

Abstract of the Thesis

Introduction

The topic of ‘Concept of Character Building in Sanskrit Literature – A Study’ was chosen because of the need of the hour, as the world is on the brink of disastrous collapse due to the evil forces which are bent upon the disturbing peace and harmony which this planet is blessed with. These evil forces are exploiting and playing with poverty, religious dogmas and beliefs of innocent people. Technological explosion witnessed during last century, continuous expansion of knowledge base and commercialization of life style has strangled the student community to anarchic condition. The youth energy is being dissipated, inviting physical and mental stress. This is where a strong character build up dictum will help the entire youth community in general and Nation at large. The message of Character Building is excellently covered in Sanskrit literature; however same required to be put up in coherent manner and the language understandable in the present environment with implementable Strategy. This is covered in the first chapter. Learning of Sanskrit itself is one of the essential requirement for Character Building. Sanskrit literature especially scriptures are great source, for drawing the aspects and attributes of Character Building. They also offer implementable Strategy in the form of rituals, stories, musical composition and so on. These are required to be augmented and strengthened with modern technology and suitable environmental condition prevailing amongst the youth community.

Framework of Thesis

The thesis consists of six chapters. It is from repository of Scriptures and literature, known and proven texts like *BhagavadGita*, *Vivekacudamani*, Selected *Upanishads* and *Nitisatakam* are chosen for analytical study and drawing the aspects of Character Build up. However supportive literature of Sanskrit from epics, Ayurveda and other have been referred. It was revealed to me that directly embarking on Scriptures would not be sufficient, unless background information on Indian philosophical thoughts is projected, especially for the students who are not conversant with Sanskrit and Vedantic concepts and terminology. Therefore a separate chapter on ‘Indian philosophical thought’ is introduced with main emphasis on *Sad darśanas* (The six systems of Indian philosophical thoughts), which forms a part of the second chapter.

The main backbone of thesis is the third chapter. The important point in choosing *Bhagavadgītā* amongst the vast ocean of *Sanskrit* literature as a guiding material for study of Character Building is its universal appeal and covering the basic philosophy of human behavioral science. It being epitome of *Sanskrit* literature, the study of the same would be apt beginning to identify and elaborate important aspects of Character Building. *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* is another classic chosen, as Shankara has beautifully covered the aspect of spirituality which is one of the major attribute of Character Building. *Nītiśatakam* of Bhartrhari's is one of the master piece on *Niti* - policy which dictates morality, ethics and behavioral science. The *slokas* cover the wide aspects of human behavior, narrated in simple *Sanskrit* language. Upanisads are philosophical torch bearers for humanities, however they more than hundred in numbers. Few Characters from the principle Upanisads are chosen to demonstrate the Character Building. Classification of age group right from embryonic stage to adulthood has been evolved and presented so that the Character building can be indoctrinated at appropriate age. Foundation of the Character Building has to be very strong and the appropriate characteristic are required to be infused at right stage of child development.

The life of some the legendary personalities are covered in chapter four to exhibit Character Building aspects, as there is no need to reinvent wheel. The period of these personality is starting with Jagadguru Adi Shankaracharya to the poet-prophet of alternative medicine, Dr. Deepak Chopra of twenty first Century. Chapter five of the thesis covers the application of Man Making with the golden principles for Character Development. The chapter last chapter of the thesis encompasses the essence of the total work on Character Building done under this project.

Sanskrit literature

There is no other treatise in the world which can match the philosophical excellence covered in Gita for application under all situation. All the eighteen chapters Gita have been analytically studied from the view of drawing Character Building attributes and found that every chapter offers new dimension with interwoven connection and some repetition as an empathetic move. Most of the attributes are interpreted as for realization but it is found that they are equally applicable to house holders and any Sadhaka for accomplishment of any noble mission. Krishna at the end his discourse, offers last word to Arjuna that he should listen to him without egoism

and being emotional. Follow your *svadharma* and *sadbhava* and pass on this most valuable divine message to all mankind for better world order.

Though lot of literature and commentaries and definition are available on the on the subject of spirituality but the most appropriate description appears to be in Vivekacūḍāmaṇi by Shankara. This is known as Sadhana-chatustaya. The three character portrayed from Upanisads are Nachiketa in Kathopanishad, Uma in kenopnisad and Yajnavalkya in Brhadaranyaka Upanishad. The exemplary legendary personalities chosen for Character Building are:

- (a) AdiŚaṅkarācārya – He is recognized as world-teacher (Jagadguru) and benefactor of mankind (Lokasankara). He was philosopher for intellectuals and spiritual leader for the masses. He was strong believer and practicing saint for India's strength as nation of 'Unity and diversity.'
- (b) Swami Vivekananda – Eight volumes of "*Complete works Swami Vivekananda*" have been perused to strengthen, understand and substantiate the Character Building aspects.
- (c) Swami Chinmayananda – His main mission was Man Making. He has written commentaries for all principle Upanisads and established Chinmaya mission in all major cities in India and abroad. His two volumes 'The Art of Man Making' based on talks on at AIR just after independence covering 18 Chapters of BG were very popular.
- (d) Sri Aurobindo Ghosh – He was totally brought up in Western environment till Maharaja of Baroda picked him and employed him with State administration and later on as a lecturer and Vice Principal of Baroda College. He was freedom fighter and dreamt of India leading on the front of spirituality. His published work on analysis of scriptural treatise gives new dimension and outlook. (1872 1950)
- (e) Dr. Deepak Chopra – He is known as 'The poet-prophet of alternative medicine'. Has written more than 26 books, which are translated into thirty-five languages. Brought up in Indian traditional environment with education in English medium School and graduated in Allopathic medicine. An ardent follower and student of Ayurveda, having an innovative approach in practicing medical profession.

Śaṅkarācārya has already spelled out how fortunate we all are having taken birth on this beautiful planet, which has been abode of saintly personalities, offering wisdom through overflowing philosophical doctrines encompassed in Sanskrit literature.

There are number of important issues to which Swami Vivekananda has drawn attention and offered a solution to bring back the derailed Education policy and reestablished it. Now that the New Education Policy 2020 is on anvil, all concerned should look into the valuable input from these saintly personalities so that it is laid on sound foundation. Some important points which emerge from the above statements are:

- (a) Education is the only solution.
- (b) Decentralization is necessary.
- (c) Centers of education should impart value education as well.
- (d) Skill based training is equally important for vocational approach
- (e) Teachers training helps to nurture the future generations

Following are the highlights of chapter five.

- (a) Prayers, Mantras and *Gitan* in Sanskrit language have great value in CB.
- (b) The art of storytelling is almost vanishing from present generation and lot of material is available in Sanskrit especially for children.
- (c) A 'Trilingual Formula' for recitation is presented for overcoming the language issue especially for Children.
- (d) The stories, cartoons, Study materials, recreational material and other skill development are also available in audio visual devices for present generation.

Importance of Ayurveda in character building is definitely there. Health is most important for Character Building. This is offered by Ayurveda and few aspects are mentioned below as an example.

- (a) Each of the *dosha* are dominant and prevalent in Nature. After discovery of your body type, one has to balance these timing with the Nature. Maintaining balance of *dosha* percentage in your body will keep the body healthy and no disease can affect you.
- (b) Strict maintenance of '*Dinacarya* – Daily routine' is key to keeping body healthy.

(c) Practicing regularly *yoga* covering *pranayama*, *asanas* and *dhyana* is essential for maintaining health. Breathing, posturing, etc. are no doubt helps in yoga; but they are physical and exercise to cognitive faculty is the main requirement.

The Thesis focusses not only on the theoretical concepts of Character Building but also the applied side. Unless and until all of these or part of these fundamentals are not practiced then the desired result, in terms of Character Building, may not be achieved. The reason for this entire exercise is to imbibe in the society in every layman for strong character. Strongly built character can always contribute to family, society, state, country and universe on the whole. Today's society largely need such leaders who can contribute their might for the nation. This is what will make the country proud and strong. May it be academics or extra-curricular activities! An example of such is already evinced by us in the recent Olympics and especially in the Paralympics wherein the country bagged a number of medals making all of us proud. Thus, Character Building is not just a concept but much more. It is the foremost required quality in nation building as well. Its effect largely on the society is also visible. We hope for the day when a society stands upright with all such inherent qualities portrayed by our Sastras in terms of Character Building. That is entire purpose of writing this Thesis. It is concluded that important aspects of Character Building are strong points and core competency of Indian subcontinent. The leadership in these can change the present chaotic world scenario.
