

## Usefulness of Vedic Education

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Education is the storehouse of any nation and pinpoint of advancement. A state, which is responsible to impart education to its people, announces the identity of a developed and prosperous country. According to Vivekananda, - “What is education? Is it book-learning? No. Is it diverse knowledge? Not even that. The training by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful is called education.” In this way bookish or collective knowledge is not considered by him as education. So, regular practice by which the inherent self urges is directed towards the humanitarian ends can be called as real education. According to him, - “The education which does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle of life, which does not bring out strength of character a spirit of philanthropy and the courage of a lion-is it worth the name ? Real education is that which enables one to stand on its new legs.”<sup>i</sup> Therefore, external expression of an inherent power of man is called as ‘Real Education’. The bookish knowledge is rejected by him. Spontaneous and natural real knowledge is knowledge which gains the favour of Vivekananda. The education system which begins its footsteps in the lap of natural atmosphere and nurtured by the mantras of seers, sages, teachers etc. is called as ‘Gurukula’ system. There the students (hostellers) stay with the gurus (teachers) in same campus where they acquire knowledge from the teachers after being admitted therein by their parents. This system was freed from any sorts of consideration of rich and poor, caste and creed, higher or lower strata etc. Even the children of both, rullers and peasants stay together and state politics does not interfere in this education system. Pupils accept the teachings of their teachers in a calm nature under the guidance of their educators. The relation between teachers and students seems to be identical to that of the parents and children. Students serve the teachers with earnest behavior. They lead day to day life together and visit door to door for begging (*Bhikṣā*).

Vedic education was not only confined in the book related knowledge and clearance of mind rather widened thorough the whole life of a human being. Not only the making eligible for service or their own business but also the development of physical and mental power and to prepare the educants to fight against three types of sorrows was the benevolent schemes of education with special importance to the progress of their insight and mentality. Educators and educants accepted a huge pleasure of devotion towards sacrifice and penance. Teachers appear as the effigy of celibate and good moral behaviour to mould students towards the nature of good quality of moral practice. Here, the sayings of Yāska is may be recalled – “*Ācārya Ācāraṃ grāhayati, ācīnotyarthān ācīnoti buddhimiti vā*”<sup>ii</sup>

The control over the behaviour was another important theme of primary objective of Gurukula education. Once again we can quote Yāska who considered student as a beloved one and students live in the heart of the teachers - “*Ācāryaḥ pūrvarūpam. Antevāsyuttararūpam. Vidyā sandhiḥ. pravacanam sandhānam. Ityadhividyam*”<sup>iii</sup>

In Vedic education system teachers stands as first pillar of education and students for the second. Thus, students called as *Antevāsī* instead of student. Thus was the proof of high psychological and practical quality of Vedic education policy as the students live in the inner spirit of the teachers. This is the crystal proof in respect of deep internal relationship between both teacher and student. *Atharvaveda* says that teachers protect students like the mother who accepts her child in her own womb:- “*Ācārya upanayamāno brahmacārīṇaṃ kṛṇute garbhamantaḥ | Tam rātrīstisra udare bibharti tam jātam draṣṭumabhisānyanti devāḥ ||*”<sup>iv</sup>

A teacher admits a student through *Upanayana* ritual, at this occasion he includes the new comer in his innate place which not only refers the admission in teaching group but also the placement in heart. Teacher does not conceal anything from his pupil. It means teacher offers all his acquired knowledge to the students.

It's the one of the characteristic feature of a teacher who possess four parts namely as- “*Ācāryo mr̥tyurvarūṇaḥ soma oṣadhayaḥ payaḥ*”<sup>v</sup>

- ❖ *Mr̥tyuḥ* or Death refers to the destruction of bad qualities.
- ❖ *Somaḥ* - Peace is the symbol of placing delight and calmness in mind.
- ❖ *Payaḥ* - Milk is the dictionary meaning. The milk of knowledge which is white and protein like ingredient feature to restore health and self power.
- ❖ *Agniḥ* - Teacher bears the leader like quality which is bestowed on god - Agniḥ ‘Fire’.

These are the qualities of a teacher since Vedic age in Indian tradition of Education. Vedic education also aims at the overall development of the students by enlighten and sharpen the brain through the light of knowledge so that students enable themselves to lead a prosperous life as

“*Vardhayainam jyotayainam mahate saubhagāya. Samsitam citsantaram sam sisādhi...*”<sup>vi</sup>

Education is assimilated by the pious mind and intellect which is inclined to the towards education as “*Śam sarasvatī saha dhībhirastu*”<sup>vii</sup> To achieve this stage, Veda indicates two types of process namely penance and - “*Bhadramicchantaḥ ṛṣayaḥ tapo dīkṣāmupaniṣeduragre*”<sup>viii</sup> Hard and fast rule and devotion are helpful to fulfill all the aforesaid matter.

In Atharvaveda, student is identified as *Brahmacārī* whose life is driven through truth, penance and discipline. It is said therefore that he acquires knowledge or ‘*Brahman*’ (*jñāna*) - “*Brahmacārī brahma bhrājadvibharti tasmindevā adhi viśve niṣeduh*”<sup>ix</sup>. His pledge penance is also channelized and enriched through stick and sash –

“*Brahmacārī samidhā mekhalayā śrameṇa lokāmstapasā piparti*”<sup>x</sup> Penance and behaviour of *Brahmacārī* is so powerful that all thing bend towards him. Moreover, a king also can rule successfully by implying celibacy in his personal and leadership – “*Brahmacaryeṇa tapasā rājā rāṣṭram virakṣati*”<sup>xi</sup>. In this way Vedic education policy always emphasizes the controlling of mind and character for both educators and educants. So, we can recall the nice saying – “*Ācāryo brahmacaryeṇa brahmacāriṇamicchate*”<sup>xii</sup>. Teacher is an idol for his students. Students get influenced by them. So, a teacher should control himself and maintain his life with ideal qualities.

Today's education system needs some features of ancient Vedic qualities of education. Contemporary teaching and learning policy is impure. Both teachers and students have no real aim of directives. Present education system is failing to promote and spreads successfully the value based and moral teachings of our eminent sages or predecessors, though it is equipped with all sorts of modern technical facilities. The ancient monk-like teachers were able to acquire the knowledge of self through their calm and quite livelihood. But, at present we are failing to achieve a little bit of that. Our ancient teachers became successful enough to utilize the various kinds of teaching techniques, arts and crafts, logic etc. with their divine and unimaginable power. Presently these are proved to be satisfied. But modern policies related to education are regularly being proved to be less scientific than that of our primitive ones. We have successfully developed ourselves in respect of practical fields, yet we are unsuccessful to establish our primitive heritage of education. Now, we are losing our power, peace, sacrifice etc. Even, the brothers of same womb become enemy of each-other. Man breaks the shoulder of another man. Most of us are engaged in mal-practice. We have no limit of our desire. We have lost our morality. Whole country is peace less today. Influence of education is not visible in the mind of educated people. Fearfulness and terrorism are spreading everywhere. We are leaving the path of our ancient seer and monks. What to be done or what not? Such kind of considerations are been forgotten by ourselves. We are only engaged ourselves to open the mind of the little ones. Morality and character are wiped out. As a result the students are making nuisance in the academic institutions after drinking. Only the Vedic teaching methods can solve such kind of problems.

Vedic education system compels its students in the convocation to lead life with truth and morality - “*Satyam vada. dharmam cara. Svādhyāyānmā pramadah*”<sup>xiii</sup>. Oh student! Always speak the truth, don't employ unreal in your life and behave as per your duties which are assigned upon you according to your position and quality. Always practice learning and employ three fold Vedic sandhas (*Sandhyā*) thrice a day and recite *Gāyatrī* mantra regularly. If we want to improve your civilization, we must have to employ the teachings of *Upaniṣads* in our life. The common mass, political leaders, eminent persons – each and every one must have to employ these in their day to day life. If these are implemented properly in each and every one's life, the education system will be implemented properly. If all of us use truth and real things are seen as real, political leaders will also follow the same, teachers and students will also imbibe truth – nobody can prevent us to develop our education system.

Here, we are again remembering one saying “*Mitrasya mā cakṣuṣā sarvāṇi bhūtāni samĪkṣantām. Mitrasyāham cakṣuṣā sarvāṇi bhūtāni samĪkṣe. Mitrasya cakṣuṣā samĪkṣāmahe*”<sup>xiv</sup>. The true sense of friendship is important to solve all the problems.

Today our teacher- student relation is directed towards the sense of business. Students are not obeying and honoring their teachers. Teachers are also not showing dignity to the students. As a result the co-operation is disappearing and violence is spreading in each sector of the society. It is also a matter of great achievement or deep sorrow whichever may be said that machines are acting as instructor and replace the position of indispensable teachers. The direct effect of this is witnessed among the relation, behaviour, mind, dignity etc. of teachers and students. We forget to think that machine cannot be a substitution of teachers due to the matter of human psychology. Teacher student relationship heritage bears the quality of making a child to prepare him to enter in to the social life with a kind of aptitude which can help him to lead a peaceful life in the civilized society. Such kind of qualities can be hoped from the teachers only instead of machines. Machine is unable to show and offer love, affection, honour, character, morality, affection, service, sympathy, etc. All these reasons mentioned above are too much significant to recall and the employ Vedic Instruction system in India and abroad for the sake of humanity, peace, brotherhood and feelings.

### **References**

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