

## Influence of Western Knowledge and Culture upon Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and his Philosophy of Education

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### **Abstract:**

*Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar belonged to Indian enlightened community. His ideas of education and enthusiasm were really fruitful and influential to the Indian people. His contribution, for the salvation of their countrymen is really praiseworthy. He has inspired his countrymen in many ways adopting several strategic measures. He was the pioneer of Bengal Renaissance. His theoretical and practical efforts helped to break the long-standing superstitions and bad practices that were devastating the society. It is expected that the proposed research clearly identify the impact of his efforts on the 19th and early 20th century Indian society. With the help of this study we have understood that how European science and technology influenced him and how Bengal Renaissance occurred, which later on enlightened and developed the then backward society. He was not only the great man of India, but also famous internationally. So a lot of research might be completed about his philosophy of education. The present research has tried to find out the influence of Western knowledge and culture upon Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar.*

### I. INTRODUCTION

A new era was instigated in the 19th century Bengal. This time the western liberal ideas and thoughts entered into Bengal. The influx of western knowledge, art and culture as well as advanced moral values enriched the mental horizon of Bengal liberal intelligence. It influenced Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar to initiate social, religious and literary reformation to purge the evils from the then society, which arose from the ignorance and superstitious beliefs. It also influenced him to improve the condition of common people in the light of western liberal knowledge and ideals. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar remained the key figure amongst the then humanitarian intellectuals. He dedicated himself towards setting up the education system of the country. He tried to reform the traditional mode of education and attempted to remove the veil of darkness from the mind of his countrymen.

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar played a pioneering role in expanding modern education and social mobilisation during the nineteenth century Bengal. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar not merely confined himself to the role of a preacher towards spreading education within the superstition engrossed Hindu community through their native language, but also engaged himself in the practical field of social changes like the initiation of widow-marriage.

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, the genuine scholar of Bengal and the bright star in the sky of Bengal Renaissance, was in the middle of 19th century. Vidyasagar was a teacher, reformer, educator and philanthropist. Several times he argued against the then government's decision about education. He was in the middle of the British government and his natives. Government wanted to lead the education system in their style. They did not care the Indian sentiment, culture or heritage. On the other hand the Indian natives were

superstitious and highly rituals. They were not aware of their education. In this condition Vidyasagar wanted to reform both the society and education. He tried to break the unusual rituals and wanted to construct the society on reality, honesty and cooperation. To establish a fruitful syllabus he sent several reports to the government officials and argued. He established many schools, recruited many teachers and helped the poor from his own funding. He also wrote books for the children when he felt the lacking of schoolbooks.

The nineteenth century is very much important for the people of Indian subcontinent. From the beginning of the nineteenth century India experienced a socio cultural and intellectual awakening, which laid the foundation for the movement that transformed India to a modern nation. The liberal tradition of Europe filtered through the prism of Bengal; this time deeply influenced this process of modernization. This flowering manifest itself in various spheres which questioned and shook the foundation of tradition in the spheres of social reformation, in religion, education, women's role and status, social practices, philosophy, art etc. (Amin, 1989). This European scientific knowledge and ideas began to influence the people of India. A number of intellectuals displayed a significant enthusiasm to absorb this knowledge. Remarkable intellectuals are Raja Rammohan Roy, Akhay Kumar Dutta, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Bankeem Chandra Chattergy, Keshab Chandra Sen, Rabindranath Tagore and many other intellectuals of the Nineteenth century Bengal. Among them we would like to discuss the philosophical thought of education of great thinker Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar. He acquired western knowledge and tried his best to implement it to his own society. He was pragmatic and was deeply affected by the western knowledge and culture. So the study also wants to reveal the effect of the western knowledge and culture on him.

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## II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar was the great Bengali intellectual, who was committed in his whole life for developing the Bengali Society. Education is the first element to build up a nation. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar realized this truth.

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar was an educator but did not write his philosophical thought of education in a single book or essay. Education has two sides. One is the academic or institutional and the other is social. Vidyasagar traveled both sides of education frequently. His academic activities of education are well known to us. We can learn some social attitudes from him such as humanity, patience, liberality, greatness, intendment, adoration, patriotism etc. Till today his image is not dimmed. He is such a great person and his work is very much needed for present days. We have passed about 150 years from those glorious days but still we remember with full honor as earlier. Though he struggled against the then conservative society to establish humanities along with all castes and religions, it is undoubtedly true that he started to do so.

Vidyasagar's education related reports and letters are the carrier of his educational ideas. Despite being a Sanskrit pundit (Teacher), he realized that Toll, Chatuspathi, Patshala or only Sanskrit education is not enough for modern education, such as science, philosophy etc. He felt that either Eastern or Western education is not enough to make modern nation. Vidyasagar felt that realistic education could make modern society. He did not desire theoretical excellence or commercial purpose of education; rather he wanted mundane happiness and progress for the society. Our nation would have to practise modern science as well as logic. He found new meaning of life through learning western moral values and culture. The development of Bangla (mother tongue), it was another attempt of his educational thought. Vidyasagar's education related works; several types of letters, reports and opinions about education reform showed his contemporary, creative and pragmatic sense. We have observed that Vidyasagar's philosophy of education has been shown in a plan in 1846. Moral of that plan was, science and civilization of the western world would be received cordially, everything would be done in mother tongue and to enrich mother tongue, proficiency of both English and Sanskrit language would have to be required.

Our nation has been created many years ago and we have become independent before 43 years. But till now we are not sure that what type of education is necessary for the nation. Researches are going on everyday about our state policy of education. If this research finds out the basic theme of philosophy of education of Vidyasagar, it can be helpful to our society.

## III. OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENT RESEARCH

1. To reveal the philosophy of education of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar.
2. To discover the influence of Western knowledge and culture upon Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, and
3. To reveal the impact of his Philosophy of Education on the then Bengal Society.

## IV. METHODOLOGY

The research methodology of the study was exploratory and explanatory in nature and was based on documentary analysis. To conduct this research both primary (Books, Essays and articles written by Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar) and secondary data (authentic writings, books, thesis, articles, documents etc. of eminent authors on Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and on present issue) were used.

Standard methods of historical investigation have been used in the research. First the information has been collected from primary and secondary sources. Secondly the relevant literatures have been studied deeply. Then in order to remove contradictions among some information of those had been made carefully and in this regard objectivity had been maintained strictly. Then these have been analyzed in the light of our purpose. The analysis was followed by logical inferences, i.e., both inductive and deductive method have been used in this research and later led to generalizations that sound valid unless overthrown by further investigation and evidence.

## V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar (1820-1891) was a Sanskrit pundit, educator, reformer and writer and also was a philanthropist. He was one of the greatest intellectuals and activists of the nineteenth century. His real name was Ishwar Chandra Bandopadhyay. Hindu Law Committee of examination gave the title "Vidyasagar", which means "Ocean of knowledge", to him as an honor for his knowledge and excellence. But his contribution to the Bangalee society is far more than just scholastic. He is considered as one of the most glowing figures of the Bengal Renaissance in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Vidyasagar picked up the social reformation work where Raja Rammohan Roy left it. He laid the foundation of the modern Bengali language, as we know it today.

Vidyasagar's great effort was to enlighten the then medieval superstitious nation. He didn't try this in a single work at once. Rather he tried in different ways to modify the nation.

Vidyasagar was never recognized on the question of spirituality, but he moved freely in the field of paying attention to human mind. He carried out responsibilities as a teacher and an educationalist for teaching children alphabets from writing textbooks for higher classes in college. Including these books 'Bornoporichay (1855)', 'Kathamala (1856)', 'Charitabali (1856)', 'Jivancharita (1849)', 'Banglar Itihaas (1848)', his literary translations include romanticism of 'Sakuntala (1854)', depth of sorrow in 'Sitarvanavas (1860)', sense of humour in 'Bhrantivilaas (1869)'. He mixed the system of cultural logical judgement with the language of modern humour and wrote 'Oti Alpa Hoilo (1873)', 'Abar Oti Alpa Hoilo (1873)', 'Brajabilaas (1884)', 'Ratnpariksha (1886)' etc. On the other hand in literary criticism, he was logical, avid reader and critic. He has introduced uniqueness in literary criticism in 'Sanskrit Bhasa O Sanskrit Shahitya Shashtra Bishyok Prostab (1854)' Vidyasagar was an active person. He has made himself distinguished from others through his works. He has said nothing special about himself. His autobiographical composition 'Atma Charita' reveals his different personality.

Although he started his autobiography in simple language, he was unable to finish and so readers remained dissatisfied. He has written in a painful language of the heart of an upset father suffering from the pangs of separation, 'Provabati Somvason' centers round the premature death of a daughter of his friend. His literary world based on the background of different subjects is not little in terms of its magnitude. His language is according to the diverse expression of a wide range of subjects. The contribution of Vidyasagar to Bengali literature is considered in two ways – subject matter and rules of language. Modern critics think that his vocabulary has rescued Bengali literature from roughness.

Vidyasagar's mission was to spread education to broaden the outlook of his countrymen. He knew that, none, but education can remove the superstitious beliefs and practices prevailing in the society. To awake his community science and scientific knowledge was essential. Most of the countrymen of Vidyasagar were illiterate. To illuminate the mental horizon of the people of Bengal, he tried to teach them following the international science and philosophy. But there was scarcity of books in Bengali. He took the responsibilities on his shoulder for writing books in Bengali. His main books were to spread education, development of realistic education etc, which was essential for the then Bengal society. He suggested that the backward nation needs pragmatic education, which would help them to uplift their condition. For this reason he wrote several books following the pragmatic and utilitarian way, not in spiritual way.

He took part to transform society from medievalism to modernism through various works, such as policy making in education and establishing schools. To make proper teacher he established Normal School, solved the problems of textbooks and many others.

He struggled against illiteracy as well as prejudice throughout his life. He was firm minded, argumentative and confident in modern thinking. All knew his pioneering view of teaching English language and logical scientific method. He also desired that education should be realistic, not impersonal. Humanistic aspects should be considered more than spiritualistic aspects to develop the social and moral values.

Western scientific education as well as Mill's 'logic', Bacon's 'Novum Organum' were introduced to the curriculum of Sanskrit College. He meant by 'education' social, realistic and scientific education. His aim was to enrich Bengali Language through the practice of Sanskrit.

Vidyasagar's ideology was to spread education in mother tongue. He felt need of mother tongue. For this he established Bengali Schools, Model Schools as well as women schools. Though his mission was not completely successful for the lacking of government's help, yet those activities proved Vidyasagar's views on education. His activities stirred the unconscious, superstitious nation. He was criticized extremely sometimes in favor or disfavor of him. Despite his initiative to educational movement many liberal and modern educated people also did not accept him cordially. In this context many of the then society became failure to reveal the truth of Vidyasagar's work. That is the common situation of contemporary society of the world. We see the same picture that a creative thinker is not evaluated in his lifetime but after his death became honored.

Vidyasagar's thought, philosophy and reformation still stir us. We did not forget him or his works. Day by day it will be influenced the person, who wants to change the society.

His thinking, sense of realism in his activities, firmness of belief, and sense of life did not allow him to go into oblivion. Although above one hundred years have passed since his death, he is still at the centre of our enquiry. The evaluation of Vidyasagar is going on from the perspective of those points.

## VI. EARLY LIFE OF VIDYASAGAR

Ishwar Chandra was born on Monday the 26th of September 1820 (12 Aswin Bengali Year 1227) in a village called Veerasingha of the then Hoogley (now part of Midnapore) district of West Bengal. His father (Thakurdas Bandyopadhyay) and mother (Bhagavati Devi) were very religious persons. Their economic condition was not solvent and subsequently the childhood of Vidyasagar was spent in abject poverty. But poverty did neither touch his soul, nor could it deter him from his chosen path of achieving his life's goal. After the completion of elementary education at the village school, his father took him to Kolkata. It is admitted that Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar learnt English numbers by following the milestones labels on his way to Kolkata at the age of eight years.

Vidyasagar commenced primary education at the village pathshala (an indigenous Indian school), where language, grammar, arithmetic and other shastras were taught to youngsters. In the pathshala he was a loving student of Pundit Kalikanta Chatterjee for his dedication for learning, modest manners, supreme honesty and great respect.

## VII. AT KOLKATA

After the death of his grandfather, Vidyasagar accompanied his father to Kolkata. His father was employed as accounts receivable clerk with a metal goods importers store at Barobazar. Ishwar joined a pathshaala in neighboring Jorashanko. His father's desire was for him to be educated as a Sanskrit scholar so that he would go back to his village and start a Chuspahathi (a Sanskrit school) thus maintaining the family tradition in teaching Sanskrit. But one family relative - Madhusudan Bachaspati who was then studying at the Sanskrit College - convinced his father to send Vidyasagar to that college arguing that this course of education will allow the young man to gain access to both Sanskrit and English streams of education.

It is not clear as to what role Vidyasagar played in this decision but with the possibility of enhanced job opportunities in the future his father relented. Within a short while Vidyasagar was admitted to the Sanskrit College in grammar class III. As it turned out, this decision was a small turning point in the life of one man, but a giant leap in the history of Bengal.

Young Vidyasagar applied himself to learn with full discipline, diligence and perseverance - often in the most arduous of circumstances. He passed his all of successive annual examinations with great brilliance. His meritorious performance in every field of study rewarded him with prizes and scholarships, which were a welcome relief in his impoverished financial condition. It is here he came in close

contact with half a dozen of Sanskrit scholars who impressed an indelible mark on the young impressionable mind of Vidyasagar.

Vidyasagar graduated himself in law examination conducted by the Hindu Law Committee in the year of 1839. His well-rounded education at Sanskrit College saw him amassing considerable knowledge and mastery in a number of shastras or disciplines - kavya (poetry), alonkar (rhetorics), Vedanta (vedic literature and anthology), smriti (philosophy of law), Nyaya (logic, science and jurisprudence), and jyotish (astronomy). It is here at a tender age the title Vidyasagar was endowed to him. He lived up to that expectation and offered to his society far more than that. In a thousand years that would follow, Bengali people and indeed the world at large would not be able to rid itself of the debt owed to this man.

### VIII. VARIOUS PHILOSOPHICAL THEORIES

There are different types of theory and methodology of education in the world. Every type of theory or methodology has come from different philosophical views. Among all of the theories three are most common and effective. The three theories are discussed below in brief:

1. Idealism,
2. Naturalism, and
3. Pragmatism

These three theories are mainly the general ideas about the world and lives. These three theories are not established only for education. Education is a part of life, so those philosophical theories are related a little bit to education. But life and education are not separated from each other. Some theories of general philosophy have been implemented in educational sector. Some times several theories are assimilated in philosophers theory, though among those any one have been highlighted.

Philosophical views of Idealism and Realism are derived from the ancient Greek philosophers, Plato and Aristotle. These two theories are contemporary to Pragmatism and Existentialism theories. However, educators who share one of these distinct sets of beliefs about the nature of reality presently apply each of these world philosophies in successful classrooms for quality education. Let us try to explore each of these metaphysical schools of thought.

### IX. IDEALISM

Idealism, as a philosophical approach, has as its central tenet that ideas are the only true reality, the only thing worth knowing. In a search of enduring and everlasting truth, beauty, and justice the focus is on conscious reasoning in the mind. Idealistic philosophers think that only 'Idea' is true. They believe in the existence of some spiritual values, which are universal. Truth is universal and unchangeable. It is not dependent on space and time. Plato, father of Idealism, espoused this view about 400 years BC ago, in his famous book, "*The Republic*". According to the belief of Plato, there are two worlds. The first world is the spiritual or mental world, which is eternal, permanent, orderly, regular, and universal. There is also the world of appearance, the world

experienced through sight, touch, smell, taste, and sound, which are changing, imperfect, and disorderly. This division of world is often referred to as the duality of mind and body of people. Reacting against what he perceived as too much of a focus on the closeness of the physical and sensory world, Plato described a utopian society in which "education to body and soul all the beauty and perfection of which they are capable" as an ideal. In his allegory of the cave, the shadows of the sensory world of person must have to overcome with the light of reason or universal truth. To understand truth, one must pursue knowledge and identify with the Absolute Mind. Plato also believed that our soul is fully formed prior to our birth and is perfect and at one with the Universal Human Being. The birth process checks this perfection, so education is required to bring latent ideas (fully formed concepts) to consciousness.

In idealism, the aim of education is to discover and develop each individual's abilities and full moral excellence in order to give better service to society. The curricular gives emphasis on the subject matter of mind: literature, history, philosophy, and religion. Teaching methods focus on handling ideas through lecture, discussion, and Socratic dialogue, a method of teaching that uses questioning to help students discover and clarify knowledge of the learners.

Vidyasagar was not blindly influenced by the whole teachings of Idealism except ethical values. Western Philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle were well known to Vidyasagar, but he did not accept everything blindly in his own thought. Earlier he also rejected Bishop Berkeley's philosophy from the syllabus of Sanskrit College and argued in favor of pragmatic and utilitarian outlook (Umar, 1985).

He also did not believe in the Idealistic view of Indian Philosophy. The Sankhya and Vedanta philosophy accepted in the syllabus of Sanskrit College for another reason (Datta, 1987). He thought that, if anybody learns Sankhya or Vedanta that means Indian philosophy as well as Western philosophy at the same time, he might understand the difference and also the lacking of their own philosophy. He was not interested in ancient Indian Vedic Brahmin's education system, which was mainly idealistic, and religion based.

### X. REALISM

Realists believe that reality exists independently in the human mind. The ultimate reality is the world of physical objects on earth. The focus is on the body or objects. Truth is objective-what can be observed by our sense organs. Aristotle (a student of Plato) broke his mentor's idealist philosophy. Aristotle is called the father of both Realism and the scientific method. In this metaphysical view, the aim is to understand objective reality through "the diligent and unsparing scrutiny of all observable data." Aristotle believed that to understand an object, its ultimate form had to be understood, which does not change. For example, a rose exists whether a person is aware of it or not. A rose can exist in the mind without being physically present, but ultimately, the rose shares properties with all other roses and flowers (its form), although one rose may be red and another piece of a different color. Aristotle also was the first person to teach students logic as a formal discipline in order to be able to reason about physical events

and aspects. The exercise of rational thought is viewed as the ultimate purpose for mankind. The Realist curriculum gives emphasis on the subject matter of the physical world, particularly on the science and mathematics. The teacher organizes and presents content to his students systematically within a discipline, demonstrating use of criteria in making decisions. Teaching methods focus on mastery of facts or contents and basic skills through demonstration and recitation. Students must also demonstrate the ability of thinking critically and scientifically, using observation and experimentation. Curriculum should be scientifically approached, standardized, and distinct-discipline based. Character can be developed through training by the rules of conduct.

## XI. PRAGMATISM

According to pragmatism, only those things that are experienced or observed are real. In this late 19th century American philosophy was focused on the reality of experience. Unlike the Realists and Rationalists, Pragmatists believe that reality is constantly changing and that we learn best through applying our experiences and thoughts to problems when they arise. The universe is dynamic and evolving, a "becoming" view of the world. There is no absolute and unchanging truth, but rather, truth is what works. Pragmatism is derived from the teaching of Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914), who believed that thought must produce action, rather than lingers in the mind and lead to indecisiveness.

John Dewey (1859-1952) applied pragmatic philosophy in his progressive approaches. He believed that learners should and must adapt to each other and to their environment. Schools should give emphasis on the subject matter of social experience. All learning is solely dependent on the context of place, time, and circumstance. People of different cultural and ethnic groups learn to work cooperatively and contribute to a democratic society. The ultimate purpose of doing so is the creation of a new social order. Character development of a person is based on making group decisions in light of consequences.

For Pragmatists, teaching methods focus on practical problem solving, experimenting, and projects, often having students work in groups. Curriculum should bring the disciplines together to focus to solve problems in an interdisciplinary way, rather than passing down organized bodies of knowledge to new learners. Pragmatists believe that learners should apply their knowledge to real situations through experimental inquiry by themselves as this prepares students for citizenship, daily living, and future careers.

Vidyasagar was a realist as well as a pragmatist. His views are reflected in educational thought, personal attitude, and social behavior. He did not believe in re-birth. He told that there is no other world except present material world. He requested his mother to help the poor with the fund what she used in religious work. Once at Kansi he replied in a question of priest that parents is like God to him (Ahmed, 2006).

In education reform movement he initiated many more, which proves his pragmatic view. Though he introduced both vernacular and English language in the college, but emphasized vernacular language first. In the syllabus he

welcomed western knowledge, such as science and technology, realizing the need of modern life. He liked Mill's logic and philosophy, but did not like Barkley's theory. Before him, besides Brahmins, nobody was allowed to study in Sanskrit College. Having become the principal of Sanskrit College he changed that rule and opened it for everybody.

Being a Sanskrit pundit (Teacher), he realized that Toll, Chatuspathi, Patshala or only Sanskrit education is not enough for our countrymen rather modern education, such as science, philosophy etc. are essential to cope with modern world. To build a modern nation western science, technology and values are to be learned by us. Vidyasagar felt with his moderated realistic thought that realistic education is essential instead of spiritualism to make our society a modern one. He did not desire theoretical excellence or commercial purpose of education; rather he wanted mundane peace, happiness and prosperity. Vidyasagar also wanted to set up that people would be self-dependent and fit to survive acquiring the knowledge of realism, social consciousness, modern science as well as logic. He found new meaning of life through western culture. Hence he did not hesitate to criticize the ancient idealistic Hindu philosophy. His motto was to enrich Indian society with modern science and best of modern culture. Students would learn through mother tongue. In the development of Bengali (mother tongue), it was another attempt of his educational thought. Vidyasagar's education related works; several types of letters, reports and opinions about educational reforms show his contemporary, creative and pragmatic sense.

## XII. WESTERN THINKERS' INFLUENCE

This benevolent, hard working, philanthropist was an intensive reader. Everybody knew that he loved to read different kinds of books and some of those books are still now in collection of Bengal Literary Council. He was acquainted with the theme of Western education movement. He collected various kinds of books, like 'National Education', 'Public Education', 'Primary Education', 'Model School', and 'Female Education' etc. many other contemporary books, which were published from England. Vidyasagar was curious about western theory of education and method of implementation. Amongst those theories, he accepted and implemented only that part which is needed to reform our native education. Mr. Prodig Roy has said in his 'Social personalities' Page: 142, that many other books were in Vidyasagar's collection and those are, 'The Positive Philosophy of August Comte (1853)', 'The History of British India by James Mill (1848)', Cousin M. Victor's 'Cause of The History of Modern Philosophy', 'A System of Logic by J. S. Mill' etc. Above mentioned those famous books prove that how Western Philosophy and knowledge influenced Vidyasagar. Those books had tremendous effect on Vidyasagar's life and work.

**The fundamental theme of Vidyasagar's educational thought was to teach the student morality.** Here is a similarity between Plato and Vidyasagar. To make his Philosopher King Plato emphasized on virtue. In ancient Indian traditional education system, morality was the prior idea. Though he disliked their religion based education system, he was remained unchanged in the subject of morality.

In this connection some contemporary world famous educationists' educational views are being discussed.

**John Locke (1632-1704)** was an English scholar, Physician, scientist, and philosopher. Locke's curricular recommendations included conversational learning of foreign languages, especially French. Locke believed that a sound education began very early in a child's Life. Stressing the maxim of a sound mind in a strong and healthy body, Locke directed attention to a child's physical environment, diet, and activities. Children should breathe fresh air, have plenty of sleep, eat light and plain food, bathe frequently, exercise regularly, and have time for play and recreation. Locke insisted learning should be a gradual process. The child's instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic should be slow, gradual and cumulative.

**Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712 - 1778)** was a Swiss-born, French theorist, profoundly influenced social, political, and educational ideas. Rousseau studied for a variety of careers but achieved fame as a social and educational philosopher. Rousseau's most famous educational treatise is his novel, *Emile*, written in 1762, which tells the story of the education of a boy from infancy to adulthood. Rousseau's novel is an attack on the doctrine of child depravity and on exclusively verbal and literary education. Such doctrines and practices, he felt, ignored the child's natural interests and inclinations. Society has imprisoned us in a set of institutions. The child needs to be freed from one of the most coercive of these institutions -the school.

Rousseau emphasized the role of nature in child's development and education. He also said that nature is the best teacher, gives instruction in science and geography. By watching the cycles of growth and development of plants and animals, Children can learn natural science. According to Rousseau, there are five stages of growth: infancy, childhood, boyhood, adolescence, and youth. Each stage requires an appropriate kind of education to stimulate further development and growth. Most important, the early and formative stages of growth are to be free from the corruption of society. Rousseau wanted to liberate the child and adult from artificial social restrictions. He said that if pleasure was the result, then child earned his own reward.

**Johann Herbart (1776-1841)** was a German philosopher known for his contributions to moral development in education and for his creation of a methodology of instruction designed to establish a highly structured mode of teaching. Herbart attended the conventional German schools and then went on to study philosophy at the University of Jena, where he worked with the famous professor Gottlieb Fichte. Early in Herbart's career, while he was a tutor in Switzerland, he became interested in the educational theory of Pestalozzi. In 1809 Herbart was appointed to the chair of philosophy at the University of Konigsberg. He now turned to serious scholarship and conducted a seminar in the psychological and philosophical aspects of education.

Especially Herbert emphasizes morality in education. He says that moral development is basic and necessary to all for educational goals or purposes.

**Dewey (1859-1852)** was the American philosopher and educator. He was a pioneer whose synthesis of Darwinism's evolutionary theory is remarkable. Pragmatic philosophy and

the scientific method formed the basis for his work as an educational reformer. There is no doubt that Dewey's ideas influenced the course of educational development in the United States and throughout the world. His concepts of learning by experience and by problem solving were particularly influential in educating the American teachers. Viewing education as a process of social activity, Dewey recognized that the school was intimately related to the society that it served. Vermont was the birth place of Dewey. He received his doctoral degree in philosophy from Johns Hopkins University in 1884. Dewey's years at the University of Chicago, where he headed the combined departments of philosophy, psychology, and pedagogy, was important for the development of his educational theory - As the director of the University of Chicago's Laboratory School from 1896 until 1904, he tested his Pragmatic educational philosophy by using it as the basis of learning activities.

Dewey believed that learners want to explore their environment and gain control over it. In exploring their world, learners encounter both personal and social problems.

Dewey outlined three levels of activity that would be used at the school. The first level, for preschool children, involved exercise of the sensory organs and development of physical coordination. The second stage involved use of the materials and instruments found in the environment. The school was to be rich in the raw materials that energized children's interests and caused them to build, to experiment, and to create. Children in the third stage discovered new ideas, examined them, and used them.

Dewey's concept of the school was social, scientific, and democratic. The school introduced children to society and their heritage based on each child's own interests, needs, and problems. The school as a miniature society was the means of bringing children into social participation. The school was scientific in the sense that it was a social laboratory in which children and youth could test their ideas and values (**Omstetein and Levine,1981**).

The pioneers in education reform movement of different countries made distinctive contributions to the development of education in their own countries. In challenging the dogma of child depravity, Comenius, Locke, and Rousseau developed a method of education more closely based on the learner's natural growth and on the child's natural goodness. Herbart's principles of instruction and moral development have strongly influenced classroom teachers.

In child education Vidyasagar's view was from simple to complex that we have seen in the first section of his written 'Bornoporichay'. In the notice of second section of Bornoporichay, he mentioned "Continuously learning pronunciation and classification of letters may bore the students, so some interesting stories are included along with the lesson" (**Datta, 1987**). There also mentioned some moral advices for the students in the second section of Bornoporichay, some are noted here.

#### **First Lesson:**

1. Never say bawdy to others. To say bawdy is a great offense. Nobody likes him, who does so?
2. Be attentive from early life. Everybody likes him, who studies attentively. Nobody loves who is lazy to study.

3. Always be truthful to others. Everybody likes him, who is truthful; nobody likes him, who is a liar to anybody.
4. Always be polite to your parents. You should follow your parents as they wish.

### **Second Lesson:**

1. Without hard labor nobody can learn or be established, so everybody should study with firm effort.
2. Don't touch other's prosperity. As stealing is a crime, so do not steal. Everybody hates him, who steals.
3. Don't quarrel with others. He becomes the enemy of everybody, who does so.
4. Don't loose attention, during study. If you do so, you cannot remember anything for a long time.

### **Third Lesson (Good Boys):**

1. Good boys love their parents very much. They always keep in mind what their parents articulate and never forget.
2. Good boys always love their brothers and sisters. Do not quarrel with your brothers and sisters. Good boys never eat anything without sharing with his brothers and sisters.
3. Good boys always obey their teacher's advices cordially. Teachers also love them because they never ignore their teachers.

Moreover Vidyasagar stated many advisable stories from fourth to tenth lesson in the name of 'Jadab', 'Nabin', 'Madhab', and 'Ram' 'Pita Mata (Parents)' and 'Surendra' (Datta, 1987). Vidyasagar wrote many books for the children. Those books are magnificent. A programmed learning may be organized by using these books. He created a situation in Bornoporichay that teaches a child to be able to adopt himself with the society gradually. First, 'Bornoporichay' was into two sections, then step-by-step 'Kathamala' and 'Bodhodoy'. The linguistic knowledge of the student has been increased in Bodhodoy. Then he gave the student gradually 'Akkhan Manjury', 'Charitabali', and 'Jibancharita'. In this way he completed the way to have good character and norms. Later he supplied pure literature such as, 'Sakuntala', 'Shitar Banabas', and 'Bhranti Bilash'. Along with those books he suggested 'Upakramanika', 'Byakaran Koumudi' and 'Rijhupath' to learn Sanskrit language.

Vidyasagar was conscious about the learning of the children, so that neither they feel boring nor inattentive. For this he selected those stories that the children like. It is clearly understood that Vidyasagar wanted to make a new nation through writing modern, scientific and interesting books. In this process he stirred the consciousness and wisdom of students. Here is the difference between Vidyasagar and ancient Indian traditional education system. There was no such type of initiatives in the medieval Indian education system.

Humanism was the foundation of Vidyasagar's education scheme. Human welfare was the aim of his educational thought. He wanted to keep free his philosophy of education from spiritualism as well as religion. He was the great humanist and did everything in favor of mankind. He was the Sanskrit Pundit but he was not blind to Indian traditional system of spiritualism. He never sought to reject the practice

of Sanskrit shastras and literature, but said about the modification of method and tried to do this heart and soul (Ghosh, 1371 B.S.). Greek philosopher Protagoras was a humanist. His view was 'Man is the measure of all things'. He was mainly a sophist. The Sophists taught the people by money. Vidyasagar was also a humanitarian. But he did not take unauthorized money except his salary. Rather most of the time he spent money for the poor pupil and for the development of schools.

Finally, he was a great philanthropist, patriot and was stimulated by Bangalee sentiments. He was a great humanist also. He had a soft and open mind beyond his strict principles, what was desired to help the ill-fated people. He worked every minutes of his life for mankind. On 29th July in 1891 the great Bengal genius Vidyasagar died.

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