

How Can Vedic Education Ideals Save Our Current Education System and Help in Its Improvement?

Pooja

Master of Arts, UGC NET (History)

ABSTRACT

Our current education system is not going well. It is not producing quality education and capable citizens. It is sick at all levels whether its primary, secondary or higher educational level. It has many serious problems which need to be solved as soon as possible for a better education system. It has many issues like - lack of discipline, low concentration power in students, lack of dedication in teachers, high fee charges, corrupt practices, rote learning, theoretical curriculum, boring teaching methods, no personality or character development, pen-paper based evaluation system, no scope for creativity or vocational training, etc. etc. If order to make our modern education system better, more relevant and efficient we need to look at our past. Our ancient historical time period has all the solutions for our modern day problems. We should revive our vedic period's Gurukula education system. Gurukuls were based on "simple living, high thinking" principle. If we revive some ideals of our Gurukula education system, our whole education system will witness a revolution. This new revolution will be so impactful that it can remove all the current shortcomings in our education system. This article will focus on the need of reviving the Gurukula system. It will also try to suggest some possible ways to implement Vedic ideals in current education system. Vedic educational ideals are the only hope to save our education system by degrading. They will make our education more practical and valuable.

KEYWORDS: Vedic education system, Current education system, Gurukula education, Vedic ideals.

INTRODUCTION

Vedic culture flourished in Indian subcontinent from C. 1500 to 500 BCE. It is one of the oldest cultures in the world. Our ancient seers and sages built the best system of education. This was a fully man making system. Moral education was the base of this system. Gurukuls used many techniques to teach their pupils. Pupils were treated equal irrespective of their caste, creed, class, status or sex. The ultimate goal of education was self-realization. Pupil's personality and character development was given the utmost priority. Students received vocational training as well. They were taught about humanity, social virtues, moral values etc. Pupils were made civilized, well behaved, cultured and fully educated in every field of knowledge. Vedic education was based on Vedas which are four in number - Rig, Sama, Yajur, and Atharva Veda. They are the main source of our Gurukul education system.

Today's education system lacks many Vedic ideals of Gurukula system. This modern classroom education system has been started by Britishers to make us more submissive. This new classroom system uprooted our age old Gurukul education system. This modern education system was the result of lord

Macauley's minute. He was a British agent who worked in favour of English education. He prepared a massive plan to make Indians permanent slaves of British government. On 2nd February 1835, he presented this 'minute on Indian education'. This event decided the future course of action for education. He wished to create a group of Indians capable of serving British interests. He wanted to create a group of Indian people who would be "Indian by blood and colour, but English by tastes, opinions, morals and intellect."

Modern education is only linked to employment. It is not making the leaders, it is just producing slaves of work. Students are not receiving real life knowledge, they are only being burdened with conceptual curriculum. Vedic ideals of education had the tendency to change the minds of people and they also moulded the character of the students. Only the revival of Gurukul education system's ideals can save our current education system from degradation. We can modify the Vedic ideals according to our present day's needs and demands and then can effectively implement them. We will surely see the desired results in our education system.

OBJECTIVES

1. To analyse the gaps in modern education system and offer some suggestions to overcome them.
2. To revive Vedic ideals for their effective implementation in the current education system.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Do Vedic ideals of Gurukul education system have any relevance even today?
2. Is there any way to improve current education system?
3. If we revive Vedic education system's ideals, will it work in a desired manner and yield the expected results?
4. Is it possible to make our modern education system better by implementing Vedic ideals of education system?

REVIVALISM OF VEDIC IDEALS

Many questions pop up in our mind when we think about reviving Vedic ideals and implementing them in our current education system. The question arises that what's the need to revive our very old Vedic education system? How those old ideals can be useful in today's education system? Let me clear all of these doubts and answer each of these questions.

1. Curriculum -

Our current education system has theory based curriculum. It is not practical and contains many faulty concepts. It doesn't provide vocational training. It doesn't even provide moral education. It is very narrow in its outlook and it doesn't cover all the aspects of a child's personality.

Vedic education system had a very extensive and wide curriculum. It included philosophy, astrology, logic, grammar and much more. Pupils received vocational training as well according to their interests, power, abilities, attitudes, and aptitudes. For example - Brahmans got education of Vedas, Kshatriyas received warfare training and Vaishyas got training on agriculture, trade, arts and crafts. Practical knowledge was fully imparted which was real-life related knowledge. Pupils also received knowledge on Dharma, yoga, meditation etc.

We should modify our curriculum with the help of Vedic ideals. Some expert committees should be established with subject experts, teachers, specialists, researchers as their members. The new modified curriculum should be child centred. It should include morality, practical knowledge, real-life based education etc. Some creative activities should be included to nurture the child's creative and innovative skills. More interesting content should be added which can ensure the active participation of children.

We can unlock many benefits by modifying our curriculum in a better direction. Pupils will be active in their learning processes. When the concepts will be according to child's interest, need, ability, age and mental capability, he will be studying with full focus and dedication. Students will be more creative and expressive. They will no more feel anxious or stressed due to curriculum burden, rather they will take keen interest in the learning process. Their learning will be more interesting, efficient, life long lasting, and effective.

2. Teaching methods -

In today's scenario, teachers don't put much efforts in making the teaching learning process enjoyable and more productive. They use outdated and boring traditional teaching methods to impart the knowledge. Lecture method is mostly used where students feel bored, become uninterested, unattentive and thus they lose their concentration. They easily get distracted from the class topic. That's how the whole process becomes least effective.

During Vedic period, Gurus used many techniques to keep the pupils on right track. Firstly, Gurus explained the topic, then students learnt the content by reflection. If pupils had any doubt they could ask it and Guru used to clear all the queries asked by his pupils. Many events were organized to make the learning process effective, like-debate, discussion, seminar, symposia etc. Pupils got opportunities to show their abilities through reasoning and argumentation. Travel was also encouraged.

New creative and innovative teaching methods should be adopted by our educational institutions. Students should be encouraged to ask more and more questions. Workshops, seminars, creative activities, games, projects, dramas, functions, travel etc. should be organized timely to maintain the interest of students. Lecture cum demonstration method, project method, play way method, story telling, role play etc. teaching methods should be inculcated. Various teaching aids and modern technologies should be used in the classroom.

These new methods and activities will ensure the active participation of students in the teaching - learning process. Students' senses will be more active by new methods. Students will be able to learn difficult concepts with ease. Their learning will be more realistic and long lasting.

3. Teacher-pupil relation

In our modern education system, students and teachers share very formal and less friendly relation. Most of the teachers behave in a rude and strict manner towards their students. Teachers target some specific students and they favour some students in a very discriminatory way. Teachers don't create any special bonding with the students. They only focus on their duty of teaching in a formal manner. They don't even pay attention to student's special needs or interests.

In Vedic period education, pupils usually lived at their Guru's residence. Gurukula literally means the 'family of the Guru'. Guru played many different roles in his pupils' learning process. He was a facilitator of learning, a live role model to his pupils, a friend, a father-figure, a personality and character builder, importer of knowledge and wisdom, and much more. He took care of each individual's needs.

He provided all the necessary things to his pupils. He instructed them in each field of knowledge. He moulded pupil's behaviour in a socially acceptable manner. Teacher-pupil relations were more like father-son relation and they were very pure and cordial. Both of them were fully dedicated towards each other.

Teachers of modern education system should put some extra efforts to make their relations strong with the students. They should focus on child's overall personality development. They should cover all the aspects of a child's personality. They should behave more friendly in their approach. They should avoid discrimination and should treat each child equally. They should pay individual attention to each students' needs and interests. Teachers should abandon the practices of punishment, physical abuse, targetting a child or giving any kind of mental trauma. They should try to make their relations more friendly, cordial and loving with the students.

Students will be more open to their teachers. They will no longer have a fear or phobia of their teachers. They can ask anything without hesitation. They can even share their personal problems. This cordial relationship between a teacher and his student will create a friendly, two-way process of learning and more creative classroom environment. This will boost up the student's growth and development in a desired manner.

4. Personality development

Student's personality is not being developed in it's holistic manner in our modern education system. Students only receive the conceptual knowledge mentioned in the books. Teachers don't address the physical, moral, emotional, cognitive, social or spiritual aspects of a child's personality. Student's character is also not being shaped. Rote learning is being emphasized only.

Gurukula education system was well developed and it used holistic and integrated approach towards pupil's development. Physical needs were addressed and many physical activities, domestic chores, yoga, pranayam etc. were organised for this purpose. Pupils cognitive development was addressed by teaching them philosophy, logic etc. Moral education was taught and practiced as well. Socially acceptable behaviour was inculcated into pupil's personality. Pupil's character was being shaped by Gurus from the very beginning. Pupils were receiving vocational training as well. They were being prepared for their future social life.

Games, sports and physical activities should be organized in schools and universities on regular basis. Each student's participation should be mandatory. This will help in student's physical growth. Social festivals and events should be held to give pupils opportunities to interact with each other and to build social relations. Moral education is the instant need of our education system. So, proper arrangements must be done to ensure a quality moral education. All the aspects of a child's personality should be shaped in a manner which is required in the society. Not even a single aspect of pupil's personality be left undeveloped.

By building overall personality of a child we will be able to create a physically strong, mentally stable, emotionally balanced, morally developed, socially acceptable, spiritually awakened person for our country. These well developed students will contribute in our society's and country's higher development.

5. Political control on education -

Politics has entered in our education system. This has increased the degradation of education system.

There is an increase in corruption level and unfair means of receiving a degree. In higher educational institutions, political links work in favour of a non-deserving student. A candidate who possess power and money gets admission or a job in reputed institution without any difficulty of facing a tough competition. These corruption cases are making our education system an unfair and biased place where deserving candidates are not being selected. This will become very harmful for us in the long run. Degrees will lose their importance and students will be no more hard working. Our education system can collapse in near future if these practices keep continuing.

Gurukula system was completely in the hands of Gurus or Brahmans. There was no outer influence. State or political control over education was not practised. There was no discrimination on the basis of power, status or high Varna. Each pupil was equal for the Gurus. Gurus never favoured any pupil. They treated their pupils on the equality bases. Gurukuls were located in an isolated place or in a jungle. Gurukuls were established far away from discriminatory or materialistic social world. Everything was pre-planned and made disciplined by the Gurus.

We should remove all of these corrupt mechanisms from our education system. Fair means of getting admissions or recruitment should be practised. A committee should be established to keep an eye on these corrupt practices. More strict ways of evaluation should be applied. Any kind of discrimination should be completely removed. Harsh punishments should be given to those found guilty in any kind of corruption.

This will stop the corruption in education system. These fair practices will ensure the selection of only deserving and suitable candidates. Pupils and teachers' trust would be re-established by these fair means.

CONCLUSION

Dr. Radhakrishnan rightly said : "A society does not consist of bricks, steel and machinery, it is constructed with people, their value and character." So the ultimate goal of education is to create all the excellence in the body and soul of the learner. Learning never ends, it is a continuous and never ending process. It is a life long process from cradle to grave. But, unfortunately our current situation of education is not desirable. We have lost the essence of our vedic education system's ideals. The disciplined life, the cordial relations of a teacher and student, the moral and spiritual values, the vocational training methods, self-sufficient education etc. have been disappeared. Surely, we can't follow all of vedic ideals in our current era because of many differences. But there are some principles which can be implemented in the modern system of education. Vedic education shaped the pupils into individuals capable of living a full and complete life on the basis of Dharma values. So, by reviving and implementing vedic education ideals today we can save our education system and we will progress on a faster scale. We should find the gaps and should try to remove them as soon as possible. Education plays an important role in a country's development. A faulty, slow and corrupt education system can hamper any country's growth. Our past has all the solution of our present day's problems. We should look back at our ancient culture. We should inherit our ancient ideals into our daily lives. It will improve the quality of our lives.

REFERENCES

1. <https://www.jetir.org/view?papes=TETIR1709090>
2. <https://educational-system-blogspot.com/2013/07/vedic-education,html>
3. <https://www.doi.org/10.56776/IRJMETS34517>

4. https://www.academia.edu/38385984/Education_during_vedic_period-docx
5. <https://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/education/development-of-education-during-vedic-period-in-india/44815>
6. <https://www.bednotesatozin/2020/03/structure-and-organisation-of-education.html>
7. <https://blog.teachmint.com/vedic-education-all-you-need-to-know/>
8. <https://Jagimadcollegelive.co.in/attendance/classnotes/files/1623056178.pdf>
9. <https://ncert.nic.in/textbook/pdf/heithIII.pdf>
10. <https://www.anantaajournal.com>
11. <https://www.doi.org/10.56726/TRJMETS34517>