Integral Education with Societal Extension: Empowering Future Generation with Holistic Multi-Dimensional Human Development and Social Leadership

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ABSTRACT
Current education and learning practices and pedagogy methods in numerous countries like India are found to be highly inadequate to prepare the future generation for the immense challenges they are likely to face. Though the intended goal of human development has been extended to incorporate expansion of opportunities, individual choice and human freedom- the measurement of Human Development Index explicitly captures economic and social opportunities via the income, health and education indices. These parameters cater to individual entitlements and rights without incorporation of ‘societal responsibility approach’ and ‘social leadership’ in a comprehensive Multi-Dimensional Human Development framework. The implied suggestion here is then providing Integral Education along with essential Societal Extension or Exposure components beyond the standard conceptual teaching-learning methods. This will open up the social challenges faced by the society to the present generation. This societal understanding will help the human development policy makers of any country to design a suitable Social Leadership Programme that can be imparted as an integral component of education curriculum with a vision to create potential to empowering future generation with Holistic Multi-Dimensional Human Development and Social Leadership. The idea is to view ‘social leadership’ as extension of individual freedom- beyond human rights, leading to human responsibility. What can be the vital elements of preparing tomorrow’s scholars and leaders then? The present paper explores ways to integrate social responsibility approach to human development and analyses the feasibility of imparting social leadership among the youth through integral teaching-learning pedagogy.

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Introduction

Education is the backbone of human resources development in any country. As natural resources are the fundamental factors of production in an economic system, so are the human resources that are critical for the enhancing productivity and growth in the economy. Development of human knowledge creates a knowledge base systematically over a long period of time, which leads to creation and development of civilization- as evident from ancient prominent human civilizations like Mesopotamian, Egyptian in the Middle East, and the Harappan Civilization in the Indian subcontinent. The ancient knowledge base created and developed in these civilizations had played a crucial role in advancement of scientific, technological and human sciences throughout the world. With advancement of human knowledge, the need for scientifically storing, processing and imparting the knowledge became crucial for sustained growth of the knowledge and intellectual pool itself. This led to the development of the teaching- learning practices, education methodologies and various learning pedagogies like pictographic depictions in the ancient caves, hieroglyphic tablets in Egypt, stone carvings and edicts in India and so on.

Indian system of education had however, a very robust system of Shruti- that is, receiving learning through memorizing the entire verses and knowledge contents and passing them through the same methods by teaching from the memory base only. By development of modern tools like paper documentation, development of computers and virtual space, there has occurred sea change in teaching-learning practices and methodologies. The focus of these modern education systems is developing man power and human resources so that they can effectively contribute to the economic growth and productive activities in the economy. But any meaningful goal of education is never restricted to creating productive human resources only; it should be holistic, comprehensive, all-encompassing, futuristic and visionary so that it can lead to development of individuals with empowered capabilities of discrimination between justice and injustice, right and wrong- and thus leading to providing the foundation for the holistic prosperity and growth of the world. Nevertheless, current education and learning practices as well as the pedagogy methods in numerous countries like India are found to be highly inadequate to prepare the future generation for the immense challenges they are likely to face.
Human Development vs. Holistic Human Development

When human beings felt the need of systematically creating and developing human resources for the goal of overall advancement of the nation as a whole, the basic idea was to enhance the productivity of the human labour in the economic system. Adam Smith’s idea of enhancing the labour productivity for creating Wealth of Nations was through ‘Division of Labour’ - performing a singular task only over a prolonged period of time - which ultimately leads to manifold increase in efficiency of the worker. (Adam Smith, 1776) Likewise, many educational and psychological philosophers like John Dewey in the early 20th century advocated for the Philosophy of Pragmatism and introduced the concept of ‘Learning by Doing’ through broad based educational methodologies in his Experience and Nature (1925). John Dewey’s ideas of learning by doing have opened up the newer concepts of Progressive Education, which is beyond the traditional classical concepts of education, which is based on development of uni-dimensional expertise in a field of knowledge.

'Progressive education' is a pedagogical idea that was conceptualized in late 19th century. This system of education was developed as an alternative to the traditional Euro-American pedagogy of that time, which was based on classical system and traditional methodologies of preparing for higher education. Moreover, the Euro-American pedagogy education was strongly founded on social class structure. The ideas of Progressive education can be found in the writings of John Locke and Rousseau, the ideas that were subsequently developed by educational philosophers like Dewey. Locke advocated that "truth and knowledge... arise out of observation and experience rather than manipulation of accepted or given ideas" (www.uvm.edu/). He stressed on providing concrete experiences to the children for effective learning understanding of the natural principles. Rousseau likewise had strong belief that memorization of facts in no way can qualify as effective education (as observed in Emile, or On Education).

Progressive Education envisages two indispensable elements: First, ‘Recognition of Diversity of Individual’ - i.e. one’s recognition for own’s abilities, interests, needs, and cultural individuality. Second, ‘Development of Critical, Collaborative Intelligence’ - promoting abstract reasoning and
social interactive intelligence, for collaborative engagement with community issues. These components of education are known as ‘Child-Centred’ and ‘Social Reconstructionist’ methods, which have led to the development of foundations of progressive education- which though was lesser known earlier, but today has widespread acceptance, advocacy and adoption globally. (A Brief Overview of Progressive Education)

Progressive Education can include wide range of some common features revolved around above fundamental principles, like:

- Integral learning of conceptual pedagogy with experimental methods
- Including ‘Learning by Doing’- i.e. self-experiential learning
- Stress on critical, abstract and out-of-convention thinking
- Goal oriented approaches and focus on problem solving methods
- Focus on inquisitiveness and understanding of problems with long terms approaches
- Problem solving based on practical projects
- Unique personalized learning techniques focused on one’s interests and needs
- Team work and collaborative learning in groups
- Co-operative education through participation in social and community issues
- Understanding diversity and respect for individuality
- Infusing social responsibility through social sensitivity
- Promoting innovation, spirit of entrepreneurship- including social innovation

Progressive education has been adopted as the advanced way of thinking on teaching learning processes, and thus viewed as most desirable today for the advancement and progress of the society today. It includes social sensibility and sensitivity as its most important component components, however, extension of this into integration with development of leadership qualities is yet to be fully recognized. Moreover, development of social leadership as an integral component of formal educational curriculum is yet to be included in many parts of the world, though in different ways it may be scattered in the curriculum.

The formal education is thus, an essential ingredient of human development, which has been conceptualized for creating productive human resources. This has led to development of Human Development Index (HDI) in the 1990s for making formal quantification in numerical terms. The
idea of Human Development Index was incorporate basic parameters of human development goals into the framework in the form of estimable and measurable indicators so that countries can be evaluated and ranked accordingly and desirable targets can be prepared, for which the task was given to the UN Development Programme (UNDP). Though the intended goal of human development has been extended to incorporate expansion of opportunities, individual choice and human freedom- the measurement of Human Development Index explicitly captures economic and social opportunities via the income, health and education indices. HDI indicator is thus multi-dimensional in its approach which is refined and developed over the years. These parameters cater to individual entitlements and rights without incorporation of ‘societal responsibility approach’ and ‘social leadership’ in a comprehensive Multi-Dimensional Human Development framework.

**Social Responsibility Approach to Human Development**

The implied suggestion here is then providing *Integral Education* along with essential *Societal Extension or Exposure* components beyond the standard conceptual teaching-learning methods. This will open up the social challenges faced by the society to the present generation. This societal understanding will help the human development policy makers of any country to design a suitable *Social Leadership Programme* that can be imparted as an integral component of education curriculum with a vision to create potential to empowering future generation with *Holistic Multi-Dimensional Human Development* and *Social Leadership*. The idea is to view ‘social leadership’ as extension of individual freedom- beyond human rights, leading to human responsibility.

The human development approach assumes incorporation of development attainment goals that are basically to be ensured under a rights based framework. The supremacy of rights is envisaged because in many countries and societies of the world basic human rights are sometimes not even recognized and allowed for attainment. And thus many desirable development goals may not be ensured in the processes of economic and social developments. Hence the enforcement of these rights under comprehensive national and international understanding and agreements under say for example, UNDP development goals- i.e. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). MDGs and SDGs and the overall HDIs despite being wide and multi-dimensional in their goals, they exclusively do not include development of
leadership potential among the people as an essential component of solving social and community problems. Community participation of people in solving developmental and social problems have been identified as important mode of developmental approach and implementing public policy plans. However, systematic development leadership in the community itself to solve the problems of the community mutually in an agreeable framework is yet to be formalized in development models and educational approaches.

Leadership involves social responsibility. Social leadership incorporates taking up responsibility to solve the social problems and issues and thus try to contribute in attainment of development goals of the community or society. Thus, there is a need for social responsibility approach to human development- distinguished and different from rights based approach.

**Imparting Social Leadership among the Youth**

Infusing leadership, in particular, social leadership among the youth is crucial in order to develop leadership responsibility in the community. Child and youth being in the formative stage of education, critical intervention is required at this stage. In stead of imposing developmental ideas among the people from the top, community based approaches like community participation in designing appropriate developmental models, ensuring developmental rights and directing developmental deliveries to the targeted end must be part of the essential human development methodologies. Moreover, infusing greater responsibility in these development participation models can be a symbiotic way of complementing the co-operative rights based approach. Thus, ensuring developmental rights through community participation (co-operative rights based approach) and creating a sense of developmental responsibility within the community (social responsibility approach) - collectively both ways can go hand in hand to create an appropriate developmental ecosystem which can cater to the suitable developmental needs of the society as well as help in sustenance of those development attainments. To start with, critical intervention for this can be imparted at the educational pedagogy for human development for the children and youth.

**Integral Teaching-Learning Pedagogy: Societal Extension**

The ways to integrate social responsibility approach to human development and feasibility of imparting social leadership among the youth can be imparted through integral teaching-learning
pedagogy. For developing social leadership then, social extension of educational goals can be a desirable way to infuse leadership potential among the youth. Social extension can involve participation of students in social issues on the field, making visits to the community, understanding social problems by taking part in community discussions and interacting with different social groups and so on. This can help them to understand various social problems from first hand experiential approaches. This can be more integrated and focused with a deeper expositional learning approach. Youth and students may be required to spend quality time with the community, understand the problems thereof with considerable interaction and observation and then make efforts to solve the problems by mutual co-operation and team work. Enough opportunity should be given to create leadership among the youth here, by appropriate methods of recognition of leadership potential. Simultaneously, social leadership education should be provided to the youths so that some of them can be developed as potential social leaders who can proactively work with the community to design and solve community problems. This can be a systematic process with a goal to impart generation of social responsibility among the youth- to make them understand that they bear a greater responsibility to solve critical problems faced by the communities.

This should be an extension of the human rights already to be attainable for the youths, beyond developmental rights. The feeling of onus of developing the society as part of youths’ responsibility, will be critical in the long run to create a better future of the world, where in different parts of the world will have their own leaders who will be proactively working for betterment of their own communities. Such pedagogies then must incorporate social extention for leadership creation a part of integral teaching-learning methodologies.

The human development framework thus can be more comprehensive and greater multi-dimensional with inclusion of the social leadership component in it. In this sense it can be termed as ‘holistic’ in its approaches to create human development.

**Conclusion**

Infusing greater responsibility in the development participation models can be a symbiotic way of complementing the co-operative rights based approach. Thus, ensuring developmental rights through community participation (co-operative rights based approach) and creating a sense of developmental responsibility within the community (social responsibility approach) -
collectively both ways can go hand in hand to create an appropriate developmental ecosystem which can cater to the suitable developmental needs of the society as well as help in sustenance of those development attainments. To start with, critical intervention for this can be imparted at the educational pedagogy for human development for the children and youth. The human development framework should be redesigned to make it more comprehensive and greater multi-dimensional by including social leadership pedagogy in it. In essence, a ‘holistic’ approach to create multi-dimensional human development should be desirable for making better world.

References