Preparing Leaders in Indian Schools

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Abstract

Education is vital for development and a young country like India needs quality education for the proper channelisation of its human resources. Population dividend may be favourable only when we provide good quality education to the mass and they are being lead by efficient & honest leaders - Academic, Administrative and Field Specific. Leaders must possess knowledge of the subject matter, relevant issues and of leadership characteristics. In one sense or other every individual has some amount of leadership quality. Group, leader and leadership quality are associated. Leader is one who leads the group, and so every group has a leader. Leadership quality helps the leader to achieve group goals and objectives easily. A principal is a leader, A mathematics teacher is a leader, a class captain is a leader, and of course there are political leaders. Group cohesiveness is an essential quality of any group, and if there is less cohesiveness in the group there may emerge a group or more within the group. School is a right place for the development of leadership quality as during this period most of the process of development & maturation takes place. Identification and nourishment of leadership quality at this stage is crucial. Colleges and teacher education colleges may enrich the leadership material in their places, but it is school stage that is instrumental. At school level we can start to prepare for academic, administrative and field specific leaders. In fact, school as a formal social system manages external relations and maintains internal pattern to condition the educational process and to generate leader & leadership quality.School is to prepare leaders,but we need leaders for the school proper functioning and development. Identification of potential child, leadership input at every stage of curriculum, integration of curricular & extra curricular content, discussion about leader personalities, development of a national policy of leadership, application of methods of teachings like simulation & role playing, internalisation of required leadership skills & qualities among future leaders., development of cultural harmony & language integrity

and formation of potential specific groups for the development of leadership quality, etc. are some of the measures that can guard the preparation and development of every types of leaders for schools and also for other fields.

Keywords : *Leadership, Academic, Administrative, Field Specific, School.*

Introduction

Development of a country, society or humanity is possible only through quality education. The world received a message through UNESCO Commission On Education (1996) when it suggested for learning to live together and learning to be besides learning to know and learning to do. Education is not limited to providing knowledge only rather it has to prepare the mass to behave and lead life as a member of human society. Higher education enlightens the individuals, but it is school education that is instrumental for the preparation of learners for higher education. India, the youngest country of the world, has to take care of its school education in order to utilise its population dividend. School education is the stage where the individual almost completes its process of development, not only physical or intellectual rather social, emotional and moral as well. Sound development of the nation depends on the quality of the school education and Kothari Commission has rightly concluded that the destiny of the nation is being shaped in its class-rooms. Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (1996) by defining the relationship between teacher education and school education has expressed in the same way, "Education of teachers is not an end in itself. Its target is the school, where it is expected to shape the destiny of pupils and prepare citizens for the nation." Considering the importance of school education the New Education Policy Draft Document (2019) has suggested to improve the structure of school education as 5+3+3+4. It has suggested to change the present 10+2 structure of the school education and again has suggested to integrate secondary & higher secondary and to extend the limit of Right to Education from Pre-School Years (3 years) to Higher Secondary Level (18 years).

We need leaders, teachers, bureaurocrats, doctors, policy-makers, engineers, painters, writers, media persons, scientists and what not? for the functioning of our social life in one hand and the development of the human civilization in another. In every walk of life we need leaders in all the related fields of human walk and no need to say we can get these leaders in our educational institutions, and school is the place that provides foundation for the preparation of leaders for every possible field. School can provide leaders, but for the same the school needs leaders - Administrative, Academic and Field Specific.In fact,school can provide leaders,but for the same we need potential leaders in

schools to work for school related tasks as a devoted person.

NCERT (1993) has rightly reflected the importance of leader for the success of the group whether it is a school or a political party, "An efficient leader is in a better position to keep group members together." It further concludes that a leader is possible without a group, but we cannot find a group without a leader. School education needs good leaders as good leaders can provide future leaders to the society in every sphere of human life. Our leader and young minds as future leader must know Social, National and Global concerns of a leader. They must be prepared keeping in view the growing needs and aspirations of the schools. Leaders of today must know related facts, skills and issues like Sustainable Development Goals, Millennium Development Goals, Human Rights, RTE, RTI, Environmental Concerns, ICT, Scientific Humanism, etc. It is sad to narrate that our public-funded institutions are in a poor state and so are more or less helpless to contribute in this regard. Bihar Curriculum Framework (2006) expresses, "Majority of our government school today, including the old high schools, are nondescript, suffering from an amnesia about their past, lacking a vision for the future and having lost their institutional identity and character."

Group, Leader and Leadership

Leader is one who leads the group. Every group has a leader or even more, who helps the group to move in the right direction to attain the group's goals or objectives. Every leader cannot lead the group in the same manner and with same efficiency as they differ in their leadership quality. Leadership is the capability of the leader that is instrumental for her/his success in achieving the goal of the group or groups. Teacher of mathematics may lead the group in a different manner in comparison to the teacher of physics as group goal for mathematics and physics teacher may differ. Two mathematics teacher can differ in their leadership style and quality. Leader does not mean political leader as there are academic leaders, administrative leaders and leaders to lead different groups to achieve the group's goals or objectives. There are different types of groups and so there may not be only one type of leader having only one type of leadership quality. Group, leader & leadership quality are related and associated and so the nature of group, leader and leadership style have to be linked and associated.

Group has common objectives, group ideology and group structure. It is different from crowd as the person of a crowd does not have any sense of belongingness. Activities of group are planned and their behaviours are defined & expected. Crowd activities and behaviours are not planned & defined. Groups are of many types as (i) Primary - Secondary, (ii) Formal- Informal, (iii) Ingroup-Outgroup, etc. Primary group is a type of group in which members of the group are more close to each other. They share their

feelings too frequently. Family is an example of primary group in which family members live together very informally. In this group there is close interpersonal relations among the members and they interact very closely and most of the time face to face. Playmates, close neighbours, etc. are also some examples of primary group. Members of the primary groups influence other members attitude, belief, behaviour etc. in a large way. Secondary groups are more formal and it run on the basis of certain specified and defined rules and regulations. Members are associated with a formal type of relation where group goal is the binding force among them. Class-mates, cultural groups, political parties, etc. are of the examples of secondary groups. Formal group is like secondary group where members are governed by specified rules and regulations. In this group there is greater degree of formalisation. Informal group is like primary group and that is like a family, where interaction norms are not specified. Structural rigidity is not found in informal group as that of formal group. There are some groups in which the members of the group specify own group as in-group and other group as out-group. School groups, caste groups, mohalla groups, religion groups etc. find them in-groups and their counterpart groups as out-groups. Members who belongs to a particular group finds her/his group as In-group and others group as out-group. Students of an institution generally fall in the Secondary, Formal and In-group. Students may be the member of out-group and in-group as like rival students group, but usually students are not in Primary and Informal Groups, and so the characteristics of academic group is unique in one sense or other. No doubt, most of the time academic groups behave like secondary and formal groups.

Leader and leadership are associated concept. The person who has potential to lead is a leader, but the person who does not possess leadership quality may not be a leader. It means, leader and leadership quality are inseparable as of object and shadow. Leadership quality is not absolute rather relative and in this sense most of the human being possess certain amount of leadership quality. Gandhi, Subhash were great leaders, but there were other leaders. Captain of one team may or may not be better or inferior to other captain, but it is true that they learn to lead the team and again they continuously improve by learning to lead. In nut shell, individual can lead, can learn to lead and can become a better leader by learning to lead. This is true for any form of leadership and of course it is also true for academic leadership as well. A group cannot run unless or untill there is some group cohesiveness. If there is less group cohesiveness and the group is large there may emerge other groups within the group. Besides other factors group cohesiveness is related to the quality of the leader and her/his leadership capability. Leader is a person capable of leading a group where as leadership is the process of helping, guiding, influencing and supporting other persons of the group to act

purposefully with zeal to achieve the group's goal or objectives. It is the leadership quality that is instrumental in group formation, group binding & group activity, without which group mind will not be motivated and group objectives will not be realised.

There are so many theories of leadership such as Great Man Theory, Trait Theory, Contingency Theory, Situational Theory, Behavioural Theory, Participative Theory, Management Theory, Relationship Theory, etc. and the leadership development team must know the characteristics of all these theory. Great Man theory states that leadership needs inherent potential as according to the theory leaders are born they are not made. Trait theory is similar to the trait theory of personality. Some traits as cooperative, self-confident, adaptable, etc. alongwith some skills like creativity, clever, tactful, fluent speaker, etc.These traits and skills are critical for leaders. Contingency theory states that the leadership style effective in some situations may not be successful in some other situations. Situational theory finds a range of situational factors helpful for the course of action that is based upon situational variables. This theory requires flexibility in leadership style. Behaviour theory is opposite to Great Man theory and is based on the principle of behaviourist school of thought. It claims that great leaders are made, not born. It further states that one can grow as a leader through teaching and observation. Participative theory puts emphasis on the participation and contributions of all the group members. It considers to utilise inputs of other group member. This theory helps among the member a sense of relevance as they take part in decision making. Management theory is based on the principle of management where reward and punishment are instrumental. It is also known as transactional theory where the focus lies on the role of organisation, supervision and performance of the group. Relationship theory, which is also known as Transformational theory, puts emphasis on the relationship between leaders and followers. Leader of the group motivates and inspires group members and these leaders are generally of high moral standards and ethical values. Various styles of leadership is also adopted by the leaders as Laissez-Faire Style, Bureaucratic Style, Charismatic Style, Autocratic Style, Democratic Style, People-Oriented Style, Task-Oriented Style, Servant Style, Transactional Style, Transformational Style, Environment Style, Situation Style etc. In some of the styles followers have more autonomy to respond in the group and in some others they have very limited scope to decide their action path. One style may be beneficial in one leadership situations, but may not be so appropriate & relevant for some other situations.

School is not the only place where one can develop leadership quality in the academic career of learners. Colleges and teacher education institutions are other important places for this purpose. In colleges focus may be on general nature of

leadership, but teacher education colleges are to develop teacher and teaching related action and activities. All these academic centres should shoulder to generate the general and specific type of leaders as we need leaders for every possible work of life. Academic leaders are needed, but our academy must generate leaders for different needed field. National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education Draft for Discussion Document (2009) rightly suggests, 'Learning is not confined to the four walls of the classroom. We need to connect knowledge to life outside the school and enrich the curriculum by making it less textbook-oriented." Leadership quality can be developed at any educational level,but school is the foundation stage for it.

Preparing Leaders in Schools and for Schools

School system of any country is its backbone for any type of development. No nation of the world has developed a higher and technical education system without the proper development of its school education. It is even more important for the development of our education system as we are the youngest country with more human potential to be directed and utilised. School is the entry gate of human development and during the school stage most of human natural potential is directed and channelised. If we talk of leaders during school days we have to discuss so many issues like where to prepare leaders for school - Schools, Colleges or Teacher Education Colleges? Again we have to answer how many types of leaders - Academic Leaders, Administrative Leaders and Leaders for all the related Specific Fields?

In ancient India school developed along an individual or around some groups. Even in western countries in the beginning school building was not essential for the functioning of the school. No doubt, there were leaders to lead in different academic fields and learners inner potential was channelized properly to produce future leaders. Now the scene has changed and more formalisation of school system has generated many more field for the development of potential and leadership quality as well. Now, in the modern age, school constitutes a system to socialise and to shoulder responsibility of imparting knowledge in more varied way to cater social needs in a comparatively more formal manner. School as a formal social system manages external relations and maintains internal patterns to condition the educational process and to generate leader & leadership quality. School as a miniature society has many types of relationship with persons and organisers of the wider society, and so has to function as a mini-society to train its member for the wider functioning in the society. Students have to learn and have to learn to lead as they are the member of the wider society, besides the member of school as a miniature society.

Manpower planning, manpower development and manpower nourishment is

possible only through schools. These works can be done properly only when we have appropriate person for these technical task. No doubt, different school teachers through their knowledge under the leadership of school head and with the help of other support staff can complete this task in a better manner. School in the society is like fertile land that gives grains, vegetables, pulses, fruits, etc. as and when it is being utilised properly. The fertile land of the school environment is the only place where man and his character is formed. It is school that plans for nourishment of young leaders in the school itself to provide solid material for the development of future leader and no need to say this function of nourishment is undertaken by the school leadership. School not only provides environment for the development of leadership quality of the individual learners in the potential-specific area, rather it supports to grow the learners unique potential with the help of its human resources. School within the society, a mini society, helps the learners as a social animal through societal training & training of citizenship. It also helps to grow as a member of human and global society. We need different types of leaders at different levels. It supplements leaders for national & global requirements, but it also takes care of local needs as well. We need academic experts in different fields like mathematics, science, language, etc. We also need leaders to transmit our cultures though different arts. We need sports leaders as well. School is the place where we can identify future leaders of every field, and we have to develop the school premise as a place of leadership development. No other place is as appropriate as the school is for nourishment of leaders in every possible fields. If we focus on academic leaders only then the school is the right place. We need leader for teaching, leader for evaluating, leader for administration, leader for judgment work, leader for organisation of programmes & events, leader for financial issues, leader for cultural transmission, and many more. In fact, we need schools to develop a place for identification of leadership and development of leadership due to two important reasons (i) school is an appropriate place to identify and nurture young minds of the nation for the development of leadership quality (ii) identification, training and development of young leaders may help to identify leader for our future needs. Leadership generation needs to be the part of our educational policy and it must be a continuous process. We have to shape the leadership quality in the expected manner, otherwise it will become more difficult to find honest, dedicated and hard-working leaders for our social, national, international and educational needs. In this regard suggestions forwarded by National Curriculum Framework (2005) is worthwhile, "A policy of inclusion needs to be implemented in all schools and throughout our education system. The participation of all children needs to be ensured in all spheres of their lfie in and outside the school." Schools are to be developed as a leadership nourishment place

and so schools need good leaders in different human acts and activities.

Suggestive Measures

School is a more meaningful place of leadership development in general and academic leadership nourishment in particular. By integrating this preparation work in all the stages of education we can find academic leaders and leaders for all the possible area. Following are few suggestive measures to strengthen leader preparation and development for academic and other fields :-

- Identify potential child for leadership training in every related area.
- Manage and place a sound pool of leaders for related works of schools.
- Curriculum at every stage must contain leadership input.
- Develop their potential inside and outside the school and college boundary.
- As suggested in New Education Policy Draft Document (2019) there must not be any hard demarcation between Curricular and Extra-curricular aspects of content to develop all the related capabilities of the learner in integration.
- Ideal leaders from every related area be discussed through written and verbal communication during certain special classes and most importantly during morning assembly sessions of the school/colleges.
- Development of leadership quality of students needs a national policy in the matter.
- Simulation, Role playing, Mock-Court, Nukkar Natak, etc. be played and organised to make the students aware with facts & concepts related to leadership.
- School and college principals must present ideal of leaders before the students.
- Every academic, cultural, sports, etc. teachers must present ideal of specific leaders before the learners.
- To resolve the conflict of the utility of Ideal leaders Vs. Pragmatic leaders.
- To make sure the academic institutions need an academician administrator-leader not a pure administrator-leader.
- At every stage of education education system must plan for preparation of three types of leaders - Academic, Administrative and Field Specific.
- Future leaders must internalise required leadership skill - Hard and Soft, Researching, Teaching, Reading, Learning, Listening, Communicating, Managing, Negotiating, Evaluating, Financing etc.
- Learners must possess certain quality to become a successful leader- Ideal, Honesty, Capability to Lead from the Front, Knowledgeable, Social, Human, Aesthetic, Democratic, Integrity, Inclusiveness, Capacity to Judge, etc.
- Development of cultural harmony in the light of Indian culture as a whole.

- Development of language integrity through knowledge of more and more languages.
- Formation of potential specific groups for the development of leadership quality.
- Inclusion of yoga practice in the curriculum of every stage of education as a compulsory input.

The task to provide more and specific time in our educational institution for leadership quality is a difficult one as our academic centres are already burdened, but we have no way accept to act if we have to learn to lead & have to lead the world once again. Population dividend is in our favour, but we need to channelise the human resources of the nation for our all round development. We cannot find any other means, except the education and our education centres, to grow & develop. We can rule the mankind, as we did in past, if our academicians and young population interact scientifically to chanellise nation human resources. We were leaders of the world, we are still capable to lead with harmony and hopefully the young mass of the nation by acquiring leadership qualities in their educational institutions will lead the globe once again and that too by following the principle of scientific humanism. National Curriculum Framework for School Education (2000) narrates properly, "The task of building an enlightened, strong and prosperous nation rests on the shoulders of its children who are to be cherished, nurtured and developed with tenderness and care." Placement of quality leaders for our schools and preparation of leaders in our schools need to be the part of our national education plan,policy and action.

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