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**Empowering Education to Achieve the Ever-changing Employment Expectations**

*Abstract*
This paper throws light on the current trend of utility based education. It advocates a radical change in the present education system. It also delineates the picture of the ancient as well as present teaching methodologies.

From the time of the ancient Guru-Shishya system to today's ICT equipped epoch of education, there has been a huge metamorphosis of teaching techniques in India. The Report of Education Commission 'Education and National Development' (1964-1966) states that "the destiny of India is now being shaped in her classroom." So....... are we really shaping the destiny of our nation? India- once the land of world's best universities like Nalanda and Takshashila, now, as per the World University Rankings 2011-12, does not even stand among the world's top 100 universities. The question here arises is what went wrong?

Education is the institution without which any society will collapse. Like any other institution, this institution also has a non-demising nature which results in its potential to meet the fluctuating human needs at any given time. The history of education is replete with instances of paradigm shifting which happened in response to the new calls and needs. Here is a table that summarizes these paradigms:

| Paradigm Shift | |
| --- | --- |
| **Human Knowledge** | **Focus** |
| Limited in Quantity | Teacher (One who knew it all) |
| Diversifies Disciplines | Text |
| Highly Diversified and Highly Specialized | Learner |

(Source: "E-*Learning: A New Paradigm in Education" by Alireza Jalali Farhani*)

As the table depicts, earlier human knowledge was concise so in the conventional Guru-Shishya system Guru or Master had the required amount of knowledge and wisdom to impart. Their words were authoritative. Also, a low thirst of knowledge added into that, consequently placing teacher as the focal point of education system. Eventually, around the 20th century, the focus point shifted to the text as the sole source of knowledge. However, this mushrooming of the 'text-based' approach in education came to an end with the individual needs and demands becoming prominently unique, holding an unprecedented challenge to education. This was the time when the learner entered the centre of the education circle.

Even though the time demanded a learner-oriented approach, our conventional education failed to create a niche for it. Hence, this learner- oriented approach is still striving hard to carve a niche of its own in this age old education system. J. Krishnamurti, one of the greatest reformers in the field of education in India, believed "Education in the true sense is helping the individual to be mature and free, to flower greatly in love and goodness." On the other hand we still have a conventional teaching methodology permeating in schools, colleges and universities where the learners till do not own even the freedom of studying the subjects of their choice.

Starting from the curriculum to the teaching techniques employed in our classrooms, there are many loopholes in our education system. For example, when a kid starts going to school he/ she, instead of being nurtured, get tortured. First thing that confines them within the boundaries is the fact that all the subjects they are supposed to study are pre-decided by the so-called experts of that field. They just have to bear the burden of those compulsory subjects forced on them. What about their individual choices? What about the market needs? Will that kid be as efficient worker as he should be in the world outside where ultimately he has to compete?

As per the report prepared by employability assessment company Aspiring Minds, only 17.45 per cent of the engineers roped in by the IT sector are employable nationally. So what about the rest of the engineers? The problem lies at the grass root level that is the whole concept of knowledge. What is knowledge? Is it just about 'knowing'? No, the emphasis should be more on implementing than knowing. Perhaps this is the only reason why India lags behind when it comes to the skilled workers. India has an enormous man force taking into account its large population. But the reason behind such a high level of unemployment is the lack of skills in Indian workers. And skills can only be acquired through practice. So preparing our students for the challenges they have to face in the world outside, we must first improve on our teaching approach.

It's high time that we adopt a practical approach in teaching-learning. The traditional preaching and teaching of text-based theoretical knowledge is leading our students nowhere. We must prepare them for a more rational and competitive world out there. For example, rather than giving away the explicit statements about grammar rules in a language in the class, we should actually get our students communicate with one another and let them infer the rules on their own. Such innovative techniques not only make teaching-learning more interesting and effective but also shape our students for becoming independent learners.

Thus, when the role of a teacher is transformed into a facilitator, only then can a learner breathe freely and actually "flower greatly" as J. Krishnamurti put it.

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