

Need of Holistic Education in Present Time: An Alarming Call

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ABSTRACT

In today's rapidly increasing globalised world, it is imperative to make learning and education a holistic experience beyond classroom academics. The classroom is the original cultivator of true learning and the lavishing green house that nurtures talent and creativity of human beings. The dynamics between a teacher and students define the essence of a classroom. A great teacher can transform the brick-and-mortar confinement and take students on a journey of pure learning, responding to their doubts and instilling an environment of curiosity and interactivity. Hence, to optimize the learning experience, schools and colleges in India are vying to embrace innovative methods, installing the latest educational technology and encouraging teachers to be more creative than ever. In present time the importance of education is increasing day by day on the other hand the education is miss used and manipulated by many and the purification of the process and the system is the craving need. In these circumstances the holistic education and the idea of major educational philosophers play a crucial role. This paper makes an attempt to understand the concept of holistic education and its need in present era

Keywords: *Holistic Education, experimental learning and inclusion.*

Introduction :

India has a rich tradition of imparting information and knowledge. The 'gurukula' was the education system in ancient India with shishya (students) living with the guru in the same house and obtain training and imbibe knowledge. Nalanda was the oldest university-system of education in the world that India gifted. Students from across the world were attracted to Indian knowledge systems and practices. Many branches of knowledge system had its origin in India. Education was considered at a higher virtue in ancient India. During the freedom

struggle, several leaders like Gokhale, Ram Mohan Roy and Mahatma Gandhi worked for better education for our people, particularly women. Indigenous model of education was a major component of Gandhi's conception of Swaraj and Swadeshi. Post-Independence, the importance of education as a precondition for development was very well recognized by the leadership of the nation. In the last 20 years, education discourse in India has undergone a major transformation and new concepts such as rights-based approach to elementary education; shift in emphasis

from literacy and basic education to secondary, higher, technical and professional education; the endeavor to extend universalization to secondary education; reshape the higher education scenario.

However, modern India failed to capitalize on its initial edge due to years of colonial rule, financial constraints, and wrong policies and so on.

Need of Holistic Education:

Meaning of Holistic Education
Previously, this research will explain the definition of Holistic Education Strategy separated from the definition of Contextual Teaching and Learning. Some experts define Holistic Education as: “Holistic Education is a philosophy of education based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning and purpose in life through connection to the community, to natural world, and to humanitarian values such as compassion and peace” (Miller, 1999) “Holistic Education is cultivating the whole person and helping individuals live more consciously within their communities and natural ecosystems” (Miller, 2005). Holistic education is a discipline of education based on the premise that each person finds, meaning, identity and purpose in life through connections to the natural world, to the community, and to humanitarian values such as peace and compassion. Holistic education aims to call forth from people an

intrinsic reverence for life and a passionate love of learning. This is the definition given by Miller, editor, founder and author of the journal *Holistic Education*. The term holistic education is often used to refer to the more democratic and humanistic types of alternative education. Flake, C. L (1998) describes this further by stating, “What distinguishes holistic education from other forms of education, at its most general level, are its objectives, its focus to learning through experience, its goals and the significance it places on primary human values and relationships, within a learning environment.”

The concept of holism refers to the idea that all the properties of a given system in any field of study cannot be determined or explained by the sum of its component parts (Forbes, S. H, 1996). The system as a whole instead determines the behavior of its parts. There is no single source for a holistic education movement. There is neither a major form of expression nor a predominant proponent. It is difficult to define clearly a holistic education. There are a number of perceptions and values, however that most schools claiming to be holistic would follow (Miller.R, 2010). A holistic way of thinking rather than defining human possibilities narrowly, literally tries to integrate and encompass multiple layers of experience and meaning.

Why Holistic Education?

Parents, in drastically increasing numbers, are seeking alternatives to mainstream education. Few could criticize the commitment to academic excellence that most schools and teachers have and work hard to actualize. But more and more parents realize that just learning academics is not enough, and they see young people in their communities suffering from a lack of needed learning, and society suffering as well.

Parents worry about the negative social influence they see affecting their children. Parents see themselves having less impact on their children's behavior, relationships, and attitudes than the media and marketing which directly targets children. As a result children's senses of themselves and self-images are under pressure. This pressure is expressed in:

- Increased competitiveness in many aspects of a child's social life, such as sports, out-of-school activities, and of course, school.
- Obsessive concern for their "look," from their body shape to their clothes.
- Violence in many forms, from the physical to the psychological and emotional.

Parents are also worried about negative learning attitudes they see developing in their children. Parents saw

their children as infants eager to learn, and this eagerness dissipated as these same children's schooling increased. Learning becomes a necessary chore, driven by rewards and punishments, and too often devoid of direct meaning in their children's lives.

Many parents also look at our current society in which social problems seem to be getting worse; in which those considered successful are too often greedy, corrupt, and brutal; in which families and communities seem increasingly dysfunctional; and they ask, "Why aren't we as humans learning what we need to know in order to live good and meaningful lives?"

It doesn't appear that we will learn such things from learning more mathematics, literature, or history. Parents see the need for their children to learn these other things as well as academics, and they look for schools that give time, attention, energy, and resources, to such learning. Parents generally do not come to holistic education from philosophical musings, but from a perceived need for their children that they feel is not currently met.

What Holistic Education offers?

- Emphasize learning by doing and provide hands-on projects and opportunities
- Design integrated curriculum focused on thematic units

- Help our students learn to develop problem-solving and critical-thinking skills
- Provide regular opportunities for group work and the development of social skills
- Facilitate understanding and action as the goals of learning as opposed to rote knowledge
- Emphasize collaboration and cooperation rather than competition
- Educate for social responsibility and democracy
- Integrate community service and service learning projects in the daily curriculum
- De-emphasize the use of text books in favor of varied learning resources
- Create life-long learners
- Assess by evaluation of children's projects, goals and learning experiences
- Help students understand and respect their learning styles.
- Emotional development.
- Resilience.
- To see beauty, have awe, experience transcendence, and appreciate some sense of "truths."

Consider your life's greatest challenges. What did you need to know to overcome the obstacles you faced? Consider your greatest successes. What did you need to know in order to achieve those successes? Then ask yourself, how many of those things that I needed to know did I learn in school?

For thousands of years before schools there were social groups which taught people about the great adventure of being human; its trials and tribulations, its challenges, and its enormous possibilities for human goodness and even greatness. These groups were extended families, communities or tribes or clans, and religions. For the most part, these groups have disappeared or become compartmentalized in people's lives.

Now, it is predominantly popular culture (the media, music) and schools from which young people can learn about what it means to be human. But culture has its own agenda (not the welfare of children), and schools were not designed to replace extended families, communities, and religions. They were designed to prepare people for the world of work; to give them the skill sets that would help them up the ladder of material success. We want that education by which character is formed,

Conclusion:

In simple words the purpose of holistic education is to prepare students to meet the challenges of living as well as academics. Holistic education believes it is important for young people to learn:

- About themselves.
- About healthy relationships and pro-social behavior.
- Social development.

strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded and by which one can stand on one's own feet. (Swami Vivekananda Vol-5). Holistic education covers a wide range of philosophical orientations and academic practices. Its focus is on completeness, and it attempts to avoid excluding any significant aspects of the human experience. It is an eclectic and inclusive movement whose main characteristic is the idea that educational experiences foster a less materialistic and a more spiritual worldview along with more dynamic and holistic views of reality. It also proposes that educational experience promote a more balanced development of – and cultivate the relationship among – the different aspects of the individual (intellectual, physical, spiritual, emotional, social and Aesthetic), as well as the relationships between the individual and other people, the individual and natural environment, the inner-self of students and external world, emotion and reason, different discipline of knowledge and different structure of knowing. Holistic education is concerned with life experience, not with narrowly defined "fundamental skills". Krishnamurti writes: If the unity of life and the oneness of its purpose could be clearly taught to the young in schools, how much brighter would be our hopes for the future! (Krishnamurti, J.1974). Holistic education is a philosophy of education based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to

the natural world, and to spiritual values such as compassion and peace. (Miller, R.1997).

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