

Indian Education System

Education is today the most important gift we can give to our children. The most important factor which gauges any country's future success is its talent pool of young and talented people. The fact that Indian students have ranked a lowly 72nd in the Global Education Survey conducted by PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) doesn't show much of promise in our students. It is indeed a matter of shame that we ranked 2nd last out of the 73 countries that participated. So it is, beyond doubt, that our present system of education is not up to the world standards and we need to make serious efforts to improve this situation in the future. So where to start?

India has always had a wonderful tradition education and learning from the beginning of time. So, it is with immense pride that we look back at our "own" education system which once spread the light of knowledge in the world when other civilizations didn't even exist on the map. Let us have a look and see what we can derive from our rich heritage and how we can imbibe the learning's into the present system of education.

In ancient India immense focus was provided on education, such that a child spent a part of his life with his teacher in an ashram where he learned about himself and the world around him. This "Gurukul System" of education was highly effective. According to the ancient Indian theory of education, the training of the mind and the process of thinking are essential for the acquisition of knowledge. Ancient Education System in India had three simple processes - Shravana, Manana and Niddhyaasana.

- **Shravana:** It means to listen to the words of wisdom which the teacher spoke
- **Manana:** It implies that the student needs to interpret the meaning of the lessons imparted by the teacher so that they may be understood fully, reflecting upon what has been heard (shravana). This process was to remove any doubts about the knowledge that was received via shravana
- **Niddhyaasana:** It means complete comprehension of the knowledge that is taught, so that the student may live the knowledge and not merely explain it by word. It was believed that knowledge must result in realization and not merely a collection of facts

It is no doubt that our ancient education system was a great success, but unfortunately today we are in a very poor condition. There is no link between the teacher and a student anymore. The teacher student interaction has been limited to classrooms and the critical bond of growth has been broken. The respect for the "guru" has been lost. Secondly, our students have actually forgotten to think critically (manana). Nobody bothers to explain to the student the true meaning of what he is being taught and the rote learning is on its way up the hill, but this situation is leading us to a serious problem of lack of innovative and creative minds. The growth of mind is impossible without the process of critical thinking (manana). Thirdly, the present education system just focuses on factual learning rather than practical learning. There is no working system wherein a student can practice what he is being taught or put his own ideas to work. The true knowledge always comes with experience and it needs to be understood seriously in tackling this problem.

So, we need to understand that our education system needs a revamp and we have to be the leaders of this change. We have to imbibe the seed of creative and analytical thinking into our children, so that they can be successful in their future endeavours. Let us build a beautiful tomorrow by starting today.