



## Educational Philosophy of Sri Sathya Sai Baba

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**Abstract:** Education is a continuous and life long process. It is the process of development from infancy to maturity. It includes the effect of everything which influences human personality. Education means growth and growth never stops. It is to bring about the growth of education through experience and activity. Every experience and activity leads to some sort of learning and enrichment to the learner's mind.

### Introduction

Since the creation of man in the world, constant efforts have been made to understand his origin, his aims, his diverse relationships and his destiny. Different thinkers tried to interpret man in their own ways. But the most important basis of understanding man is through philosophy which is mainly concerned with an inquiry into reality. Lives of great men prove that philosophy results in a certain way of life, in certain beliefs, values and ideals formulated in terms of experiences and background of the person who expresses them. Education, on other hand, is the dynamic side of philosophy. It is a process of initiating the child into the ways of adult life. It is a multifaceted process, involving the learner, the teacher, the content, the method, the environment and so on. Education is an essential human virtue. Education humanizes man and fashions him for the society. It is the cultural or the social aspect of human life which signifies man's supreme position and thus constitutes the noblest work of God.

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influences human personality. Education means growth and growth never stops. It is to bring about the growth of education through experience and activity. Every experience and activity leads to some sort of learning and enrichment to the learner's mind.

If philosophy is speculative, education is the practical side of philosophy. Philosophy shows the way to be followed by education. With this, education becomes an applied philosophy. Philosophy formulates the aims and methods of education and its process. Sri Sathya Sai Baba said "Education has two aspects, the worldly and the spiritual. Worldly education brings out the latent knowledge pertaining to the physical world. Spiritual education brings out the inherent divinity in man. So both worldly and spiritual education is essential, without which the human life has no value".

Sri Sathya Sai Baba proclaimed that many revolutionary changes are needed in the sphere of education by merging secular and spiritual education into a philosophy and pedagogy of education with the power to better serve the needs of society. He has inspired and



guided the development of an educational system that achieves this goal. The essential premise of the system is the recognition of divine nature in every one that can be assisted and nurtured through all forms of educational activity at every level of educational advancement. Sri Sathya Sai Baba has foreseen the need for value based education and has taken concrete steps to implement the same in to a formal education system known as Sri Sathya Sai system of value based integral education. Sathya Sai Education thus entails a lifelong process of transformation, and aims to strengthen the sacred connections between the individual, the family, the society and all creation. Keeping this in his mind, Sri Sathya Sai Baba has chosen education as the foundation for his mission to lead humanity away from the precipice of self annihilation. Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL), of which Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is the Chancellor, is providing free education to students at first class to Ph.D. Sri Sathya Sai Baba's thought has fructified as process of transformation beginning with Balvikas and leading up to a marvelously unique university, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning was accredited by NACC with A++ in the year 2002 and this high rating is continued upto today with a 3.63 CGPA in four point scale. It has flourished as a unique university combining the inculcation of human values with academic excellence with uncompromisingly high standards. The SSSIHL aims at building of the character of each individual and drawing out the divinity inherent in him. The emphasis is on practicing the fundamental human values of truth, right-conduct, peace, love and non-violence, all subsumed in the

substratum of selfless love. Sri Sathya Sai Baba calls this true education, as it is not limited to the intellect or reasoning but flows from the heart. The most distinguishing feature of this educational system is its philosophy that helps students to develop a good character, which paves in fostering the development of skills that will help them to earn a good living.

### **Research Studies**

A psychological evaluation was done by Kulakarni (1975) of Sri Sathya Sai Balvikas centers, Mumbai and found that the children receiving the balvikas training manifest positive sign of improved personality, better developed cultural values and a more enlightened outlook on life.

Patel in 1981 studied the value orientation in the educational institutions run by the Sri Sathya Sai organization in India and found the good impact of Sri Sathya Sai Baba's teachings on the development of the concept regarding life among the final year students studying in the colleges situated at Bangalore and Anantapur.

Sambi Punam did an experimental study in 1983 on Balvikas children and found that the children who attended balvikas classes were remarkably high in all areas of moral judgement, self-concept and human values. Sambhi Punam did a comparative study of the values existing among Sri Sathya Sai higher secondary schools and central schools in 1990 and found that Sathya Sai higher secondary schools are having the highest score in values and those of central schools are having the lowest score in values. The value pattern of the student studying in the Sathya Sai



higher secondary school is significantly high.

Villy Nanji conducted a research study on the impact of Balvikas on students, gurus and parents in 1983 and found that Sri Sathya Sai balvikas had highly positive impact on attitude and behavior pattern of students as well as of gurus and parents, and all parents spontaneously reported that they found a lot of change in their children's life style. The parents found a change in their own behavior and attitude as a result of their children joining the Balvikas classes. Parents felt that their children turned better not only in studies but also in co-curricular activities. Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Programme Trust conducted an intensive study in the primary classes of sixteen schools spread in thirteen states in 1983 and found that there was significant positive impact of the Programme on the practice of values by the children in their homes across all the thirteen States.

Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Research took up psychological evaluation of Sathya Sai Balvikas centers, Mumbai and Bhopal in 1997 and found that Sri Sathya Sai balvikas Moral and Spiritual training Programme is effective in building up a good character and balvikas centers have succeeded to a certain extent in achieving their objectives.

Ramachandran in 1988 did a critical study of the development of Human Values among secondary school pupils and found that the awareness of human values as stressed by Sri Sathya Sai Baba greatly helped the school students.

Madhu Kapani conducted a study on 'Education in Human Values' in 1990 and found that the five basic values; truth, righteous conduct, peace, love and non-violence include in a balanced way propounded moral insights of the world's great enduring civilizations.

Shanthi conducted a case study on 'Value Education Imparted in Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School' in 1992 and found that the children were very much influenced by the value education and they had assimilated the values to a great extent.

Nanda R.T. studied in 1996 contemporary approaches to value education in India including Sai approach in Balvikas both theoretically as well as empirically and found that the Sai approach to value education is indeed very enlightened, functional and worthy of universal implementation.

Manchishi conducted an impact study on the Sri Sathya Sai Education in human values programme and found that it had a positive impact on pupil's development and was displayed in the general behavior and the level of discipline; readiness to abide by school's regulations, willingness to work hard towards improving academic results and give volunteer service to schools. The teachers became dedicated to their work, value conscious and displayed great improvement in their professional competence.

Phani Dhurjati in 2010 conducted an experimental study on 'Impact of Balvikas classes in developing values among children' in the elementary schools of Guntur and found that the experimental group was significantly better than the control group in the



areas of respecting elders, reciting prayers, maintaining discipline in the class room, following human values, moral values etc.. He concluded that there is a great impact of Balvikas classes in inculcating values among children.

Sai Bhavani conducted an experimental study on 'Impact of Balvikas classes in developing values among children' in Sathya Sai Schools at Guntur town in the year 2011 and found that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group. She concluded that Balvikas classes had a good impact in developing values among children.

Gokak, V.K. (1979) conducted a study on "Comparative analysis of the Sathya Sai experiments in education in India and experiments done at the International Institute of Integral Human Sciences in Canada. He revealed that Sri Sathya Sai Baba's aim was to produce a new man through a judiciary blending of spiritual moral and modern contents of education.

Doctor, V. conducted a study on Psychological Evaluation of Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas Centres – Bombay in 1983.

### **Methodology**

The present study, 'The Educational Philosophy of Sri Sathya Sai Baba' was done by following content analysis. The analyzed content dealt with relationships and development of generalizations, principles or theories that have universal validity and it added knowledge to what is already known. The present study is a disciplined enquiry on Sri Sathya Sai Baba's observations, propositions and practices in educational philosophy.

As per procedure, representative sample of the material was analyzed and classified. Most of the available books of the Educational Philosopher, Sri Sathya Sai Baba were collected for the present study. The classification system involved the collection of content into a rational system. Contents with meaningful similarities were grouped together. Units of content, having greater similarity with other units of the same group were considered as a category. The categories adopted were related by some unifying principle. Care was taken about the above aspects in identifying the categories.

### **Sample of the Study**

The main content of Sri Sathya Sai Baba's teaching was acquired from his talks, discourses and discussions that were edited by N. Kasthuri with Sri Sathya Sai Baba's approval and published by the Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust, Prasanthi Nilayam, Andhra Pradesh, India with relevant titles. The primary source books were about 60 and the secondary sources were about 30.

### **Objectives of the Present Study**

1. To study the bio-sketch of Sri Sathya Sai Baba in depth.
2. To analyse the philosophy of life in view of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.
3. To identify the educational philosophy of Sri Sathya Sai Baba as education for human values.
4. To study the educational programmes of Sri Sathya Sai Baba at various stages.
5. To discuss the relevance of Sri Sathya Sai Educational System to the present day educational system.



### Scope and limitations of the Study

The scope of the study is limited to educational philosophy of Sri Sathya Sai Baba and its related aspects only. A skeletal view of educational Institutions and related aspects up to University level was given. Detailed picture of education only in Balvikas programme was given. The relevance of Sri Sathya Sai education related programmes to the present educational system was focused.

### Findings

1. From the biosketch of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, it is found that he gave priority to education and health; meeting the primary needs like water and safety; meeting social needs like educating the parents, development of skills of the needy and meeting the meta needs by orienting towards spiritual development.
2. The philosophy of life of Sri Sathya Sai Baba was crystallized into five human values- Truth, Right conduct, Peace, Love and Non-Violence. In his view these five human values are the pillars on which a wholesome and vibrant society could be built. Sri Sathya Sai Baba's educational philosophy was also drawn from these five human values. These five human values were also proposed by National Curriculum Framework for School Education' 2000 as the core universal values.
3. Sri Sathya Sai Educational System provides value based integral education that aims at achieving excellence at all needs of human personality through a blend of secular and spiritual education with the objective of moulding professionally sound, socially responsible and spiritually aware citizens.
4. Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Programme is a secular programme that gives equal respect to all faiths and religions, promotes character development and sought to instill in the student, respect and reverence for nature and for the rights of others.
5. Sathya Sai's educational philosophy is inclusive of the aim of preparing the learners for living a valuable life and promoting the same, whether it is personal or social or spiritual.
6. Educare stresses on living the values, loving the values, transferring them to the people around, and transmitting them to the generations of people.
7. Value-oriented education intends to start and get support at home, develop in academic institutions and to experience throughout the life.
8. Its spirit is life- long learning, living lovingly and non-violently to be truthful and peaceful in oneself and with others, and doing the right and appreciating the right actions of others to strengthen them.
9. The sub values touch the varied core characteristics that are to be developed among the growing children at the hands of committed teachers to bring in humane and right conduct.
10. The value based interventions of curriculum not only develops their mental faculties and innate feelings but also broadens their perspective of life.
11. Truth being the most fundamental value, leads the students to be factual, realistic both in secular and spiritual lives. The degenerating society can be regenerated only if the





- tender minds are directed to understand the reality of life of anybody, rather than being egoistic and self-centred with the store of knowledge alone.
12. As the stress is more on action, function, practice of what is learnt, the students develop as good human beings, good citizens of not only the locale but also of the world.
  13. Silent sitting develops how to monitor the mind on one side and as an incubation period that could be followed by creative expressions on the other side.
  14. Group work and cooperative learning develop the spirit of brotherhood among the learners, nature of sharing what they have and others need.
  15. Endurance of the body and mind along with perseverance make them face the challenges of life instead of escaping or defending or complaining easily.
  16. Others- centeredness only can reduce the focus on self and increases empathy which is basic to the welfare of the society and humanity. Learners develop the ability to manage with their emotions and violent tendencies and sensitivity towards others emotions and difficulties, which paves a sound ground for peaceful co-existence as there is understanding of interdependence in life.
  17. Peaceful mind is the healthy mind as it is the happy mind. If the minds of the learners are peaceful the surrounding atmosphere could be peaceful as it reflects in all their interactions.
  18. True peace requires inculcating equanimity, regardless of loss or gain, success or failure, pain or pleasure.
  19. If the learners' interactions are not emotionally charged, their intelligence flowers to bring in right understanding that can lead to right actions. They do not yield to immediate pleasures but develop long vision.
  20. Teacher's love towards students and subject and student's love towards teachers and learning make them totally involved in the process of education. Then only their compassionate hearts can serve whenever and wherever the necessity arises.
  21. Teacher's reality orientation can make people and the growing children humble in understanding their role at the given time to fulfill up to their capacity either at home or school or society or work spot.
  22. The educated mind is like an immovable rock, steady and strong, fearless and daring to face the challenges of life.
  23. Integrity sprouts from the harmony in thought, word and deed of the students. Harmonious relationships with others, with the understanding of oneness lead to the highest aim of education.
  24. Spirituality is that which deletes man's animal nature, nurtures humanness and finally transforms him into a human being. God or the absolute Truth is One irrespective of the religion, which is the secret of self-realization. The very objective of education is found as to experience God or Truth in everything and everywhere.
  25. The teacher must encourage students to strive to realize their full potential as human beings.
  26. The teacher must use the power of discrimination to fight the evil forces



- within him and to foster divine elements through self-awareness.
27. The teacher must have a balance between the materialistic aspects and the spiritual understanding.
  28. The teacher has to tap the divine energy, love among the students.
  29. The teacher has to realize that there is no greater dharma than truth.
  30. Knowing the worth of silence which not only provides relaxation, rest and healing power but also a breeding ground for insights, the teacher has to provide for silent sitting in the classrooms.
  31. The teacher has to motivate the students to get rid of their selfishness and self-interest to render services to the needy.
  32. The teacher has to be watchful of conflicts, prejudices and partialities that arise among the students to set them right through group discussions so that the students' minds can be peaceful.
  33. The teacher has to see that the students appreciate and do regulated breathing, engage in social work through self-reliance programme.
  34. The teacher has to impress upon the students that violence is not merely injuring a living being; it is to hurt any person even by a word, look or a gesture.
  35. The teacher has to aim that students develop good character along with knowledge and skills that help them earn a good living by giving both secular and spiritual education.
  36. The teacher must aim both at human excellence and academic excellence.
  37. The teacher must take care to provide for the development of all the domains of the personality, keeping all the constituents in balance with each other.

38. The process of teaching and learning must integrate these five human values i.e. Truth, Right conduct, Peace, Love and Non-violence into the curriculum.

### Educational Implications

Modern education develops the intellect and imparts skills but does not promote positive qualities. Education must enable a person to discriminate between light and darkness. It must foster and promote the precious wealth of moral strength and spiritual victory. It must purify the inner impulses of man. Mere mastery of books does not entitle a man to be known as 'educated'. Without the mastery of the inner instrument of emotion no man can be deemed to be educated. Education is meant to mould the child into an integrated personality through sustained influence, which is constantly positive in its appeal. The NCF for school education 2000 has proposed that truth, righteous conduct, peace, love, and non-violence are the core universal values that can become the foundation for building the value based integral educational programme, which are realized, practiced and lived by the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Teachers must put their heart and soul in preparing students up to the mark and for this they themselves should be value-oriented. The teachers should put into practice what they preach to the students. They should guide the students properly as they are most important assets of the educational institutions. The teacher must come down to the level of the students. The baby on the floor cannot jump into the arms of the mother when she calls her. The mother has to stoop low to possess the child. In the same way the teacher should come down to the



level of student to teach him. This is a laudable sign of love.

### Conclusion

Education is to purify impulses and emotions and equip one with the physical and mental disciplines needed for drawing upon the springs of calmness and joy that lie in one's own heart. So, the students should be educated because there is no penance equal to a peaceful mind, no greater happiness than contentment, no worse desire than desire and no righteousness than equal mindedness. Ultimately all this brings about unity, purity and divinity to oneself, to the society and to the nation.

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