- Education aims at the all-round development of child-physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual. Develop the students personality so that the student can balance his professional and spiritual properly.

And if we can achieve such measures ,in every short time our nation will beget children of high caliber excelling in all discipline ,for the prosperity and progress of all

² Sri **Aurobindo** (15 August 1872 – 5 December 1950), born **Aurobindo Ghosh** or **Ghose** was an Indian nationalist, freedom fighter, philosopher, yogi, guru, and poet

Time has come teachers, academicians ,Scholars , Visionaries, Government officials , Industrialist , Managers , Technicians and Technocrats , Masters and Authorities of all discipline should come together , on an UNCONDITIONAL and EGOLESS state of mental preparation , respecting each other , and with ability to understand the presence of other, seek a dynamic and an uniform methodology , a process for every stage /level - from pre-primary to Post-Graduate level or beyond -a complete package for the overall development of the students

Do not follow the west , we have everything here to grow and expand .There is no saturation stage here. Our spiritual philosophy towards life is very subtle and strong , no foreign ideology can shake and challenge . we must understand what we are , we must not forget our rich legacy and cultural heritage . The Material west has understood their failure, came and adopted our philosophy and ideology .But we unfortunate ignorant people, are blindly following the west. Stop ! this foolishness, everything is here , for all of us and our generations to come .

A selection from 'Guru Gita' as given in Uttarakhand section of 'Skanda Purana' in the form of a dialogue between Shiva and Uma (Shakti).

“Guru Brahma Guru Vishnu
Guru Devo Maheshwara
Guru Sakshat Param Brahma
Tasmai Shri Gurave Namah”

Guru is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu, Guru is Lord Maheshwara. Guru is verily the supreme reality. Sublime prostrations to Him.

“Chinmayam Vyapitam Sarvam
Trai Lokyam Sacharacharam

Tatpadam Darshitam Yena
Tasmai Shri Gurave Namaha”

I prostrate to the Guru who has made me realise that essence which pervades
past, present and future and all things moving and unmoving.

Thank you .

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“3rd International conference “Elixir 2013”

published in the ISSN Journal ‘DAROHAR’ -International Management Journal (ISSN
2230 - 9357)”

