

# Indian Psychology and Education

## Abstract

The author raises three important questions in respect of Indian psychology: its importance as a part of the total scheme of knowledge and its elements that can be fruitfully incorporated in our school curriculum. Indicated at some length are also the lessons from Indian psychology and their implications for the immediate curriculum in this regard.

**Keywords:** Indian, Psychology and Education

## Introduction

If there is one science which has been developing in India uninterruptedly from the Vedic times to the present day, and if this development has been both comprehensive and subtle in heights and profundities and if because of its ever-progressiveness, it is far more advanced than the advances made in that field in any part of the world, then that science is the science of psychology. Already in the Veda we find the record of the discovery of the loftiest states of consciousness and also of the surface levels and deeper levels of human consciousness along with unmistakable awareness of what we call today Depth Psychology or the Psychology of the Subconscious and Unconscious.

Subtle distinction of different constituents of consciousness are clearly discernible in the Veda and we have distinctions between *citta*, *medha*, *manas*, *mati* and *dhi* as also the distinctions of higher faculties of knowledge, - *mahi*, *Ila*, *Saraswati*, *Sarama* and *Dakshina* (faculties of vastness, revelation, inspiration, intuition, and discrimination). And what is most important is that there is in this system cogent and detailed exposition of the processes by which one can rise from ordinary states of consciousness to the highest levels of consciousness such as those of *rita-chit*, truth consciousness, supported and guarded by the powers of wideness, friendliness, austere will and joy that springs from universality (powers of *Varuna*, *Mitra*, *Aryaman* and *Bhaga*). And in this process of ascent, we have detailed description of the role played by the powers of illumined will, illumined intelligence, and the powers of subtleties of the physical, vital and mental consciousness. Veritably, the Veda is the earliest existing book of a comprehensive and profound system of psychology of the world. And, fortunately, Indian history of psychology shows how the truths of psychology were continuously developed and from the Veda to Sri Aurobindo, we have a record both of confirmation and constant development of the psychological knowledge of human aspiration and means of fulfillment of that aspiration. It is noteworthy that Integral Psychology of Sri Aurobindo is today being studied in different parts of the world with increasing receptivity, and one or two psychological systems of the West today have clearly acknowledged the debt they owe to Sri Aurobindo.

**Aim of the Study.....Write here**

## Review of Literature

Indian education besides being a basic human need is vital for raising the standard of life, providing gainful employment, removal of regional backwardness, thereby ensuring overall development and wellbeing of a country. It is therefore the need of the hour to review the literature carried out by different academicians, educational thinkers, researchers, policymakers and educational reformers in the field of education in India and particular in Maharashtra state. I have examined the relevant published literature related to my study of research with a view to find out further scope of my objective of the research. The crux of the various studies, views and comments on the aforeside topics is as follows. Acharya, Prasanta Kumar and Behera, Manoranjan. (2014), pointed out that that by the end of November 2013, the progress on civil works had been very slow especially due to late release of funds, inadequate monitoring and lack of district



**Dilip Kumar Jha**

Professor,  
Deptt. of Education,  
Pragma College of Education,  
Bhadurgarh, Haryana

level convergence of SSA with other allied development schemes. But remarkable progress was made by Orissa Primary Education Programme Authority (OPEPA) in organizing teachers training programmes both at state and district level. Nearly 70% EGS (Education Guarantee Scheme) centres had been made operational by OPEPA which was a remarkable achievement. But progress in the opening of Alternate and Innovative Education Centres (AIE) was very unsatisfactory. Adhikari, Tejaswini. (2011) identified the gaps in the existing services and needs of students and teachers in the context of quality education. The survey included five schools, under Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC). The study revealed that the infrastructure of schools was in a very poor state. The number of classrooms, teachers, tables and chairs were inadequate. For 420 students there were only 3 classrooms and only two teachers looked after the entire school. Due to their good accessible location and low cost education, most of the schools had a large number of children in their classrooms. There is a need to strengthen teachers on aspects of motivation, pro-children attitudes and creative teaching learning process. Appointment of suitable staff is also recommended in order to lessen the burden on teachers. There is need to provide a good network of balwadis, restructure the human resource component of schools, and enhance community participation. There is also a need to provide training to functionaries. Aggarwal, and Chugh, Sunita. (2013) in "Learning achievement of slum children in Delhi. New Delhi:" highlighted that basic education is a fundamental right and recently 86th Constitutional Amendment was enacted so that all children can receive good quality basic education.

### Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study was to identify the social, economic and organizational factors that are associated with education and achievement level of the learner in slums. The performance of the slum children was much below the expected levels in both the subjects and in both the grades.

### Some Important Questions

It is against this background that it is appropriate that we raise today three important questions: firstly, what is Indian psychology or rather what is the universal psychological knowledge that has developed in India and what are its contents? Secondly, what is the importance of the study of this psychology as a part of the total scheme of knowledge in India into which we need to initiate our students in the country? And thirdly, what are those elements of this psychological knowledge that we can fruitfully incorporate in our school curriculum?

Very often, courses in psychology devote a good deal of time to the relationship between the physiology and psychology and to the systems of structuralism and functionalism. A large space is devoted to behaviouristic psychology, the premises of which are confined to the processes of stimuli and

responses. In recent times, Gestalt psychology with its emphasis upon unifying consciousness and operation of intuition has been proposed. But since the time when Freud and subsequently Jung made an impact on the psychological field, much attention is being paid to the subconscious and the unconscious - individual and collective, and the study of *Eros* and *Thanatos* have gained importance and are being shown as fundamental drives that shape human personality. Lately personalistic psychology has emerged and wider horizons are being explored.

But in these courses of psychological studies the truths of psychology discovered by the long Indian tradition hardly figure and we do not have as yet adequate teaching-learning material that incorporates insights and lessons of Indian psychology.

This situation must change.

### Lessons from Indian Psychology

One of the most important lessons of Indian psychology is that what goes in the name of psychoanalysis or psychiatry is a mere *abc* of psychology, and more importantly, that it is dangerous to deal with the inconscient and the subconscious without attaining a good deal of mastery and harmony in the waking consciousness and in the super-consciousness. It is clear in the light of Indian psychology that the roots of human personality are not in the subconscious or inconscient but in what may be called the subliminal, psychic and spiritual levels of consciousness. Hence, to teach students to be confined to the subconscious and the inconscient is to give them a wrong clue and to limit the possibilities of development to a very narrow and distorted process.

The most interesting part of Indian psychology is related to the analysis of personality and the concept of perfection of personality. To state it briefly, Indian psychology presents us three concepts which are relevant to the development of personality, - the concept of *sattwa*, *rajas* and *tamas* in the context of the construction of personality which can be largely affected through the development of *prakriti*, the power of executive energy as ordinarily explained in the psychology of the Samkhya. The second is the concept of five levels of personality, the personality fixed in the physicality of the human composition, *annamaya*, personality fixed in the vital sheath of human composition, *pranamaya*, the personality fixed in the mental energy of rationality, ethicality and aesthesis, *manomaya*, the personality that blossoms in the fullness of comprehensive supramental consciousness, *vijnanamaya*, and the personality that enters into the supreme regions of consciousness, the key of which is in the spontaneous ocean of delight, *anandamaya*.

These five levels of personality have each behind them the status of consciousness that originates them and sustains them, the status of what has been called the status of *purusha*, known not only in the Samkhya but in the more ancient system of *Taittiriya Upanishad* and even in the still more ancient system of Rigveda.

The third analysis of personality is at a

## Innovation The Research Concept

much deeper and profounder level. and- it is related to the concept of what Sri Aurobindo has called *chaitya purusha*. This *chaitya purusha* is described in the *Kathopanishad* as the being that is no bigger than a thumb (*angushthamatram*) or what is described symbolically as *madhvadah*, the eater of honey. It is not the static *purusha* of the Samkhya, but a portion of the *Kshara purusha*, the nature of which is *trigunatita*, that which transcends the limitation of *apara prakriti* of *tamas*, *rajas* and *sattwa*, but which partakes of the *Para Prakriti*. The real maker of personality is this *chaitya purusha*. When it interacts with the *prakriti*, the *prakriti* of *sattwa*, *rajas* and *tamas* or the *apara prakriti*, it puts forth in a progressive manner what may be called four soul-forces, the soul-force derived from *para prakriti* manifesting the personality of knowledge, the soul-force manifesting the personality of heroism, the soul-force manifesting the personality of harmony and the soul-force manifesting skill, dexterity and perfection.

We all consider the development of personality or integral personality to be one of the highest aims of education. Educationists, teachers and students are constantly in search of the knowledge by which personality can be rightly developed and integrated. We need to have, first, the psychological knowledge of the various intricacies of the notion of personality, different kinds of personality, and various levels of personality, as also of conflicts of personalities within oneself and which need to have proper remedies through the process of harmonization of personality. Where shall we find this knowledge?

Fortunately, the Indian tradition of psychology has developed this knowledge, knowledge which is repeatable and verifiable, and a knowledge which can be practiced, knowledge on the basis of which true guidance can emerge.

**Needed** – A Curriculum of Indian.

### Psychology

If, therefore, a curriculum of Indian psychology has to be developed, my own suggestion would be to focus on the psychology of development of personality and to relate other elements of psychology around this basic issue. This is not a place for giving a blueprint of the curriculum. But it would be instructive to observe that the latest Report of UNESCO speaks of learning and emphasizes on the utilization of the treasure that is within us.

Interestingly, again, it speaks of four pillars of learning, the pillar of knowledge, the pillar of living together or the pillar of harmony, the pillar of doing and working or the pillar of skill and dexterity, and the pillar of being, that which endows the individual with a true self-possession and self-mastery. These four pillars are not entirely different from the four soul-forces to which we made reference earlier.

The only pillar that is missing in the analysis of the UNESCO's Report is the pillar of heroism. In any case, it is instructive that when we come to analyze the inmost process of learning and development of personality, we seem to come

nearer to the Indian insights. Swami Vivekananda speaks of man-making education, and what is that education if not the education that develops personality, a complete personality and personality of perfection? He also spoke of every individual as potentially divine, and what is that potentially divine if not the dynamic soul and its soul-force?

One of the most important questions is to conceive of an ideal of perfection or a perfect personality. I can only refer to the concept of *sthithaprajna* as mentioned in the Bhagavadgita or we have the luminous example of the Buddha who was seated in utter calm in his inner consciousness and yet dynamically engaged in the works of verity and producing results so extraordinary that we speak of him as the greatest personality that ever walked on the earth. And if we want a fuller elucidation of the concept of perfect personality, I can do no more than presenting the following from Sri Aurobindo :

### Conclusion

"When the heart of Love is tranquillized by knowledge into a clam ecstasy and vibrates with strength, when the strong hands of Power labour for the world in a radiant fullness of joy and light, when the luminous brain of knowledge accepts and transforms the heart's obscure inspirations and lends itself to the workings of the high-seated Will, when all these gods are founded together on a soul of sacrifice that lives in unity with all the world and accepts all things to transmute them, then is the condition of man's integral self-transcendence. This and not a haughty, strong and brilliant egoistic self-culture enthroning itself upon an enslaved humanity is the divine way of super-manhood."

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