Education Symposium Creating Standards for Ancient Education Pedagogy

School of Indic Studies

Institute of Advanced Sciences,

in collaboration with the Maryada Foundation

May 12, 2018, 9-6 PM,

427 Plymouth Avenue, Fall River, MA

Program

*9:00-9:30AM –**Welcome and Social***

*9:30-9:35AM –**Welcome**– Dr. Bal Ram Singh, President, Institute of Advanced Sciences*

*9:35 –9:45 AM –**Introduction to the symposium and the School of Indic Studies, Institute of Advanced Sciences**–Dr. Raj Kumar, Assistant Professor, Institute of Advanced Sciences*

*9:45–10:10AM –**Our Experience of Home Schooling with Principle of Dharma First**–Smt. Suvrata Vinod, Assistant Professor, Behavioral Scientist, Narmada, India*

*10:10–10:35AM –**Gurukulam System of Education**–Mr. Dinesh Patel, Social Worker, India*

*10:35 – 10:50 AM–**Break***

*10:50–11:15AM –**Philosophy of Vedic Education System**– Mr. Gopal Sutariya, Gujarat, India*

*11:15–11:40 AM–**Dharma in Indian Education System**– Swami Savitananda, Spiritual leader, India*

*11:40–12:05 PM –**Need for Creating Ethics as the Prime Standard in Education**–Dr. Aparna Dhir,   Assistant Professor, Institute of Advanced Sciences*

*12: 05–1:00 PM –**Lunch Break***

*1:00–1:30 PM –**An Educational Perspective from Rig Veda**–Mr. Nilesh Oak, Adjunct Professor, School of Indic Studies, Institute of Advanced Sciences*

*1:30–2:00 PM –**Educational Importance of Memory Integration and Oral Tradition**–Dr. MG Prasad, Stevens Institute of Technology, Hoboken, NJ*

*2:00–2:30 PM –**Ethnomathematics: An Effective Pedagogical Tool to Enrich Math Teaching**–Ms. Swati Dave,Project Management Consultant and Educator, Boston, MA*

*2:30 – 2:50 PM – **Break***

*2:50 –3:20 PM –**Content Knowledge and Instructional Strategies in Teaching Religion in Classroom**– Ms. Kelly O ̓Riley, Western Middle, The School for the Arts, Kentucky*

*3:20 – 3:50 PM – **ENO Meditation: A Secular, Vedic-inspired Practice for Use in and out of the Classroom**– Dr. Jerry Solfvin, Adjunct Professor, Center for Indic Studies, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth*

*3:50 −4:10 PM −**Break***

*4:10 −4:40 PM −**Role of Ancient Indian EducationSystems in Creating Standards**− Dr. Raj Kumar, Assist antProfessor, Institute of Advanced Sciences*

*4:40 − 5:10 PM −**Vedantic Approach to Modern Education** – Dr. Sukalyan Sengupta, Professor and Direct or, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth*

 *5:10 – 5:40 PM – **Standards for a General Approach of Student Learning through Self-study and Self-m otivation** – Dr. Bal Ram Singh, Professor, Institute of Advanced Sciences*

*5:40 −5:55 PM −**General Discussion and Future Planning***

*5:55−6:00 PM−**Conclusion and vote of thanks***

6:00 PM – **Dinner**

Abstracts:

1. Our Experience of Homeschooling with Principle of Dharma First
Smt. Suvrata Vinod

Assistant Professor, Behavioral Scientist, Narmada, India

We know well that Indian children start going to public schools at 2 years of age. The question is 'for what'. We see an extreme Artha First (and probably Foremost) approach in the modern life. We sensed that this early age reserved by Shastra for Dharma is usurped by a misunderstanding about Dharma being meant for the last quarter of life. While our observation of life and scriptures showed us the contrary. There is no age bar for secular learnings while Upanayanam for Veda Learning has an upperlimit beyond which there is a penalty for non-performance of Brahmacharyam.

This gave us the slogan of 'Dharma First'. We assume that readers are familiar with the Tri-varga of Dharma-Artha-Kama. But we doubt whether many modern readers are familiar with the Vedic injunctions for the enrolment and course of Gurukul studies.

We also had a formula of 'Find work for a person but not persons for work'. This led us to run an integrated course of Veda and modern sciences for our three disciples from 2005 to 2013.
In this article we wish to share our experiences and learnings derived therefrom.

2. Need for Creating "Ethics" as the Prime Standard in Education

Aparna Dhir, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, School of Indic Studies,
Institute of Advanced Sciences, Dartmouth, MA

The culture and civilization of any nation is a product of its system of education but recently reported Indian news of "CBSE Paper Leak" causes aggression and sours future of many young brains. Isn't it painful to see the things happening around us in present education system? Is the education system now-a-days really fulfilling the purpose for which it was created? Does our society need bookworms or rationalise individuals? All these lead us to think about the relevance of ethical-education.

Seeing this "CBSE paper leak case", we can assume the kind of education our students are getting and even the teachers created from this present education system (as in this case teachers and tutor are involved {Times of India, Delhi Edition 2nd April, 2018}). Today our students are studying for scoring marks rather than gaining knowledge. Their goal is to make money rather than awaken to think. The sense of competition prevails in them not for the pursuit of knowledge but for grabbing high packages. The modern system of education is based on stuffing young minds with all sorts of information rather than getting their mind focused on the holistic approach of education.

There has been remarkable growth in the number of institutions providing higher education but still we are lacking in knowledge-based education. Our present system is techno-based, yet we are confused about learning process whereas the ancient system of education doesn't base on technology or gadgets still students of that era were sharp in learning and enhancing skills.

Happiness, consciousness, freedom, independent, skills are the outcomes of true education. To achieve these students must know the power of moral & ethical foundations of education. Present paper highlights the essentiality of ethic-based education. Imparting value-based education should be the base of the child. Our ancient teachings that one come across in Vedic and post Vedic texts such as -

'Satyaṁvada, dharmaṁchara; svādhyāyānmāpramadaḥ'

'सत्यंवद।धर्मंचर।स्वाध्यायान् माप्रमदः।' (TaittirīyaUpaniśad 1/11/1)

3. A Perspective from Rigveda

Nilesh Nilkanth Oak
Adjunct Professor, School of Indic Studies
Institute of Advanced Sciences, Dartmouth, MA

As we carry out synthesis of ideas to create standards for pedagogy of Ancient education, it would be instructional to look at what Rigveda has to say about it, one of the oldest, if not the oldest ancient narrative of humanity.

Rigveda is so potent that even a single 'richa' summarizes, for us, not only the essence of the characteristics of a teacher but also the expertise the teacher should have including the ability to impart it to the students in a customized fashion. One such 'richa' from Rigveda will be discussed. The basic requirements, minimum and necessary, are stated while leaving the details open for modifications as when and where required.

The description provides us with the fundamental criteria for assessment of a teacher, assessment of education curriculum and assessment of students, during the schooling years and for the rest of their lives. And while gaps from desired standards to actual capabilities are to be expected, the description provides us with parameters to measure these capabilities and therefore enables 'gap analysis'. The criteria provide not only gap analysis but also indicators for deviations or contradictions either in the education curriculum or skillset and behavior of teachers and students.

4. Integration of Memory and Oral Tradition and its Importance in Education

Dr. M.G. Prasad
Professor Emeritus, Department of Mechanical Engineering
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Hoboken, New Jersey 07030

Oral tradition plays an important role in Vedic education. In oral tradition, the text namely Veda mantras, sutras, subhashitasetc with precise phonetic and intonation accuracy are orally transmitted from the teacher to the students. The students then faithfully practices and memorize them. It is known that this method works efficiently especially when students are at young age. The oral transmission from teacher to students is carried out till the students retain the taught material in memory. The major advantage of the oral method is that after retention of text material in memory, the students can advance to understanding the retained material. Then with the text and its understanding, the students can further use critical thinking to deepen their knowledge. The assessment of students can be

measured both in terms of amount of text material retained by them and their ability to explain their understanding of the retained material. This presentation deals with various aspects of oral tradition with some demonstrations.

5. ETHNOMATHEMATICS: AN EFFECTIVE PEDAGOGICAL TOOL TO ENRICH MATH TEACHING

Swati Dawe

Project Management Consultant and Educator, Boston, MA

Ethnomathematics, the term first introduced by the Brazilian educator and mathematician UbiratanD'Ambrosio, is used to express the relationship between culture and mathematics.

The underlying principle of ethnomathematics is recognizing that different modes of thoughts may lead to different forms of mathematics. Ethnomathematics can be used as an effective teaching tool by teachers not only to enhance the mathematical understandings of students but also to reconstruct the relationship between culture and mathematics. The possibility for alternatives allow students to appreciate mathematical ideas from different cultures across different time periods and give them a better perspective of the historical and scientific evolution of mathematics. Ethnomathematics encourages students to learn to appreciate the achievements of their own and other cultures.

6. Role of Ancient Indian Educational Systems in Creating Standards

Dr. Raj Kumar

Assistant Professor,
Institute of Advanced Sciences, Dartmouth, MA02747

The greatest challenge of Indian educational systems is the vastness and diversity in terms of language, culture, and acceptability to all. In India, the educational system has various aspects and evolve with time since Vedic era. The current education system of India is not their indigenous system. It is imposed on us by British. Our indigenous system emphasizes more on educating the soul first which will define the real intellect of self. From Gurukul to educational center to medieval system, Indian system observed, experienced, modified, and improvise several things time to time. After British imposition on our educational system, we lost our path. Because their system brings a different approach based on colonial mentality and protocol driven, unlike our educational system. Our educational system was based on independent structures and thinking, and primarily driven by societal and teacher-student requirements. It is widely accepted that ancient education in India was associated with religion and purpose was to spread the religious beliefs, rituals, and traditions. It is quite normal to associate Vedas with religion. The purpose of education has evolved over time. It also differs based on the view of society, the educators, or the parents. In today's world, education is reduced to just a tool to prepare the competitive workforce. Today nobody is really caring to achieve the actual purpose of the education. "Literate does not mean educated", we need to understand this. In this work, I briefly describe the characteristic of the ancient educational system and then expand on the unique qualities of that system. Finally, I would like to suggest some standardized approach to integrate ancient Indian education system to the modern educational system.

7. Standards for a General Approach Learning of Students through Self-study and Self-motivation

Dr. Bal Ram Singh

School of Indic Studies, Institute of Advanced Sciences, Dartmouth, MA 02747, USA

Education is more a process of learning than teaching. Vedic concept of 'learning without understanding is cramming is like dry wood on ashes that can never blaze forth (Nirukta 1.18). Current practices in education – lecture-based imparting of knowledge, use of textbooks to back up the lectures, coaxing student work with home assignments, and employing examinations to evaluate the student learning – were established quite a while ago and do not reflect the time. With increasing availability of knowledge freely accessible from electronic sources, many of them with critical analysis, the lectures are becoming less attractive for students to acquire knowledge. Furthermore, textbook-based lectures become fixed in time and context, which make them less engaging for modern students. This is particularly true for higher education but getting to the level of high school.

The time has come to emphasize learning, which can be mainly accomplished by self-motivation. Within the past decade the advancement in information technology, availability of information from electronic sources, including e-books, e-journals, etc., dramatic use of computers in classrooms (at least in colleges and universities; and outside classroom through smart phones), and development of many encyclopedic websites have facilitated access to information on finger tips of students of all ages simultaneously. The systematic and hierarchical flow of information to students (teaching) from teachers and textbooks is increasingly becoming obsolete. The world has moved from prescription to subscription. Education needs to move into the arena of informed subscribers, who need skills to package information into knowledge, and wisdom to utilize the knowledge for appropriate purpose.

The motivation to learning and motivation for education need to be addressed. A more extensive educational framework needs to be developed for a modern globalized world to acquire rational (scientific) attitude. Under this framework standards need to be set up that can equip students with philosophical concepts, social and technical skills, and meaningful work for a sustainable and purpose life. In this presentation, a series of Vedic concepts of self-empowerment (*ahambramhasmi* – I am the supreme), *vasudhaivakutumbakam* (the entire planet is a family), self-study (*Swadhyay*), learning and realizing through work (*yogahkarmashukaushalam*), diversity if true reflection of the infinite (*ekoahambahusyami*) will be projected to be included in the framework for modern education.