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Positive Philosophy, Innovative Method and Present Education System

Dr. Desh Raj Sirswal*

Abstract: Philosophy is an important relation with education as it gives theoretical ground for its development. Principles and values of life learnt through education and experience gives birth to philosophy. Philosophy lays the foundation of leading one's life based on principles. Education is the source of learning and philosophy it's applications in human life. While discussing about the real nature of philosophy in present time, we should have a single criteria as if it to be acceptable to all reasonable people of the world. Positive Philosophy is an attitude as well as a methodology for both academician and common person. It make education process positive so that it can make something useful for societal growth and in working process it also make the person sensitive about the societal problems and make them ready to be a part of social change. Positive Philosophy is working on that issues which have some worth for human. It is a process to do something creative. We are using innovative method. Innovation not only simply implies questioning, reshaping, restricting but also developing through transformation. A teacher can play an important role in promoting this discussion because a teacher has the capacity to influence students with their thoughts and personality and engages them to creative activities. Innovativeness needs to be included in the curriculum. Once one becomes habitual to this attitude he/she will be ready to do some positive or creative. In this paper it is an attempt being made to apply positive philosophy though innovative method in our present education system.

INTRODUCTION

Philosophical thought is an inescapable part of human existence. Almost everyone has been puzzled from time to time by such essentially philosophical questions as "what does life mean?", "Did I have any existence before I was born?" Most of people also have some kind of philosophy

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in the sense of a personal outlook on life. Even a person, who claims that considering philosophical questions is a waste of time, is expressing his views on what is important, worthwhile, or valuable. A rejection of all philosophy is in itself philosophy. Abstraction without relevance to life and living in high sounding is nothing, but leading to darkness. The usefulness of any subject lies in its lying servant of practice. Philosophy because of its closeness to life should be a part of any scheme of education relevant to anyone. Philosophy will provide the ways to acquire knowledge and good behavioral patterns. In the early 20th century, with the attainment of science and technology, human values of life have changed. With this popularity of philosophy also decreased because of its consciousness to metaphysical and religious speculations. Philosophy should be creative and practical, that is the exigency of modern society.

The present status of philosophy as a useful discipline is in doubt. There are some reasons for this. First, philosophy in India is on the dominancy of religion, so one cannot make clear distinction between philosophy and religion. Most problems of philosophy are treated like religious problems and there is a lack of basic understanding between the nature of problems regarding philosophy and religion. We come to know from religious literature that its doctrines are supported either by reasoning or by revelation. Doctrines supported by reasoning unaided by revelation constitute metaphysics and fall in the domain of Philosophy, but doctrines based on revelation are to be excluded from philosophy, because revelation is supported to be a type of experience entirely different from the experiences that we as a matter of fact have. All metaphysical thinking is necessarily God-oriented. Here we need the criteria how far it is useful in dealing with matters in daily life. The teaching methods of philosophy used in institutions are not valuable as to understand the real nature of philosophy. So, here is a basic need of such a healthy and positive attitude for philosophical inquiry, which is concerned with the problems of human life and is related to ordinary discourse of living. We have used the term *Positive Philosophy* for this.

The Concept of Positive Philosophy¹

This term "Positive Philosophy" is firstly used by Auguste Comte. Course of Positive Philosophy (1830-1842) was his first great work, and in it he propounds his theory that all institutions are based upon the ideas of men which are formed in three successive stages--theology, metaphysics and finally from the Positive. In the theological stage, the human mind, seeks the essential nature of beings, the first and final causes (the origin and purpose) of all effects. In short, it is absolute knowledge -- supposes all phenomena to be produced by the immediate action of supernatural beings. In the metaphysical stage, which is only a modification of the first, the mind supposes, instead of supernatural beings, abstract forces, veritable entities (that is, personified abstractions) inherent in all beings, and capable of producing all phenomena. In the final, the positive stage, "The mind has given over the vain search after absolute notions, the origin and destination of the universe, and the causes of phenomena, and applies itself to the study of their laws -- that is, their invariable relations of succession and resemblance. Reasoning and observation, duly combined, are the means of this knowledge. What is now understood when we speak of an explanation of facts is simply the establishment of a connection between single phenomena and some general facts, the number of which continually diminishes with the progress of science."2 Comte's rejection of traditional religion and metaphysics, his faith in science and progress has had a strong and persistent influence on subsequent thought. But I am not here concentrating on the positivist revolution in the world of philosophy, but only that how philosophy becomes beneficial for non-academic persons too. Here we are using this word as a useful philosophy for everyone and trying to leave those questions that are merely religious and metaphysical in nature.

Characteristics of Positive Philosophy

Before giving a positive account, attention may be drawn to two ways of defining a branch of knowledge; in terms its subject-matter and in terms of its method. When I discuss about it, I have a single criteria for positive philosophy i.e. if it to be acceptable to all reasonable people of the world.

Positive Philosophy, Innovative Method and Present Education System

In defining Positive Philosophy it may be said, "The Positive Philosophy is an attempt to achieve an intellectual detachment from all philosophical systems, and not to solve specific philosophical problems, but to become sensitively aware of what is it when we philosophize." It is an attitude as well as a methodology for both academician and common person. It makes philosophy in India Positive so that it can make something useful for societal growth and in working process it also make the person aware. I am not negating something, here "Positive" word is not an antonym but it is an adjective. Where there are merely religious, metaphysical speculations and passive ideologies, we have to leave it behind because they are not useful so far. Positive Philosophy works on that issues which have some worth for human. It is a process to do something creative. The characteristics of this philosophy are mentioned below:

- It will be primarily concerned with the affairs of living and not what happen after death.
- It will teach a person about the real nature of the individual and nature.
- It will teach each person the art of dynamic equilibrium, so that he never tends to extremes, but remains in the middle.
- It will be steadfast in views, but not claim exclusive truth for its doctrines, to be ready to
 accept alternative versions to the eternal truth as equally valid assertions, and not seek to
 compel anyone to accept any single version of the truth.
- It will not run counter to the modern doctrines of science, gender parity, liberty, equality and fraternity, human rights and the like.³

As we know that philosophy has an enormous influence on our everyday lives. The very languages we speak were classification derived from philosophy. For example, the classification of noun and verb involve the philosophical idea that there is a difference between things and actions. If we ask what the difference is, we are starting a philosophical inquiry. So, we should have a solid methodology to do this.

Innovative Method

A methodology is a system of principles and general ways of organizing and structuring theoretical and practical activity, and also the theory of this system. A clear comprehension of the fundamental of epistemology, logic and scientific method is necessary pre-requisite of understanding any meaningful rational activity including theory–formation and decision-making. Philosophical questions concern the relations between concepts that are employed in daily life, natural science, religion and mathematical sciences.

Therefore, in philosophy, it is necessary to be familiar with them in order to see how these concepts are actually employed. We are using innovative method for our conception. Innovation is the creation of better or more effective products, processes, services, technologies or ideas that are readily available to society. Innovation differs from invention in that innovation refers to the use of better and, as a result, novel idea or method, whereas invention refers more directly to the creation of the idea or method itself. Innovation differs from improvement in that innovation refers to the notion of doing something different (Lat. innovare: "to change") rather than doing the same thing better. The word innovation derives from the Latin word *innovatus*, which is the noun form of *innovare* "to renew or change," stemming from *in*—"into" + *novus*—"new". Diffusion of innovation research was first started in 1903 by seminal researcher Gabriel Tarde, who first plotted the S-shaped diffusion curve. Tarde (1903) defined the innovation-decision process as a series of steps that includes:

- 1. First knowledge
- 2. Forming an attitude
- 3. A decision to adopt or reject
- 4. Implementation and use
- Confirmation of the decision ⁴

Philosophy is a growing phenomenon, a developing sphere. Each step in the walk of human existence adds new grains to the development of philosophy. We have to be a perpetual innovator. "An innovator is one who does not know that it cannot be done. To innovate is to introduce something, make changes into anything established, or to innovate on another's creation, renewed or altered. An innovator could be a rebellion because he breaks the established methods, norms, standards and redefines the layers of thought. Hence an innovator is one who knows what one is doing could be alone on the basis of certain method. Innovation not simply implies questioning, reshaping, restructuring, but also developing through transformation." 5

Prof. Daya Krishan said, "The philosophers, however, *have not merely thought* in a certain way but also thought that they thought in a certain way." Philosophy is the New World-Cognitive process which deals with practical ethics, globalization, human rights. It is a critical reflection of the status of knowledge, values and communication. It tries to bring out the discrepancies and gaps, the ruptures and mutations etc. and tries to modify and transform that process. So, this is necessary to follow this type of positive attitude to solve these problems rather than a negative attitude which makes the problem more complex, rather to solve it.

Our critical reflections may serve to amend the positive view with which we find relatively satisfactory. Philosophy affects Social Sciences and Humanities since many hundred years. We should think about the implication of philosophical methods on Social Sciences and Humanities. Cultivate on of ethical, moral, cultural and spiritual ideas by studying philosophy at various levels of education can change the mindset of the people. Recent research in ethics and moral science has proved that studying ethics has a tremendous influence on people all over the world. So, we should ready to give new dimensions and do best innovations in this area which has more relevance and implications in this millennium and forever.

PRESENT EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education is the process by which people not only acquire knowledge and information skill, but also get values and ability to live and interact within and with social groups, as well as they participate in cultural life and productive activities, which may not always be economic. Higher education is not a fundamental right in India, but also considered essential for any nation's cultural, social and economic development. But the base of the education pyramid of India is shabby, poorly manages government/municipal schools which shove dubious quality education down the children of the poor majority. One out of every three out of school children in the world reside in India. Fifty three percent of students dropout before completing primary school.

The issue today is not a lack of demand, but rather quality of supply. Students often dropout because their public school experiences are often so poor that they learn very little even after being enrolled for 4 to 5 years. Classrooms in India are posed with challenges of rigid curriculum demands, lack of resources, large class sizes and very often low motivation levels among teachers. Add to that poor teacher training facilities. Given the constraints, the pursuit of encouraging creativity education in the Indian schooling system seems like a fall order. 9

This is also a fact that Indian education system has a large scope but the quality of higher education down because of incapable teaching professionals and their incompetency to fight with international order. Here is an quote, "India has the second largest higher education system in the world comprising of 279 universities, over 13,000 colleges, about 7.5 million students and over 3,50,000 teachers at tertiary level. The country is also presently involved in trade in educational services. But only 9 percent of males and 5 percent of female hold qualification. Moreover, these skill levels are differentially distributed across

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different part of the country. (Desai, Sonalde, B. & others (2010). This highly diverse educational system will have a multidimensional impact under globalization. Foreign institutions are entering the country in a big way taking advantage of differential and excessive demand for higher education." ¹⁰

Individually some teachers are working to do best in quality education but they are facing many problems, "...Teachers who struggle with the implementation of an innovation may muddle through without institutional support and eventually abandon the innovation. Yet, the teachers may have because they have been taught about innovations in the workshop. In this context, training is considered less important among teaching community. The implementation of innovations is not Hassel free."

Government funding in higher education sometimes seems inappropriate as its output is nil. Government resources are being used for the benefits money headed peoples and they are not oriented to social and national goal of education. A topic of much debate in India is Should the government continue subsidizing the educational of IIT students since so many of them end up working in foreign countries? Many suggestions are being made for this like an "exist tax" be imposed on students who pass out from prestigious institutions like the IIT only to take up jobs abroad. They should be involved in social participation programme to serve time in Indian rural areas-just like medical students are required to do. 12 The lack of social and national goals need orientation in education policy making creates many problems for Indian society.

Higher education is an important thing for a nation's development. Higher education has received a lot of attention in India over the past few years. While speaking in convocation address Chairman of UGC describe the main reasons for this recent focus:

- First, country's weak higher education system is being blamed for skill shortages in several sector
 of economy.
- Second, reservation quotas in higher education institutions, particularly the more reputed ones
 that provide access to high status and best paid jobs became a highly divisive issue, central to the
 policy of inclusive growth and distributive justice, and hence politically very important.
- Third, in the backdrop of the first two developments, it began to be argued that the country would
 not be able to sustain its growth momentum and maintain competitiveness unless problems with
 higher education continues to outpace the supply due to growing population of young people,
 gains in school education, the growing middle class and their rising aspiration.

He also describes the function of the University in the following lines, "The main function of the university is to create and disseminate knowledge. The university bears the responsibility of moving the society forward by addressing the pressing problems of the society and producing the positive thinkers and intelligent workers. In this age of globalization technological advancement and competition, there is no alternative to the creation of a knowledge based society which is only possible through universities." ¹³ Govt. of India started several programmes in the field of higher education. Indian economy can flourish only if there is an academic culture favourable for innovation and technology transfer. We need world class institutes to raise our head high, especially in the field of science and technology without which India undoubtedly cannot hope to lead. Technical Education Quality Improvement Program (TEQIP) of Government of India in association with the World Bank is attempting to do this by investing thousands of crores in about 300 colleges. ¹⁴ And also, "....The new global scenario poses challenges for the higher education. UGC state, "Universities have a central role to play in promoting societal change. It must make an impact on the community if it is to preserve it legitimacy and gain civil support." It is to be realized that social changes can only be brought about by people and not through technology alone which itself is a product of human effort. Hence human resources development, at all levels, needs to be given precedence and made a part of the nation's overall approach.¹⁵ If India does not create world class universities and colleges, it will only get increasingly, more mediocre to run its national and international affairs.

Teaching Profession

Teaching is a well-paid profession in India and teachers are typically appointed based on political affiliations, not on content or pedagogical knowledge. There is no system in place to motive academic achievement and very little training available to strengthen teaching practices. To prepare competent teachers who can perform effectively and conduct themselves in most socially desirable manner, both preservice and in-service education need to be emphasized. Because time training at the initial stage will not suffice throughout one's career if we have to meet emerging needs of the contemporary society. Empowerment of teachers both at the pre-service and in-service levels will save them from obsolescence, reutilisation and burn out. The following characteristics are associated with teaching profession, "Teaching is a highly professional activity which demands specialized knowledge, skill and behavior:

- Teacher professionalism comprises at list three essential characteristics: competence, performance and behaviour, which reflect on teachers' personality and the way they behave in school and society.
- Competence is fundamental in teaching profession which includes preparation of teachers for classroom processes, acquisition of knowledge of subject and facilitates personality development of children.
- Competencies of an effective teacher include interpersonal communication, pedagogical empowerment and organizational leadership of professional competence results in performance of teachers in terms of overall development of children.
- The competent teachers are supposed to perform better in the interest of the children and society
 as well. High level of competence empowers teachers with high self-concept, commitment and
 motivational level.
- The third characteristics of humane teachers particularly in the Indian context. The manner in
 which the teacher conducts him/herself has impact on classroom, school, community and
 educational system. The teacher's conduct is reflected in the behaviour of young generation
 taught by him/her. The sense of ethics and morality goes a long way in harmonizing society."¹⁷

Government of India also working since a long time to provide best training to teaching professionals in higher education in indifferent forms, "The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), Established in 1973 and awarded statutory authority in 1993, is responsible for planning and developing teacher education, including setting and maintaining standards. There is a National Eligibility Test to select teachers in their States. In 1987, Academic Staff Colleges (ASC) were set up (45 to date) to provide opportunities for general orientation and subject refresher programs for academic staff. More than 1, 00,000 teachers have received training of 3-4 weeks duration. These colleges also conduct 2-3 days seminars of Principles." But this is ineffective due to political affairs in selection and upgradation of teachers as they face many problems in this also. Administrators' ill-will always creates many problems to an honest and real academician.

It is rightly said that, "To be effective teachers, they should be given good working conditions, necessary conveniences, instructional facilities etc. to save them from obsolescence, routinisation and burn-out. They need good working conditions, necessary facilities, devices, aids, etc. They can be given

opportunities in terms of encouragement, leave, costs etc. to grow professionally so that they are able to disseminate their experiences, research findings locally, nationally and globally."....The teacher educators have to introspect and reflect on their performance interms of their vision, leadership, teaching, values system, social accountability, commitment to profession etc. The public perception about teachers at all the levels has suffered in the recent past. The credibility of teachers has gone down and as a result they have also developed pessimism in their behaviour.¹⁹

Positive Innovative Education

In India the need to develop creativity in the classroom is in a nascent stage and yet to be emphasized in any major educational policy or planning document. The Indian education system in policy makes no overt recommendations for creativity education to be adopted as an integral part of the schooling experience for a child in India. Therefore, any such initiative can happens only at an individual level and must stem from an ideology or philosophy that believes in creating the space for children to learn creatively.

For innovative education system the following things are necessary:

- Creating a sense of informality to encourage free expression through informal seating
 arrangements, flexible class timings, group activities, proximity to nature, a vivacious campus
 and the freedom to express without the fear of being judged and ridiculed were some of these.²⁰
- Academic or professional communication skills, both written and oral, have to be imparted in such a way that students in their contexts are able to identify their own language learning needs and to set their own language learning goals.
- At college and university level, teachers may act as facilitators, just as they would need to teach
 will positive attitude for inter and intracultural communication the skills of negotiating linguistic
 and cultural differences.²¹
- Excellence in education in most simple term implies the transformation of individuals and society to higher levels of physical, intellectual, social, emotional aesthetic, moral and spiritual attainments. It must enable students to prepare themselves not only for the job market but also for life. There is a growing realization that education must equip students with more than narrowly focused curriculum, based on reading, writing and mathematics. It must expose students to a broad and meaningful study of the humanities, including science, music and art. Besides, education must also foster self-esteem, leadership, tolerance, ethical judgment and moral

reasoning. ... Conceptualizing excellence in education in such a broader perspective is now considered to be a function of four quotients: Spiritual Quotient, Emotional Quotient, Human Quotient and Physical Quotient.²²

These days Educational e-Governance also plays an important role in dissemination of bias free knowledge. It means governance of various educational activities in university and colleges in electronic way. It includes management of academic and administrative activities. The learning services intends to include Learning Management System, Content Management System, Distributed Classroom, Online Evaluation System, Assignment Management System, Question Banks and Model Answers, Project Reports, New Project Ideas, Personality Development, Business English, Soft Skills, Profiling Tests, Webcasts, Video-Lecture Streaming etc. Administrative and Facilitation Services will facilitate availability of following personalized administrative and facilitation services to the students: Personal Profile Update, Eligibility Application for Examination Schedules, Time-Tables, Centers and Venues, Examination Hall Ticket, e-Statement of Marks, Verification and Re-valuation, Convocation, Issue of Migration Certificate, e-Transcript, Status of various application, Progression Record from admission to convocation, Syllabi, List of Recommended Books, References, Contact Session, Time-Table, Personalized Alerts, Notices, Calendar, Planner, Organizer, Messaging Services amongst students and teachers selection of contact session centre, complaint registrations etc.²³ India will be successful only in higher education development if the recommendation of National Knowledge Commission (2006) and Yaspal Committee (2009) with respect of grant of autonomy to institution should be urgently discussed, debated and implemented. The following suggestions are important in this regard:

- Institutes/College/Universities should view teachers/ professors as researchers, discoverer, innovators and creators.
- Empower teachers/ professors with necessary freedom to think and freedom to act.
- Higher and technical education will take the nation forward where teachers/ professors are differentiated from government servants.
- Innovation fund for students studying in colleges will be provided for the national development.
- Teaching and researches should be treated as inseparable in Institutes/ Universities.
- Better and creative use of modern technology can solve man, problems in teaching and learning. 24

We can say that the conception of positive philosophy, innovative method are related to each other and its applications are relevant in present system of education as recommendations made by *National Knowledge Commission* and *Yashpal Committee Report* in last years. Some important concepts are discussed here and some remained for more critical reflection.

We should try to continue this discussion so that we can make a real change in our academic environment as well as change some social realities. A teacher can play an important role as a manager of management team and largely in content of classroom management, curriculum, teaching style, resources and the creation of an optional learning environment for all the students. It does justice with young people, the need of all modern societies for development of human capabilities and the professional satisfaction of the teacher themselves. It is our conclusion that education institutions, students and teachers, do make a difference positive in tone, with or without legislation and this attitude held and encourage young teachers to see their work in the classroom as source of professional and personal satisfaction.

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