

Developing softskills through Incorporating Educational Philosophy: An Effective Tool for Individual Growth

¹Shilpa Shukla and ²Sweta Agarwal

^{1,2}Institute Research Fellow Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, MNNIT, Allahabad
email: ¹Indian.sshilpa@gmail.com, ²swetag20@rediffmail.com

ABSTRACT - Purpose of the study: This study focuses on how skills could be developed incorporating relevant excerpts from the works of famous educational philosophers along with some classical literature. In this paper researcher want to reveal how one could incorporate excerpts from the aims of education by those authors who have concentrated search of the essence in education which at the present is being called “skill development and education for empowerment and emotional intelligence”.**Scope of the study:** Is to enhance the technical and professional education for the betterment of Industries and educational institutes. It will also help in self motivation and building emotional intelligence, inter cultural communication and morally driven leadership. This study will also help the future researcher to adapt an integrated and interdisciplinary approach to compress the components of education and soft skills.

Methodology: The source is secondary data latest magazines, journals, portal and websites has been used for making a valuable contribution towards my research.

Findings: The findings reveal that a renewed interest has been generated in teaching of soft skills to technical and professional students.

Value: The contemporary scenario is predominated by information and knowledge prospective. This paper fulfills the pressing needs to educate the professionals the soft skills to move towards a sustainable professional competence. This will well equip the professionals of today with the necessary skills and competency to satisfy the high level, complex and ever growing needs of the Industries and the Institutes.

Keyword - Team building, confidence, self motivation and leadership, Empirical research paper.

1. INTRODUCTION

Both Universities and Industries are embedded in the society. Generally, their primary functions are seen to be generation and transmission of knowledge, for the former; and generation of wealth for latter. It is also important to note that about a century earlier, when the number of industries was small, the education institutes were producing graduates who were socially responsible citizens with good character, leadership quality and ability to take decisions. At that time, the professional and technical

contents education was small. With time and advent of more industries this professional courses started dominating the curriculum. Subsequent to this, it was felt by industry that overemphasis on professional courses was creating graduates who were lacking in emotional intelligence, inter-cultural communication and morally driven leadership. The balance between these two streams is being attempted now. The difficulty is that what was earlier a major component of education is now to be compressed in more than two courses in soft skills. A way out is to adopt an integrated and interdisciplinary approach. The soft skill could be taught by incorporating relevant experts from the work of famous educational philosophers along with some classical literature in the existing communication curriculum and courses. To illustrate this process we concentrated on the four selected writings taken as experts from well known books the first author is Adolus Huxley who wrote Brave New world on 1931 and Brave New World Revisited in 1958 along with volumes of other writings. Huxley remained a very influential voice assessing the extent of modernization that a society should go through without losing the very essence of what human existence is for. The dialogue between ‘the savage, and the director needs reading and reading for providing direction to societies in deciding their paths towards modernization. The second expert is from a book in management science which emphasizes the special traits of groups which have succeeded in achieving very important tasks. The third expert is from the writing of the controversial American philosopher, Mortimer J Adler, who has written very influential book like How to read a book and How to speak, How to listen. The expert presented in section 5 emphasizes that the breath of knowledge is as important in providing successful leadership qualities as is the depth of knowledge. One can think of many more such experts from abundant classical literature. A suitable selection like this can be incorporated as reading material in courses of communication skills. Thus, two purposes will be served by a single effort. The last expert is from the writing of Alfred North Whitehead wrote The Aims of Education he wanted educationalists to wary of notions of inert ideas, ideas that are never utilized in constructive ways, ideas that merely form a part of a person’s information and never used in ingenious ways to generate knowledge for intellectual development. Such ideas carry no weight and have no utility in person’s intellectual growth.

Education for Critical Thinking and Analytical Skills: in any given situation, a leader is expected to give quick and right decision which calls for rational analytical frame of mind. In a critical situation, every person sense the situation, gather scraps of information available to analyses the pro and cons of the action taken and takes a decision at the spur of the moment. This calls for the training of mind which should be imparted right from the childhood. In his classical book Aims of Education and other essays, Alfred North whitehead, a renowned philosopher and thinker of the twentieth century has elaborated on the importance of intellectual development through rejuvenated and fresh ideas. An English mathematician and co-author of epochal Principia Mathematica, Whitehead wrote extensively on logic algebra mathematic education nature and physics. Whitehead's classical essay Aims of Education addresses fallacies prevalent in education system in British schools in twentieth century and suggests improving the educational standards, to make the curriculum free from inert ideas, to make it more productive with the fusion of theory with practice. He is of the opinion that by thrust given to imagination and initiation, learning could become an intellectual and invigorating exercise. Whitehead writes: Culture is activity of thought, and receptiveness to beauty and humane feeling. Scraps of information have nothing to do with it. A merely well- informed man is the most useless bore on God's earth. What we should aim at producing is a man who possess both culture and experts knowledge in some special direction. Their expert knowledge will give them ground to start from, and their culture will lead them as deep as philosophy and as high as art. We have to remember that the valuable intellectual development is self development, and that it mostly takes place between the ages of sixteen and thirty. As to training, the most important part is given by mothers before the age of twelve. A saying due to Archbishop Temple illustrates my meaning. Surprise was expressed at the success in after-life of a man, who as a boy at Rugby had been somewhat undistinguished. He answered, "It is not what they are at eighteen, it is what they become afterwards that matters." In training a child to activity thought, above all things we must beware of what I will call **Inert Ideas** that is to say, ideas that are merely received into the mind without being utilized, or tested, or thrown into fresh combinations. In the history of education, the most striking phenomenon is that school of learning, which at one epoch are alive with a ferment of genius, in a succeeding generation exhibits merely pedantry and routine. The reason is, that they are over laden with inert ideas is not only useless; it is, above all things, harmful. Expert at rare intervals of intellectual ferment, education in the past has been radically infected with inert ideas. That is the reason why uneducated clever women, who have seen much of the world, are in the middle life so much the most cultured part of the community. They have been saved from this horrible burden of inert ideas. Every intellectual revolution which has ever stirred humanity into greatness has been passionate protest against inert ideas. Then, alas, with pathetic ignorance of human psychology, it has preceded by some

educational scheme to bind humanity a fresh with inert ideas of its own fashioning.

2. EXPOSURE TO HUMANISTIC EDUCATION

It is very important to impart journalized as well as specialized education to a student to develop wholesome personality. The famous American educational philosopher of the 20th century M.J. Adler has written exclusively on topics like philosophy education, moral and ethics. Most of his writings ask questions of morality and virtue and if adopted in the right spirit help create leaders. Adler along with Hutchins, President, and University of Chicago came out with great books of western world a set of 52 books, published by encyclopedia Britannica in 1952. After wards, Mortimer came out with the idea Syntopicon. Syntopiocon is an index to great idea published as volumes II and III of encyclopedia Britannica's collection great books of western world. He got down to work in the Universities basement with a couple of helpers and after a lot of hard work came out with this great idea. In the essay, every executive, journalist first and a specialist second is talking about training that requires grit and determination, a generalized and humanistic training, the kind that is benefited from while producing the great ideas. In the essay he enumerates the benefits of a generalized and humanistic training imparted to the students at the school as well as higher level to create future leaders. Such an education starts early in life which trains an individual to be a hard worker to have an open mind to assimilate ideas and analyze situations, seeks solutions keeping the overall consequence in mind and to be a learner all his life. Look into the facts you will discover that they were all men of general learning and therefore of broad vision. Two things indispensable for leadership. They approached problems they were called upon to solve by viewing them in the largest possible context of related concerns by seeing them in historical perspective, and above all by focusing on them all the diverse ideas effecting their solution. The leaders a century ago the man who edited great newspaper, built the great industry and ran the great businesses as, well as those who held high offices in constitutional governments and to became the great engineers, lawyers, physicians and surgeons have a different kind of training to begin with, they have a general, liberal secondary schooling this humanistic education was carried on at a higher level in the colleges and universities they attended. Along the way, they require the skills indispensable to effective communication their understanding of basic ideas and issues had been cultivated. They knew how to read and write, how to speak and listen, how to use their mind flexibly in dealing with every sort of problem. Above all they all were prepared to go on learning. They were not misled by the suppositions that the education has been compelled in the school

3. CONCENTRATIONS SPAN AND TIME MANAGEMENT

Leadership quality entails dedication to a job at hand, time management and adaptability to a current situation.

Leaders are not distracted with trivialities of life and makes the of the given situation. A leader is one who comes out as a winner inspite of all difficulties. There are examples galore in literature to show human endeavor even in phase of hard ship and handicapped. For example Adlous Huxley the great English writer, was partly blind all his life but because of his contribution in the literary field, has left his imprint in the history of English literature, he was visionary, a humanist and pacifist born in the last decade of 19th century in England. An intellectual and litterateur of modern thought, Huxley lost his partial eyesight in his teenage but still went on to finish his college. Huxley was iconoclast and an emancipator who was disillusioned with the deterioration of values, custom and standard of the time that he lived in as he was unhappy with the erosion of establish norms and rampant commercialization of society, he started along with George Orwell and anti- utopian tradition and literature which resulted in novels like brave new world and 1984.these novel depict a future where human beings subject to control and conditioning. In Brave New World Revisited, Huxley warns people not to drown themselves in a sea of unreality cost by political and social policy makers in the form of entertainment to distract attention from real life problems. He enunciates beautifully how not to succumb to this appetite of distraction and be formally planted in the present, which is so very essential a characteristics for leader to posses he says”In a past many people never got a chance of fully satisfying this appetite. They might long for distraction, but the distraction were not provided .festival came but once a year feasts were rare and solemn there were few leader and very little to read, and nearest approach to a neighbored theater was the church, were the performances , though frequent ,were somewhat monotonous . for condition even remotely comparable to those now prevailing we must return to imperial Rome ,were the populace was kept in good humor by frequent , gratuitous doses not many kinds of entertainment- from poetical dramas to gladiatorial fights ,from recitation of Virgil to all – out boxing ,from concerts to military review and public execution . But even in Rome there was nothing like the non stop distraction now provided by newspaper and magazines, by radio, television and the cinema. In Brave New World nonstop distraction of the most fascinating are deliberately used as instruments of policy, for the purpose of preventing people from paying too much attention to the realities of political and social condition. The other world of religion is different from the other world of entertainment; but they resemble one another in being most decidedly “not of this world “. Both are distraction and, if lived in too continuously both can become in Marx’s phrase, “the opium of the people “and so a threat to freedom. Only the vigilant can maintain there liberties and only those who are constantly and intelligently on the spot can hope to govern themselves effectively by the democratic procedure. A society, most of whose member spend a great part of there time, not on the spot , not here and now and in the calculable future, but somewhere else ,in the irrelevant other worlds of spot and soap opera , of

mythology and metaphysical fantasy , well find it hard to resist the and encroachment of those who would manipulate and control it. In there propaganda today’s dictators rely for the most part on repetition, suppression and rationalization. The repletion of catch words which they wish to be accepted as true suppression of fact which they wish to be ignored, the arouser and rationalization of passions which may be used in the interests of the party or state. as the art and science of manipulation come to be better understood , the dictators of the future will doubtlessly learn to combine these techniques with the nonstop distraction to which , in the west , are now threatening to drown in the sea of irrelevance the rational propaganda essential to the maintenance of individual liberty and the survival of democratic institution .”

4. TEAM BUILDING SKILLS

We are living in the age of globalization. Our’s is a information based society with customer driven markets and dynamic economy. To keep pace with everyday changes of the market, a leader is expected to perceive the trends of the market and deliver goods accordingly. It becomes the mammoth task for if everybody has to work in isolation. Therefore it becomes necessary for a leader to organize workforce in a team and tap their creativity to get their work done. This is where leadership qualities are called for. The team members work with a creative spirit and dedication and create an ambience of trust and mutual respect for each other. The leader is responsible for planning and execution of a task with the help of teammates by providing freedom and space and by providing moral support. Thus with extraordinary leadership qualities even the most difficult of the task gets accomplished the people also work with passion which helps them to achieve their desired goals. The organization of the future will increasingly depend on the creativity of their members to survive. And the leaders of that organization will be those who find ways both to retain their talented and independent minded staffs and set them free to do their best, most innovative and imaginative work. Conventional wisdom about leadership and the teams continues to glorify the leader at the expense of the groups offers a new model in which the leader is an equal among Titans. In a truly creative collaboration, work is pleasure, and the only rules and procedures are those that advance a common cause. Psychologically and socially, Great groups are very different from mundane ones. Great groups rarely have problems. Intrinsically motivated, for the most part, the people in them are buoyed by the joy of problem solving. Focused on a fascinating project, they are oblivious to the nettles of working together in ordinary circumstances. Obviously, there are lessons here for transforming our classrooms, for instance, has been taboo, condemned as a form of cheating. Yet what we discover in great groups is that collaboration can only make our classrooms happier and more productive. What lessons do great groups have for our workplace, where so many people feel stifled, not stimulated? Look hoe hard people in great groups work, without anybody hovering over them. Look how morale

soars when intelligent people are asked to do a demanding but worthy task and given the freedom and tools to do it. Imagine how much richer and happier our organizations would be if, like great groups, they were filled with people working as hard and as intelligently as they can, too caught up for pettiness, their sense of self grounded in the bed rock of talent and achievement. Every great group is extraordinary in its own way. Yet all of them have much in common. Imagine that it is 25 year ago and you are a fly on the wall at Xerox PARC where the first user friendly computer is being invented. The officers themselves are none descript. But the atmosphere is charged, electric with the sense that great things are being accomplished here. Most of member of the group are young in there 20's or 30's and each knows that having been recruited for this project is badge of honor. Although Xerox is a corporate behemoth there is no sense at PARC of being part of major Corporation. No suits from head quarters are in evidence. Instead, the atmosphere is much like that of a graduate department at a first rate university. All though the group is too busy working to philosophize much, any participant would tell you that he or she would rather be here then any where else. The money doesn't matter, career doesn't matter, and the project is all. In some cases, personal relationships have been interrupted or deferred it is hard to have a life when you are up half the night in the lamp working on your part of a compelling problem, often with one of your equally obsessed colleague of your side. This not a job. This is a mission, carried out by people with fire in there eyes.

5. CONCLUSION

After the publication of the book emotional intelligence by D.Goleman in 1995, a renewed interest has been generated in teaching of soft skills to undergraduate students. But, while doing this, one runs out of slots in curriculum. The way suggested in this paper is to look into existing classical literature where there is lot of emphasis on development of communication skills. These classical theories are written by great learned teachers and trainers, even the undergraduate students with some guidance from the instructor, can easily follow and incorporate them in their life. Hence even these can be incorporated in ongoing communication skills courses and materials.

REFERENCES

1. Huxley, Aldous. Brave New World Revisited, Harper Collins Publication, Canada, 1958.
2. Sprak, W.S. Human groups, Haemondsworth; Penguin, 1960.
3. Scott Bill. The Skills of Communication, Jaico Publishing House, 2005.
4. Hartley John, Key Concept in communication Culture and Media Studies, Routledge Taylor and Franc is groups, 2004.
5. Whitehead, A.N. The aim of education and other essay. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1959.

6. Maria Salih, 2006, Realizing Sustainable development in Higher Education through Soft Skills; paper Posted on UNESCO Bangkok website [<http://www.unescobkk.org>]. Retrieved 2008.
7. Jurgen Hagman and Canny Almekinew et al. 2003 'Developing 'Soft Skills in higher Education. Paper Posted on website of international Institute for Environment and Development. [<http://www.ied.org>]. Retrieved April 2008.