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## **Human Being and Spiritual Education**

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### **ABSTRACT:**

*The article is written to describe briefly the Human –being and Spiritual education and its beneficial effect to the betterment of the society as a whole. Human being is the supreme creature of God on this earth. Each and every human being is born with inherent quality; all spiritual or material knowledge is in his mind. Human being and other being differ on account of soul. In this paper an attempt has been made to deal a conceptual framework regarding growth and development of human-being with respect to spiritual education. Human well-being is the end of the education. Well-being refers to physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual health of the human-being. The paper concludes that our present educational system should equip with spiritual education. This article explores existing problems in Educational Departments and suggestions are provided for improvement.*

**Keywords:** *Human-being, Spiritual, Education.*

Human being is the best creation of God. In Zoology, man is considered as the supreme creature in the hierarchy of animal kingdom. In sociology, man is social animal because of his social relationship is studied in it. Man is considered as a Bio-Psycho-Social organism in Psychology and his physical, mental and social aspects is studied. In physical aspect, his physical growth and development is studied. In mental aspect, his mental development, intelligence, and capacities and capabilities are studied. In social aspect, his social-ability, adjustment capacity, social behavior and personality are studied. In this connection, Singh (2014) writes, “Cosmic light is the basis of all beauty and diversity in the universe, as well as of all biodiversity and life on earth. Each form of life is unique, thanks to light. Human beings, the most evolved form of life, are most capable owing to a especially evolved mind that controls the human phenomenon of being in unison with cosmic powers, of being an ally of the cosmos in its designs of unfolding itself, of creative new highs of creativity. All of us

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are alike in terms of our anatomy, physiology and in terms of the feelings we cultivate”. According to Religious and Spiritual philosophies, man is of a combination of body, mind and spirit and is considered the masterpiece creation of God because he is rational and conscience. Kumari (2013) observes, “Man is essentially a spirit. Spirit in man is the central reality. It is not the physical body or vital organism, the mind or the will, but something which underlies them all and sustains them. It is basic and background of our being, the universally that cannot be reduced to this or that formula....Spirit is not a substance. It is something in itself and by itself, and cannot be compared to any substance, subjective or objective. It furnishes unity in diversity, similarly in difference and harmony in discord in man.” Shri Shri Anandmurti (2014) significantly quotes, “Spirituality is not a utopian ideal but practical philosophy which can be practiced and realized in day –to- day life. It is about evolution and elevation, and not superstition in action or pessimism. All fissiparous tendencies and group or clan philosophies which tend to create shackles of narrow-mindedness are in no way connected with spirituality and these should be discouraged. That which leads to broadness of vision alone should be accepted. Spiritual philosophy does not recognize distinctions and differentiations unnaturally made between one individual and another; it stands for universal fraternity. All species have natural affinity. The approach should be psychological and rational, and appeal to the deepest psychic sentiments of all human beings.” Further he asserts, “Some materialist thinkers say that spirituality is a utopian philosophy, bereft of practicalities pertaining to dealing with actual problems of life. Other thinkers conceive it as a device to fool gullible people. But logical analysis shows that spirituality is the summum bonum of life in all its aspects. Those who think dharma to be an individual’s concerns, conceive it in a very narrow sense. Dharma leads to cosmic unity, inculcating in the individual mind cosmic idealism. Religion, in the sense of dharma, is a unifying force in humanity. Spirituality provides the individual and the whole of humanity with that subtle and tremendous power with which no other power can be comparable. With spirituality as the base, a rational philosophy should be evolved to deal with the physical, psychological and socio-philosophical problems of the day. The complete rational theory dealing with all three phases- spiritual, mental and physical- of human development shall be a philosophy common to humanity in general.”

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Merchant (2014) significantly observes, “The Baha’i faith says that the atman, ruh, or soul has divine origin. The individual has his beginning when the soul associates itself with the embryo at the time of conception. The soul and body, together, constitute the human being. The soul does not enter or leave the body and does not occupy physical space. ” and he further asserts that “The soul’s relationship with the physical body is akin to the reflection of light upon a mirror. The light which appears in the mirror is not inside it; it comes from an external source. The soul has no gender, race, ethnicity or class. Evolution in the life of the individual starts with the formation of embryo and it passes through various stages; even continues after death in another form.”

According to THE HINDU (2009), a Newspaper published from Delhi, states “The human body is itself used as a teaching point, and it is shown that there are five sheaths of koshas in which the Self is manifested as the Jivatma. They are food (Anna), life (Prana), mind (Manas), intelligence (Vijnana), and bliss (Ananda). The individual Self is the microcosm representing the different aspects of the universe, the macrocosm. Just as one has to cross many thresholds to perceive the deity in the sanctum sanctorum, the individual has to penetrate through the sheaths in the body to realize the Self within. The pupil gradually understands that each of these is a vital aspect of the universe.”

Collins Cobuild English Dictionary (1995) defines spirit as “1. Your spirit is the part of you that is not physical and that motivates you. It is concerned with your character, behavior and feelings. 2. A person’s spirit is the non physical part of them that is believed to remain alive after their death. His spirit has left him and all that remains is the shell of his body. 3. A spirit is a ghost or supernatural being. 4. Spirit is the courage and determination that helps people to survive in difficult times and to keep their way of life and their beliefs. 5. Spirit is the liveliness and energy that supreme shows in what they do the played with spirit.”

Pocket Oxford English Dictionary defines spirit as “1.The part of a person that consists of their character and feelings rather than their body, often believed to survive after their body is dead, 2. a supernatural being, 3. Typical character, quality or mood: the spirit of the times, 4. a person’s mood, 5. courage, energy and determination, and 6. the real meaning of something as opposed to its strict interpretation.” The rule had been broken in spirit if not a letter and

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spiritual is defined as “1. Relating to the human spirit as opposed to physical things and 2. Relating to religion or religious belief and spiritualism is defined as the belief that it is possible to communicate with the spirits of the dead.”

“The dynamic aspect of the soul is the psychic being”, says Bijlani (2014), “Soul is like the president of India. The president is at the highest level, but for the sake of dignity of office keeps a distance from routine affairs. For dealing with routine affairs, he appoints a prime minister. The ‘Prime Minister’ that the soul appoints is the ‘Ego’. The ego has three ‘ministers’- the Body, Emotions and Intellect-to take care of different portfolios. But, like the president, sometimes the Soul also feels like putting in a word. The president has a secretariat to take care of that. The secretariat of the Soul is the Psychic Being.”

Chambers Twenty First Century Dictionary (1996) defines it as “1.The animating or vitalizing essence or force that motivates, invigorates or energizes someone or something. 2. This force as an independent part of a person, widely believed to survive the body after death and sometimes said to be visible as a ghost. 3. A supernatural being without a body. 4. A temperament frame of mind etc. usually of a specified kind.” and ‘spiritual’ is defined as “1.belonging, referring or relating to the spirit or soul rather than to the body or to physical things.2. Belonging, referring or relating to religion, sacred, holy or divine.”

Vivekananda was initially idealist, latter he became realist, and his educational philosophy was based on Vedanta philosophy. According to his vedantic point of view, the essence of man is the spirituality. We need an education that quickens, that vivifies; that kindles the urge of spirituality, inherent in every mind. He considers education as ‘self-education’ and the aim of education is spiritual.

Sri Aurobindo defines education as “helping the growing soul to draw out that is in itself.”

“By education” says Gandhiji, “I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and – body, mind and spirit.”

Radhakrishnan Commission (1948-49) defines “Education, according to Indian tradition, is not merely a means to earning a living; nor it is only a nursery of thought or a school for

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citizenship. It is initiation into the life of spirit, a training of human souls in the pursuit of truth and the practice of virtue. It is a second birth ‘Dvitiyam Janam’.

Western Educational Thinkers such as Plato defines “Education develops in the body and in the soul of the pupils all the beauty and all the perfection of which he is capable”.

Aristotle says, ‘Education is the creation of a sound mind in a sound body. Education develops man’s faculty, especially his mind so that he may be able to enjoy the contemplation of supreme truth, goodness and beauty’.

Raymont defines, “Education is a process of development from infancy to maturity, the process by which he adopts himself gradually in various ways of his physical, social and spiritual environment”.

Ross writes, “The aim of education is the development of valuable personality and spirituality”.

Butler defines, “Education is gradual adjustment of individual to the spiritual passions of the race”.

Redden says, “Education is the deliberate and systematic influence, exerted by the mature person upon the immature through instruction, discipline and harmonious development of physical, intellectual, aesthetic, social and spiritual powers of the human being, according to individual and social needs and directed towards the union of the educand with his Creator as the final end”.

All the definitions are directly or indirectly related to spiritual education. Broadly speaking these definitions would guide human being for his / her natural, harmonious and progressive development. Keeping the view of human well being, the author defines it as, “Spiritual education is education which is devoted to the transformation of ideas, appraisal and studies on contemporary educational thought and practice and solving everyday problems of human being.”

Tiwarly (2013) observes that education has four pillars-knowledge, wisdom, spiritual

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perception, and eloquent speech. It has been said that knowledge is power. Knowledge is the source by which all worldly powers could be grabbed. It is the source of all material resources. This is why knowledge in any field makes a man powerful in that field. The next pillar is wisdom-which is not the synonym of intelligence, rather intelligence with sensitivity and sensibility. It is a sense of right or wrong, emotional stability, flexibility and maturity of mind. It is closely related to spiritual perception which builds up divinity in human being. Here, the man of spirituality believes in the principle of ‘Live and let live’. It believes in peaceful coexistence for better and brighter tomorrow and the last is eloquent speech. Those who are well versed in particular branch of knowledge with wisdom and spiritual perception do have eloquent speech.

Waldorf Education shall begin by giving an outline of this in “The human being as seen by the spiritual science of Anthroposophy” that Steiner (1924) formulated “Anthroposophy is a path of knowledge which intends to lead what is spiritual in the human being to what spiritual in the universe. which contains three core statements- There is a spiritual element in every human being, the visible world around us is founded on something invisible which it is up to us to discover and research and Anthroposophy is not a faith, it is an encouragement to tread a path of knowledge which is same time a path of self-development, a path which energizes the individual’s own spiritual power.”

Each and every human being who is supreme creature of god on this earth grows biologically, psychologically, socially, culturally, emotionally as well as spiritually for well-being. Human well-being is the end of the education. Well-being refers to physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual health of the human being. Thus, the education is means for this end. Our educational system equipped with this spiritual education. In the view of Ranald Macaulay, “Man’s experience, though was “Spiritual” from the very beginning, as soon as man was made, man was made within a religious framework. Man was physical; he had a body with a bone structure, a blood system, nerves, muscle tissue and all the rest. But man was more than physical. Man was what we today call a person. Man was able to relate to everything, himself and God included, as a person. He could think, love, create, discern right from wrong, communicate in language, enjoy beauty and so on.”

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Verma (2011) observes, “To be ‘spiritual’ is to think, act and interact from an awareness of self as spirit not form, soul not body. Most of us are taught to believe we are physical forms and so we identify with our body or the labels we give to our bodies such as nationality, race, gender, profession etc. This wrong sense of self is what creates all fear, anger, and sadness in life. From a spiritual point of view these emotions are always the result of ego (misidentification) which then blocks access to your true spiritual nature which is peaceful, loving and joyful.....For example if you know your self as a spiritual being you will also know that you do not own or possess anything. When something in your life is damaged or lost, it does not affect you in any way- you are able to use your spiritual power to accept and move on. If someone praises the clothes you wear, or insults you in any way or comments negatively about your looks, you are not affected because you know that your real beauty lies within your character, within your nature, which no one can ever take away. In that moment you draw on the inner power of that knowledge and use it to remain stable in the face of others negativity. In effect you are drawing on your spiritual strength which is only released when you know, who and what you are, and then using that strength in right way, in the right place at the right time.....Spirituality is the knowledge of yourself as spirit/ soul and the understanding of your highest spiritual qualities and attributes, which are love, peace, bliss.....Being spiritual means the ego has dissolved, virtue has been restored to character and spiritual values connect your inner and outer worlds ( thought and action). It is the ability to see every other human being as soul/ spirit and thereby transcend all the false identities of race, color, gender, nationality, profession and religion. It is in this awareness that we are then able to recognize and connect with the Supreme Power.”

It was in India that the spiritual education was developed from Vedic age to Modern one. Educational thinkers, saints, sages, philosophers, social reformers and spiritual leaders like Guru Bashisth, Guru Valmiki, Guru Dornacharya, Krishna, Mahavira, Buddha, Kapila, Kanada, Gautam, Patanjali, Jamimini, Yajnavalkya, Panini, Sankaracharya, Ramaanuja, Badarayana, Guru Nanak, Dhyaneswara, Kalidas, Tulsi Das, Kabir Das, Rabi Das, Kautilya, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Ravindranath Tagore, Ram Krishna Paramhansh, Vivekananda, Dr. Annie Besant, Pandit Madan Mohan Malvia, Giju Bhai, Mahatma Gandhi, Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar

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Tilak, Dhodo Keshav Karve, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Acharya Narendra Dev, Sri-Aurovindo Ghosh, Dr Radhakrishnan and Dr. Zakir Hussain have encouraged the spiritual education in our country. And they are considered as the greatest exponent of spiritual science. Eastern Branch of Philosophy developed the spiritual science. The chief sources of spiritual science in India are the four Vedas, six Vedangas, four Upvedas, four Brahamanas, one hundred and eight Upanishad Six system of Philosophy, The Bhagwad Gita, and three Smiritis.

Moreover, there is a problem of lack of spiritual education in India today and it is because of this problem that our entire educational system is going aimlessly. That is why it may be said that educationists, teacher educators, teachers, educational administrators, educational supervisors, curriculum constructors and educational planners in our country should wake up to the task of the curriculum construction, curriculum development and curriculum transaction of spiritual education and its aims and objective, method of teaching and techniques by understanding a critical examination of the present set up of spiritual education for human well being, and furthermore, in order to sustain and to strengthen its spiritual growth and development, India needs a fast development in the area of research on spiritual education. This can be done by strengthening the pillars of professional education particularly the teacher education. Otherwise, the ignorance of spiritual education will result in exploitation, corruption, aggression, destruction, disaster, selfishness and hatred. In short, it may say that spiritual education encourages positive personality and monitors negative personality.

Spiritual education must become an integral part of teacher education as well as school education and ultimately study of spiritual science will become a part of all courses in Humanities and Social Sciences at University level also. The quality of spiritual science must also be raised considerably so as to promote a deep understanding of its theory and principle to solve the everyday problems of life for attaining ultimate aim of education.

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