

Role of Education in Nation Building

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Abstract: Any nation is defined by shared culture, a common civilization heritage, a unity of purpose and a mutual understanding and respect for diversity which goes much beyond tolerance. Modern India is the oldest continuing civilization which links with at least four thousand years of a past which was built upon by many outside cultures like the Greek, Turk, Arabic, Moguls and English. The existing direction to nation-building that tends to spotlight on the structural and administrative rudiments of state reconstruction, chiefly in post-conflict situations, should be re-evaluated in favor of a more proletarian, sociologically motivated and institutionally based approach. These in due course help to create a sense of shared wakefulness or common understanding among members of a society such that the cohesion and unity of common experiences creates a sense of organic solidarity and unity of purpose.

Key words: education, administration, Mahatma Gandhi, social, political

Date of Submission: 13-07-2018

Date of acceptance: 28-07-2018

It is education which is synthesizing factor and builds both common ethos and institutions which are of paramount importance for national growth and security, whether political, economic, social or cultural, as Mahatma Gandhi said "Education without character is evil." Indian culture always emphasizes all round educational development of moral, spiritual, physical, humanistic and a psychological trait in its perennial search for truth and attempts to evolve a complete man and society. Today economic necessities make technical and professional education very important to fully utilize the natural resources of the country. This gives boost to employment, GDP, economic growth and development. But we must not become soulless machines or ciphers. Just units in a technical system which is controlled by no one and affects everyone. That would be to promote growth instead of equity, parochialism instead of harmony, disruption instead of unity. To fulfill its function of nation building education must serve economic, democratic as well as spiritual realities for as Sri Aurobindo rightly pointed out the ultimate aim of education as well as nations is to create the new man, the supra mental earth, where truth reigns and there is no contradiction between individual freedom and growth, social and national integration, harmony and welfare. Education for nation building should be a synthesis of universal humanism, scientific curiosity and a knowledge of the vast, the supreme, the spiritual, the subtle, through whom everything evolves, gets sustenance and meaning. Satyamev Jayate is the motto of our constitution and to promote it, education must be means to harness individual potential in its search for social, economic, psychological and spiritual emancipation for a fully liberated and happy individuals means a liberated and happy nation and society. An education is the best means to promote this.

Each social order has certain needs that must be met for social life to endure and expand. Goods and services must be created and dispersed, and in order for people to survive, there must be some administration of justice, a political system must subsist, and some family structure must control so as to provide a means to reproduce the population and maintain social life on a daily basis. In the structural-functional model, individuals carry out each of these tasks in various institutions and roles that are consistent with the structures and norms of society. Because the shared values and norms, the institutions of the family, and the generally agreed-upon means for accomplishing ends are functional for the operation of society as a system, societies and political structures decay or atrophy when existing values and procedural norms of social action and engagement fall apart or are severely anxious.

If we see the history of the world post 1945, i.e. in the post colonial world we see that only those nations survived as an entity and still embrace democracy which had educated elite who could serve as the steel framework of bureaucracy. Modern democratic India owes its survival and progress a lot to the institutions which allowed effective integration of a society divided on religious, linguistic, parochial, and regional and caste lines through an education stressing on universal humanistic values enshrined in our constitution.

Administration is the lynchpin on which any effective and efficient state rests and it is education, not only an elitist one but a universal one, which allows administration to deliver whether in the framework of an enlightened civil services working for democratic emancipation or through educated citizens conscious of their duties and rights.

In India with its constitutional division of power into the executive legislative and judiciary it is bureaucracy and administration which provides the connecting link and apparatus for allowing the democratic aspirations of 125 billion people to be fulfilled. For administration to be effective in society it must be under a coherent set to rules and hierarchy which is not parochial or feudal but based strictly on meritocracy. It is essential in administration for roles and responsibilities to be properly fulfilled and duties and power to be fairly exercised and for this educational competence is the key to skill and development. A society based on meritocracy will allow administration to be manned by relatively the best and the lead to citizen oriented governance by creating institutions which allows administration to percolate both at the macro level as well as the micro level existing in all strata of society. This can only be done when administration becomes an enlightened tool for building institutions which can manage the turmoil and vicissitudes which democratic governance entails.

Today is as much a political world as it is an economic world. We need technocrats as well as administrators for the new boundaries of the world are driven by information technologies. From the act of buying a ticket for railways, to building multipurpose dams, all depends on computers, internet and the information technology. Without education that is forward looking is not possible to compete in the global economy for we need administrators and managers of entries whose boundaries extend even beyond territorial and national space. It on this kind of technocratic administration which does not forget the individual and society for which it is meant which will lead to conscious participation to the masses in the modern democracy and its concomitant the global economy.

For we must never forget the greatest danger of the global the age is of administration neither being used for nation building or to sustain universal values but which becomes a self sustained system which runs for its own impersonal interests, just to perpetuate itself, without any place for values like individualism, justice, equity and compassion. All modern tyrannies and dictatorships whether political or theoretical are based on perpetuating of an elite, parochial ideology which deals in exclusiveness and hatred and savagery to the outsider. This closed administration is the ideal of all kind of political tyrannies crony capitalism and the vast divide between the haves and have not's in the world. To rectify and prevent this, universal solidarity will be the best panacea for the cure of all the ills of the modern worlds. It must be seen that the institutional relations built through administration serve not only the greatest good of the highest number but do not even exclude the last man in the line. It must build inclusive flexible institution which allows people of all creeds, castes, sexes, and economic occupations, religions to participate and contribute to the ultimate purpose of nation building.

A stable and prosperous nation needs administration to perpetuate institutional relations which are based on the preamble of our constitution and serve liberty, equality, fraternity, secularism and socialism. Any administration which builds institutions which deviate from this ideal will be retrogressive, anti-democratic and an impediment to the national growth of people. We need schools in villages, technical and computer education, and universal higher institution of education which serve as temple of learning. As Mahatma Gandhi said "Education without character is evil" so we need education which lets us imbue the vast spiritual legacy of the past and combines it with the scientific curiosity and technical proficiency which is strength of the modern age. Any institution built on the marriage of these two factions will suit the Indian genius and succeed.

In the development of governmental infrastructure, civil society, dispute resolution mechanisms as well as economic assistance require that administration develops these institutions intentionally. One of the reasons of failed states is that people have not been integrated in common bonds and symbols exemplified by inclusive institutions. India is a unique exception in the post colonial world in that its enlightened leadership allows dissent, divergences and differences not to go beyond the point where they could not be solved by institutional mechanisms. A common education system builds an ethos for societies to absorb, common purpose, rationale and rasiond'être.

The four lone elements of nation identified by a UN study are equipping nations with the institutional foundation necessary to increase their capacity to effectively assert self governing powers on behalf at their own economic social and cultural objectives. This involves genuine self rule i.e. their making decisions about resource allocations, project building and development strategy. It also includes creating effective governing institutions non-politicized dispute resolutions mechanisms and getting a rid of comprehensive cultural identity giving the nation legitimacy in the eyes of their citizens, and the need for a long-term planning. All these factors depend upon how effectively administration can create enlightened institutions which see education percolating in society for effective and permanent nation building.

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IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) is UGC approved Journal with Sl. No. 5070, Journal no. 49323.

Dr. SuchitraVashisth "Role of Education in Nation Building." IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS). vol. 23 no. 07, 2018, pp. 52-54.