

CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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ABSTRACT

Allama Muhammad Iqbal has discussed philosophy and system of education in his poetry and prose writings. An ideal education for young generation has been an important theme of his thought. According to Allama Iqbal the purpose of an ideal education system is to improve the abilities in children which emerge in them in the early age. Allama Iqbal has described different methods that how the children should be educated and trained. Analysing the period of childhood in the light of academic principles, Allama Iqbal has emphasized the need of a modus operandi that must be practicable, effective and must consist of simple and clear principles to educate children. He narrates the need of such educational principles which could be conceived by any layman and could be benefited from them. Apart from other poetical and prose writings an article of Allama Muhammad Iqbal on children's education and training was published in *Makhsan*. This article was written in Urdu. In this article Allama Iqbal described that it is convenient to teach the mature students but to educate immature ones is a tough job. The educators of our country are not aware of the difficulties of this job. Since our classical education system does not taking into account the children's level of rational and contemplative development, therefore, its consequences also prove to be serious. The mental abilities of the children cannot improve to make them successful personalities. Furthermore in the years of their later age these educational shortcomings are seen more intensely. To conceive the routine matters and to resolve its complexities, it is necessary that the necessities of their practical personality must be focused right from the beginning. Otherwise, their life is a tragic series of failures and their existence for society just suspends. This article is English translation of the Urdu article (بچوں کی تعلیم و تربیت) of Allama Muhammad Iqbal which is also an introduction to his educational thought.

It is convenient to teach the mature students, but to educate immature ones is a tough job that educators of our country are not fully aware with its troubles, yet. Since our classical educational system does not take into account the children's levels of rational and contemplative development, therefore, its consequence proves to be serious in their favor. Their mental abilities wipe out and no radiance of freshness is seen on their faces which is peculiar to worry-free life. In older age, this educational shortcoming is seen more intensely. To conceive the routine matters and to resolve its complexities; being the chief traits of a practical person; do not emerge in them right from the beginning. Their life is a tragic series of failures and their existence for the society just suspends.

Truly speaking, the education of children is the root of all national height. If the educational methodology is based on the scientific principles, then all the civilizing complaints may be knocked down in a short time, and the life of the world seems to be so fascinating panorama that the philosophers who repress its explicit beauty should also become its admirers. The very first duty of a man is that his existence would be the cause of attractiveness of the world and as a Greek poet says; there should be a sort of illumination in its every act, whose rays reflect on others; a teaching lesson of sincerity and solidarity to pass life. His sphere of sympathy should be expanding day by day, so that his heart, grows up to purify and refine the mirror of the soul after eliminating its signs of prejudice and intimidation. There are a lot of people who subsist in the world, but remain solely ignorant in their moral relationships. Their living is the life of beasts because their every act is based on the principles of self-interest and coerced self-determination. The field of their effectiveness is limited to their family members at maximum and they remain neglected from that blessed relationship which they own as a human being with the rest of other homo-sapiens. The real humanity is that a man fully aware of his duties and he feels himself a branch of that gigantic tree whose roots are in the earth but its branches touch the height of the sky. In order to become such a perfect human being, it is important that this reason should be taken into account in the training of every child, because such excellence can be attained only with the help of moral education and training.

Those people who do not care about the right and scientific principles of children's education and training, they make a cruel attack on the rights of society due to their ignorance; resulting in the extreme level of damaging to all the persons of a society.

Our purpose of writing this article is to find out those abilities which come out first among children and how they should be educated and trained, after studying the period of childhood through academic principles. We want to present such a *modus operandi* that is not only pensive, but also a viable method, which confer such simple and clear principles to educate children, that could be conceived by any layman and who could be benefitted from them. We hope the audience will benefit from them and they will keep these principles under consideration in the primary education of their children. Because:

نشتِ اولِ چوں نہد معمار کج
تا ثریا می رود دیوار کج

If the masonry keeps the first brick crooked, then the wall going uphill to the extensions of heaven will be crooked.

First of all, it is important to see those matters which are peculiar to infancy period, so that they should be focused on the education and training of children and try to benefit from them with admiration.

1- In this context, the first thing that is clearly visible to every reader is a sort of reflexive tendency found among children; which is not only confine to humans but also to every beast. Note, how a kitten plays with fun by itself? If unchain a puppy, then he will burst with joy of reflex action.

Mr. Bain, a famous sage of the nineteenth century; regards this reflexive spirit, a very important component for the development of children, because during the reflexive condition, their organs do not depend on any external motive for generating motion. There is an extra amount of nervous strength of the children, which just goes through some way and shows their happiness. Though, their parents also suffer from it, seldom. Sometimes this extra amount of nervous force only transpires in crying, sometimes in shrieking and jumping. Thus, those who are tired of crying children, remember that it is also an essential component of their physical and spiritual growth. In addition, there are other ways to employ this force. One out of all is the sensitivity of the child that vibrates involuntarily due to which he gradually became aware about the external things. Actually the child is not an apprentice, but an energetic entity altogether; who's each

infantile activity should be benefitted educationally, such as to make brick houses, to bead a string, to sing a song, etc. The extra nervous force that is utilized in crying and rubbing noise can easily transform into a regular tune or melody, and force that is utilized in touching the harmful things and in throwing supplementary things around can comfortably exercise in building the brick houses.

2- Another peculiarity of childhood is that no constant concentration can be focused on anything in this age. As his bodily powers cannot be at rest in a single place, synonymously his mental powers cannot be calm at one point for a period. On the way hands cannot be inactive, in the same way there is also a sort of restiveness in his attention, which does not allow him to be positioned in one place. Therefore, in every technique of education, it should be kept in mind that lessons are not long and distributed in very small parts, so that the various powers of the child incite while reading. Apart from this, it is also necessary that there should be a specific common element in each lesson so that the habit of focusing on one particular place enhance, also.

3- Children enjoy watching things and especially to touch them. When the child is three months old and his attention diverts toward the light, he spreads hand and tries to catch the flame of the lamp. Eye watching does not satisfy him. He also insists to take help from the sense of touch, because he enjoys touching the external things, naturally. One thing will be experienced by every person, that when the glance of a child focused at any image on the wall, he starts abrupt shouting and wants to get the picture taken off and put it in his hands. By his shouting, it seems that the infant will not be calm down, now. But when the desired item is kept in front of him, then to set aside his quietness, you may also laugh for a while. So, whenever lesson him about something, put it in front of the child, and when the lesson is over then hand over that thing to him. Visual sense improves with observation. With traction, the touching power enhances, considerably. With conversation and chord, etc the listening power reinforces. Likewise, with joint venture of touch and vision, the child will be able to perceive the form of the thing.

4- It appears that the child is attending, more towards color of a thing than the form of a thing. Mostly, his attention confines more to the bright color of things. Put a picture sketched by a reputed painter in front of him. If its color is not bright and shiny, then he will not even care about it. Contrariwise, he prefers to attract towards the colored pictures of his own small book. Examine his speech. Word red, blue, et cetera is learned first and word square,

pillow, et cetera is learned somewhere later. From here, a principle is devised that early childhood lessons should be about colorful things.

5- Among children, the spirit of helping the elders is exclusively more in excess. If mother laughs, then he laughs too, simultaneously. If the father utters a word, he does not remain without copying his voice. When growing bigger and learns some things too, then says to fellows:

Come on! We become Molvi, you become a disciple.

Sometimes, he sells commodities like market shopkeepers. Seldom, it sells while walking to make a loud voice:

Come on! Take cheap pomegranates.

At this time, it is very important that the teacher should present his example beside child, so that he inspires to copy his every act.

6- Contemplative or reflective power is also very much prominent in children. In the evening, he starts to tease his mother:

Mom! Tell a story.

When mother tells the story of the sparrow or the crow, then he gets lost with joy. As grows younger and leaning to learn, then he gets fond of novels and stories. The teacher should keep it in mind the special care about the improvement of contemplative power, lest this force should grow erratic and produce a defect in the development of the rational power. Some scholars regard that the training of this force is not required much as to keep it within proper limits. From this quality of the child, extremely unusual educational benefit could be taken. In many schools, boys often make paper boats day and night. It's a good practice for contemplative power.

7- Symptoms of sympathy are also exposed in children, which could be benefitted in the moral education of the child. If he sees someone laughing, he laughs too. If the parents look to be sad, then he himself shapes the same. With experience and exercise, this instinctive force increases. Earlier he appears to be affected by the grief of others. The teacher should tell him superb stories about sympathy and memorize him. He has to teach a lesson about the beast, to which he behaved well, in order to set a good example for the child to follow.

8- The memory of the child is amazing to remember words. How easily, he learns the complexities of his mother tongue and remembers those. It is essential for the teacher to memorize outstanding verses and poems to his students and repeatedly point out the subjects of the lessons taught.

9- At this age, distinctive force is weak. He cannot differentiate between things, minutely. Yes, he grasps the major appearances and significant differences, such as: differences in the forms of things.

Therefore, at a start, he should be made attentive towards the apparent differences. For example: put two things, a ball and a multifaceted thing in front of him and describes the differences of both as follows:

Ball: (rounded shape)	Multifaceted thing: (many-sided shape)
There is only one level.	There are multiple levels.
There is no corner.	There are many corners.
There is no edge.	There are many edges.

After highlighting these distinctive and apparent differences, present a different form of the thing, and after comparing it with the ball and the multifaceted thing, separately; bring to light its minute and diminutive differences.

10- To weaken the rational power as judgment and reasoning. Do not expect such understanding from a child that is still increasable with experience and knowledge. It is very important for the teacher to keep in view the progressive stages of these powers. Put two common things in front of him and describe their big differences. Similarly, make a judgment by comparing them. But it should be remembered that judgment without concepts is impossible because it actually originates after comparing two concepts, which themselves produce from comparing different perceptible. For example, some common attributes are known after comparing among too many people of the entire human race; due to such commonality we assign to all these people a common and concrete name that is equally applicable to everyone. Thus, it is acknowledged that no child should be expected to have a comprehension of such concepts whose understanding of subsidiary perceptible, he does not know. How one year child can know, which animal is named as “patriotism”. Some of our teachers keep such primary books in the hands of the child, whose first chapter, for example, starts with “God's attributes”. But they do not know that God is such an abstract concept which comes after reaching the climax of the rational power and attained after gaining a lot of knowledge, and to conceptualize an entity separately from attributes of the entity is such an act that is not possible at any cost for a child to formulate. Therefore, it is possible to give such knowledge that might be good for some reasons, but according to the principles of knowledge, it is not more than to load the needless and worthless burden on the memory of the child.

As for concepts, its comparison with perceptible is requisite; so is the case of judgments with concepts. Similarly, whatever comparison comes out of judgments for reasoning, it is essential that abundance of judgments is there in the knowledge of the child. A teacher should

be careful that perceptible, concepts, judgments and reasoning of the child should advance along with his mode of knowledge.

11- The last peculiarity of the child is that he does not impress by moral motives either, or if impressed then at very low degree. Because to influence from these types of incitements and reflecting its effect in the realm of life is such a matter, that is the result of higher degree of education and training. It is a duty of teachers to try to create the ability to elevate the moral incitements in the child right from the beginning. For example, teach them to be sympathetic right from the beginning and along with try to focus on the fact that the child should be careful relating the compulsory setting of his lesson, because the habit of peace and reconciliation arises from these small belongings. It should also be remembered that the speaking-self (نفس ناطقة) is not a combination of powers, but it is a sole indivisible entity in itself, and its each nourishing power is dependent on another nourishing power. Just as the bodily organs grow according to the principles of proportion, similarly the power of speaking-self nourishes under the same principles. Therefore, only that method of education would be perfect which would provide the same equipments of exercise for all the powers of speaking-self. Perception, contemplation, efficacy and volition, so all should be included in the motivational power of speaking-self. Because the objective of perfect method of education is that the concealed powers of the speaking-self should be increased and not that many knowledgeable things get into the mind.

From the above cited lines, it has been clear that to make a fine and strong educational base, how much it is necessary to study the development of a child. In reality, the teachers are the guardian of the nation. Because to adorn the future generations and to make them able serving the country, is in their control. The work efficiency of the country's teachers is far more precious than other work efficiencies and best degree of hard work among rest of all hard works. Even though there is no value, unfortunately to this blessed profession in this country, as there should be. The duty of the teacher is more difficult and important than all obligations, because the key to all types of moral, civil and religious good deeds is in his hand, and the source of all country's development is his effort. Therefore, education is indispensable for its professionals, so that they would establish their techniques of teachings on the advanced scientific principles according to the sanctity and nobility of their profession. Definitely, its result would be that a true love of knowledge will appear due to their support; where cultural and political health is veiled in its zeal from where nations can reach to perfect accession.

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