



A comparative study on the role of Teacher from ancient to modern era

Uttam Kumar Das
Asst. Professor, Dept. of Physics
CTE, Kumarghat, Tripura University,
Tripura (India)

Sambhu Debbarma
Assistant Professor, Dept. of Education.
CTE, Kumarghat, Tripura University,
Tripura (India)

Abstract: Education is the enlighten flash of sun that brings us from darkness to light. The journey of education is never ending way and in this way the main role is played by a Teacher. Teachers are the prime force behind the process of education. As you all know that teaching is the only professional that creates all the profession. The study mainly aims at relating the role of a teacher starting from ancient to modern with the help of secondary data collected from different sources to accomplish the present study. The investigators have taken up the study to bring awareness to the people about the transformation of the role of Teacher from ancient to modern era of education.

Keywords: Education, Transformation, Teacher and Students.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is an essential human virtue. Without it, man is a splendid slave, reasoning savage. It is to humanize him. Man becomes 'Man' through education. He is what education makes him. Man is an animal, both from his passions and his reason. Education fashions and models him for society. From the Vedic age downwards the central conception of education of the Indians has been that it is a source of illumination giving us a correct lead in the various spheres of life. Knowledge says one thinker, is the third eye of man, which gives him insight into all affairs and teaches him how to act. India has the second largest education system in the world. The Indian education system has gone through many phases. Great effort has been put to shape up the present scenario of education system. The journey from Gurukuls to IITs had many ups and downs. But each phase has its own pros and cons. And with the every new movement the role and activities of teacher have undergo many transformations. From Gurukuls to present IIMs the job of teaching has transformed and with every transformation it shapes its moulds, not only the teaching has been changed but teaching methodology, classroom setup, curriculum, aim of education, all these traits has been changed to a great extent. And with every new beginning the role and personality of teachers has also been changed to cop up with the situation to serve the present needs of the society and the learners.



II. ANCIENT INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

India has a rich tradition of learning and education right from the antiquity. The excavation of the sites of Indus valley civilization has brought to our notice the prevalence of written script that suggests people of that time had sufficient knowledge and education must have played a huge part in shaping up their lives. Unfortunately, the script of that time has not been deciphered, so nothing can be told more about the education system prevalent during the Indus Valley Civilization. It is around 1500 BC, when the Aryans settled in Gangetic valley more elaborate system of education got evolved. The Hindu religion also evolved at this time and the compilation of the Vedas took place. Initially the four Vedas were orally passed on from one generation to the other, but later they were written down. It was the knowledge of acoustics that enabled ancient Indians to orally transmit the Vedas from generation to generation. The Rig Veda, the main religious and socio-economic text of Hindus was written between 1300 and 1100 BC.

Ancient Education System in India is based on making of Man and not for just survival. The making of man was regarded as an artistic and true purpose of education. It was sought as the means of self-realization, as the means to the highest end of life. Viz. mukti or emancipation. Ancient Education System in India is also to be understood as being ultimately the outcome of the Indian theory of knowledge as part of the corresponding scheme of life and values. According to the ancient Indian theory of education, the training of the mind and the process of thinking, are essential for the acquisition of knowledge. The pupil had mainly to educate himself and achieve his own mental growth.



III. PROCESS OF TEACHING

Ancient Education System in India had three simple processes – Shravana, Manana and Niddhyaasana.

- 1) **Shravana** – listening to the truths as they fell from the lips of the teacher. This knowledge was technically called as Sruti (what was heard by the ear and not what was seen in writing). This is because the pronunciation is of utmost importance. If the pronunciations of the words differ, then the true meaning of the phrase or word will also differ.
- 2) **Manana** -- Manana implies that the student needs to interpret himself the meaning of the lessons imparted by the teacher so that they may be assimilate fully. Reflecting upon what has been heard (Shravana). This is to remove any doubts about the knowledge that has been received via Shravana.
- 3) **Niddhyaasana** -- Niddhyaasana means complete comprehension of the truth that is taught so that the student may live the truth and not merely explain it by word. Knowledge must result in realization; meditating upon the essence of what has now been intellectually understood until there is total conviction.

Ancient Indian schools known for their excellence

- 1) Nalanda
- 2) Thakshasila
- 3) Vikramshila
- 4) Vallabhi
- 5) Odantapuri
- 6) Jagaddal
- 7) Nagarjunakonda
- 8) Saradhha peeth
- 9) Manyakheta
- 10) Puspagiri and Ratnagiri



IV. TEACHER IN ANCIENT ERA

The status of the teacher in ancient Indian society was very high. He was the legendary guru, the dispenser of knowledge and caretaker of his students. The teacher has the greatest role in moulding the future of a country, of all professions; he is the noblest, the most difficult, and the most important. He has to cultivate in him self-humility, compassion and the spirit of loving service, much more than those belonging to other professions for he is an ideal and example to his pupils. Teachers decide the prosperity or poverty of a country.

The institutional form of education was first imparted through the Guru-Sishya system of learning. The training of the students took place at the home of a Brahmin teacher. The relationship between the student and the teacher was most important in shaping up the entire education process. In some texts, the teacher is depicted as the poor ascetic and it is the duty of the student to beg for



his teacher. The family functioned as a domestic school, an Asrama or a hermitage. Here, the teacher's constant attention and personal instruction developed the mental faculties of the students. The first lesson that was taught to the student was the performance of sandhya and also the reciting of gayatri mantra. The preceptors were of two classes, namely Acharya and Upadhyaya. According to ancient literary texts the Acharya performs the Upanayana ceremony of the students, teaches him the Veda along with ritualistic literature and the Upanishads. But he does not work for the pupil for livelihood whereas the Upadhyaya teaches his pupil the Veda and the Vedic literatures for livelihood. The Apastamba Dharma Sutra proclaims that though the teacher is the sole guardian of the learner during his study, yet he cannot exercise arbitrary power. It declares that the educator cannot utilise the pupil's services for his own advantage. For the student's offences, he can punish him in the prescribed manner but not in any way he likes.

According to the Apastamba-dharma sutra, a pupil should confidentially draw the attention of the teacher to any wrongdoing of the rules, meant for him, either purposely or unconsciously. The students are allowed to control the teacher by force from wrongdoing or to get him restrained by his father etc. Mahabharata mentions that students are allowed to desert his teacher who is arrogant, ignorant of his duty and resorts to a wrong course of action. The importance of a teacher is as the presence of the sun. Since Vedic periods, teachers have played an important role in the society. Society has these teachers the highest respect because they were committed to bringing about the comprehensive and harmonious development of the student personality. This sentiment is succinctly expressed in the statement "Acharya Devobhava" which occurs in the Taitriya Upanishad. Even during the Buddhist and Jain periods, teacher occupied a very respect place in society. It was presumed that he gave the student real self-knowledge. Respect was shown to him by saying- "Na devah shriGuroh". From very ancient times teachers have been honoured as builders of the nation. They are the lamps that shatter darkness the light houses that guide the wandering ships and keep it away from dangerous rocks.

V. TYPES OF TEACHERS

We find three kinds of teachers in ancient India namely

1. **Upadhyaya**
2. **Acharya**
3. **Guru**

- An "Upadhyaya" was one he who taught only a portion of the Vedas.
- An "Acharya" taught the Vedas after having performed only the ceremony of Upanayana. An Acharya was ten times more than the "Upadhyaya".
- A "Guru" was one who having performed all the rites beginning with "Gorbhadhanam" delivered instructions in the Vedas. Generally, a teacher was called "Guru" which means heavy or great and he was to be really great in learning and moral conduct. He was expected to train the pupils in good behaviour and naturally to possess those qualities himself.

VI. ROLE OF TEACHER IN ANCIENT INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

The teacher or Acharya in the Vedic age was responsible not only in imparting knowledge – religious as well as secular, but also in moulding the character and personality of the pupils of his Asrama. The Acharya of the Gurukuls system was an affectionate father, an effective teacher, and a person of high moral and spiritual qualities. He maintained discipline by the influence of his personality. He was sincere and honest to his work. He taught with his heart and soul. He also performed the functions of a householder performing the five daily yajnas and observing vows. He led a disciplined life.

The role of teacher can be stated as-

Initiator: - The first and foremost role played by a teacher is initiator. He at first spiritually initiates his disciples. At the beginning of the education one has to become SISHYA of his/her guru.

Spiritual Master: - In ancient era the guru was the spiritual master of his disciples. He was the person responsible for the spiritual progression of his students. He not only provides them the material knowledge but he was also associated with spiritual education too.

Physical Instructor: - The guru was the physical instructor of his students. He used to give them various training on martial art, weapons, etc. Teacher like Dronacharya was example of such guru.

Provider of Vedic Knowledge: - In ancient time Vedic knowledge was supreme knowledge. The Vedas contain science arts commerce spiritual and worldly and heavenly knowledge. The guru was the person who used to give them all such knowledge.

An Independent Examiner: - The Guru was an independent examiner. As written exam system was not developed yet, the guru used his various techniques to asses' students' performance during the tenure.

Decision Maker: - The guru was the supreme decision maker. He enjoys complete autonomy to take his decisions. What is right or wrong was decided by guru. Thus to say that in ancient era one single guru was the supreme one. From starting to end he was only chief for every matter.

VII. TRANSFORMATION OF EDUCATION

After the ancient Vedic era, Indian society has undergone to a radical phases. Introduction of Islam, kings and their dynasty, dawn of British Imperialism, Independent hood. All these have affected Indian society, their standard of living, philosophical attribute and of course education and its related things. With the passage of time the total education system has witnessed tremendous change in its every module.

From content to the aim of education, from students attire ton teachers behaviour, from teaching methodology to teachers role all have been changed dramatically.

Yes, it is the facts that if any system has to evolve it has to change its aspects with the changed situation and the persons and things associated with it they also have to be changed to cop up with the changed situation.

Like that educational system also changed and the role of teachers too.



VIII. PRESENT INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

Indian education system has got contribution from both public as well as private sector. It is controlled by Central Government as well as State Government. Education has been specified as one of the fundamental rights in the constitution of India. Modern Indian education system is divided into many levels: pre-primary level, primary level, middle level education, secondary education, undergraduate level and postgraduate level. Pre primary level education or preschool education is provided to children before the age of five. It aims at satisfying a child's needs of fun, enjoyment, freedom, choice, belongingness, respect and love. These needs form the basis for healthy development and life-long learning.

Primary education consists of the education till fifth standard. It is meant for children belonging to age group of 6-11 year. Middle level education is imparted to students studying in classes from sixth to eighth. Secondary education is imparted to students studying in classes from ninth to twelve. After completion of school education, college education starts. College education has two levels generally- Graduation level and post graduation level. After completion of school education, the students choose course of their interest. The undergraduate course lays a foundation of the student's field of interest. After completing the undergraduate course, a postgraduate level course can be pursued. It adds to the knowledge acquired by a student during the undergraduate course. Government is investing a lot of money in education sector to improve the level of education in India. A major portion of the total budget is spent on providing good education to children as education is the base of a nation.

IX. AIMS OF PRESENT EDUCATION SYSTEM

It is worth reproducing what a document mentions about the aims of education:

The aim of education is two-fold (I) Development of the individual in society and (ii) Consequent development of the society. The aim of education in relation to individual may be spelt out as follows:

- To produce full human personality with courage, conviction, vitality, sensitivity and intelligence so that men and women may life in harmony with the universe.
- To bring out the fullest potential of child and prepare him for life and its varied situations so that he becomes a cultured and responsible citizen dedicated in the service of community.

In relation to the society, the aim of education is to create:

- I. A sane and learning society where made of material production will be such that no section of the society remains unemployed. In the Indian context such a made of Production will be necessarily based on a decentralised economy utilising all available manpower.
- II. A society. Where the conditions of work and general environment will offer psychic satisfactions and effective motivations to its members.



III. A society reconciling technological and scientific advancement with general well-being and security of its members, enhancing joy of life and eliminating all forms of exploitation.

The broad objective of education should, therefore, be to look beyond the existing society and to develop men and women amenable to the advent of a sane and healthier society of tomorrow.

While summing up, it may be pointed out that various dimensions individual and social development, social transformation, value-acquisition etc. have been well identified in the memoranda documents. The following words briefly summarise the various dimensions which are considered important indeed for marching into the 21st century:

X. ROLE OF TEACHER IN PRESENT DAY

Instruction: - Instead of just lecturing in the classroom, teachers are facilitators of learning, providing students with the information and tools they need to master a subject. At times, teachers act like tutors, working with small groups of students or individual students within the classroom or after class.

Student Interaction: - Perhaps the most important roles teachers fill involve interacting with students. Teachers must be leaders in the classroom and in the school, earning the respect of students and setting a positive example.

Creation: - Because teachers must use the curriculum, they should have input in its creation. A teacher can gauge whether an activity will fit into a specified time frame and whether it will engage students. If multiple teachers will use the curriculum, allow as many of them as possible to provide input during the creation stage.

Implementation: - Teachers must implement the curriculum in their own classrooms, sticking to the plan that has taken so much time, careful planning and effort to create. When a teacher fails to properly implement a strong curriculum, she risks not covering standards or failing to implement effective practices in the classroom.

Reflection: - Reflecting on a curriculum allows teachers and others involved in the process to find any weaknesses in the curriculum and attempt to make it better. Teachers reflect on curriculum in multiple ways, such as keeping a journal as they implement the curriculum, giving student's surveys and reviewing the results or analyzing assessment data and individual student performance.

Instructional Specialist: - An instructional specialist helps colleagues implement effective teaching strategies. This help might include ideas for differentiating instruction or planning lessons in partnership with fellow teachers.

Curriculum Specialist: - Understanding content standards, how various components of the curriculum link together, and how to use the curriculum in planning instruction and assessment is essential to ensuring consistent curriculum implementation throughout a school.

Classroom Supporter: - Classroom supporters work inside classrooms to help teachers implement new ideas, often by demonstrating a lesson, co teaching, or observing and giving feedback. Blase and Blase (2006) found that consultation with peers enhanced teachers' self-efficacy (teachers' belief in their own abilities and capacity to successfully solve teaching and learning problems) as they reflected on practice and grew together, and it also encouraged a bias for action (improvement through collaboration) on the part of teachers.

Learning Facilitator: - Facilitating professional learning opportunities among staff members is another role for teacher leaders. When teachers learn with and from one another, they can focus on what most directly improves student learning. Their professional learning becomes more relevant, focused on teachers' classroom work, and aligned to fill gaps in student learning

Mentor: - Serving as a mentor for novice teachers is a common role for teacher leaders. Mentors serve as role models; acclimate new teachers to a new school; and advise new teachers about instruction, curriculum, procedure, practices, and politics. Being a mentor takes a great deal of time and expertise and makes a significant contribution to the development of a new professional.

School Leader: - Being a school leader means serving on a committee, such as a school improvement team; acting as a grade-level or department chair; supporting school initiatives; or representing the school on community or district task forces or committees. A school leader shares the vision of the school, aligns his or her professional goals with those of the school and district, and shares responsibility for the success of the school as a whole.

Data Coach: - Although teachers have access to a great deal of data, they do not often use that data to drive classroom instruction. Teacher leaders can lead conversations that engage their peers in analyzing and using this information to strengthen instruction.

Catalyst for Change: - Teacher leaders can also be catalysts for change, visionaries who are "never content with the status quo but rather always looking for a better way" (Lerner, 2004, p. 32). Teachers who take on the catalyst role feel secure in their own work and have a strong commitment to continual improvement

Learner: - Among the most important roles teacher leaders assume is that of learner. Learners model continual improvement, demonstrate lifelong learning, and use what they learn to help all students achieve. Manuela, the school's new bilingual teacher, is a voracious learner.



The Paradigm Shift of Role: - from the detailed discussion we can say that the role of teacher has been transformed. When in present day we have curriculum, examination system, grading points, ICT enable teaching-learning the role of teacher are also vivid. As comparison with the past, when there were single Guru available for thousands of students the responsibility of teacher was very large. But today the system of Gurukuls is not there. So teachers in comparison with the past their responsibilities has also been shared. Moreover, today for the different subjects we have different teachers from vivid academic perspective. But in ancient time this scope holds no longer. The phrase like Brahmacharya has given special emphasis in ancient time. But today with the fast changing psychological adversity the teachers have to deal with sex education and have to tackle the problems of teenage periods with a strong hand thus the role of teachers has changed with the passage of time.

XI. CONCLUSION

Thus to conclude it can be said that education is the most basic insurance against all types of social evils. Education represents opportunity. At all ages, it empowers people with the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to shape a better future. Education transforms lives from down to up and accelerate the wheels of development. And to move that wheels teachers are the main force. Be it ancient time or modern time, though the role of teacher may be changed to an extent but their prime role has remained the same. They are here to infuse all the traits needed to be a complete human being in us and thus making us prepare for tomorrow.



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