

Strategies for Transforming India through Materialistic and Spiritual Higher Education

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It is a well known fact that development is a continuous process. Now a days, the development has been transformed to sustainable development. The thinking is new in western terms but concept is old in Indian terms. The difference in civilizations has created difference in concepts. Thinking that what one civilization does is the best and what others do is questionable, leads to conflicts. Educating the pupil brings similar level of thinking in different categories of people. English speaking citizen of Japan, India, Africa and USA may think alike because they get the same education. Transforming a nation through its education system is one method of transforming the country. Changing the nations' fortune needs multi-pronged strategy and higher education is only a fraction of education framework. There are many more areas one has to touch in order to transform a nation full of citizens of wide variety of thinking, faith, caste creed and gender.

Framework

The University based higher education system needs an overhauling. Churning out conventional graduates fit to do nothing will not lead to any strategic transformation of the country. Let each institute of higher learning be defined for its goal. University that specializes in Biotechnology will work around that area of specialization alone. It will not be allowed to teach research and develop computer technologies for automotive. They will develop computer techniques for bio-technology. All tools and mechanisms available shall be used for betterment and upliftment of biotechnology alone. In case they need specialized minor research area and collaborative work using control techniques let them bond with a university institution specialized in control technology. This will increase institutional interaction and will provide collaborative research.

In European countries, there are institutions known only for one specialized knowledge area. For example, institute specialized in automotives, motor, sociology etc. That area is their main focus and the

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whole setup revolves around that specialization.

Knowledge is an ocean and mechanical engineering is a molecule of water in that. To understand the entire creation, the molecule of water in ocean will not suffice. So let us create institutions known for their specializations. The framework has to be defined by state. No one will be permitted to start a program not permitted, and any one will be allowed to flourish in only one area of specialization out of the large number of bubbles of knowledge areas.

Conventional Knowledge Resource

What distinguishes India from other countries is its spirituality. Spirituality is inbuilt in Indian sub continent. Its in the blood, its in the veins. No one can take away the spirituality of an Indian. It was once told to a Spanish scientist that before plucking the flower from a plant, an average Indian will seek forgiveness from the plant that he is plucking the flower for his materialistic gain and that the plant may kindly forgive the farmer. The scientist said that they are not so religious. The farmer countered that, it is not about religion or faith, it's a matter of practice and sustainability. If you will know the harm you are doing to the nature by plucking its resources, you will better preserve them. Now this does not require any higher level scientific knowledge. It is not taught in any class or any degree program. You learn it on your own when you grow up. Is this higher education? Yes, it may be. So it is our firm duty to make the coming generations understand the role and importance of nature and necessity of its preservation.

Accreditation, Approval and License

The modern education system needs license, approval and then accreditation to run the business of educating the citizens. Did we do this in old times, in *gurukul* system? There was no license, no approval required from king and accreditation was not required from any central agency. Rishi Kanav was freely running his ashram and learners from all over the world used to come to be his disciples. It is what you do and what you teach becomes your brand ambassador for knowledge. It is said that IIT Delhi is famous for its

electrical engineering department. What does that mean? It means that the teachers and students of that department had done high quality of *tapasya*, produced world class research articles and have contributed immensely to technical knowledge that it becomes the best department of IIT. That is what is exactly desired to transform India. We create scientists like in olden days we had *rishis* and *mahatmas*. They will be institutions in themselves. These mahatmas will produce technical professional and skilled citizens who will transform the nation. The question again comes, what is that we want to transform? Is it Indian economy or electricity distribution. If we want to transform any particular area, create specialists in that area who will work for decades and lead to transformation.

Strategies

So what kind of strategies do we deploy? Is it scientific or spiritual approach that will lead to transformation? Or should we go in for a fusion? May be we require an overall transformation? Spiritual, mental and technical transformation. Change the peoples thinking and you will be able to change the country. Lord Macaulay changed the way Indians used to think by introducing English in Indian curriculum and promoting people knowing English language. Apply reverse engineering. If you want to transform the country through higher education with traditional values, give jobs and responsibilities to those who learn and take up spirituality for transforming India.

If we think MOOCS and NBA accreditation will bring transformation in Indian higher education system, it will, but it will not necessarily transform India. It will make India another country which follows a set of western values of education system. For transforming India, we will have to go back to our own roots, to which, even world is looking forward. Spirituality. We have to transform India through Spirituality and that will be effective, if we open more and more schools of higher education with spirituality

as its basic theme. Let there be primary and secondary schools which give the basics of *ved*, *upnishad*, *puran gita*, *ramayan yog*, and *spirituality*. And then the higher education institutions will supplement that knowledge through research in modern and contemporary terms. The old age teachings were *saarv bhaum* (true in all ages). These values have to be rewritten in modern formats, using digital techniques. Use of modern day tools to strengthen our moral values of spirituality is the call of the day.

Conclusion

The strategists sitting in air conditioned rooms will think western style Indian transformation. Someone sitting under a banyan tree in a remote village will be thinking local style of transforming India. Think locally act globally retain your own identity to transform the nation. Transform our schools in to spiritual centers. It's a difficult task but then the transformation of nation is at stake.

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