

Minor Research Project

Dr. Shubha

Department of English, University College, Trivandrum

ENCOUNTERING RELIGIOUS PLURALISM CREATIVELY

This project aims to show how religion has remained and continues to be a potent force in the history of mankind. Religion has an inseparable part in the lives of a majority of human beings influencing culture, politics, economics and ethics. In four chapters the encounters regarding religious pluralism (Introduction), religious diversity (Chapter II) resulting communalism, the scepticism towards secularism (Chapter III) are dealt with by arriving at a creative exposition of the rising concern for religious intolerance through moulding a generation and directing the youth to value based education.

By refraining from religious education the educational institutions can resolve issues created by religious intolerance by directing youth to employable skills and providing livelihood facility with the help of Government sponsored scholarship schemes and employment opportunities. The responsibility of religious education is to be entrusted to family and the state ought to be concerned mainly with compulsory education for all. The curriculum and other learning practices in educational institutions need to be designed to cater to Value Based Education (VBE) by involving the youth in different types of

social service to the state and the nation , and there by nurture proper emotional intelligence through test and training .

The education system needs to encourage people not to think in terms of groups and communities but inculcate secular idea in the minds of young students by promoting a feeling of brotherhood of a mutual understanding. Religious sentiments should not be evoked to solicit votes with the help of factors like religion, caste etc. to secure votes.

Educational institutions can resolve such issues by directing the youth to employable skills and provide livelihood facility by generating , with the help of the Government, various scholarship schemes and employment opportunities. Unemployed youth are lured into terrorism and that tempts them with big offers sufficient to take care of themselves and their families for an indefinite period. The institutions need to ensure that no kind of teaching or coaching becomes a challenge to the country's commitment to secular education, therefore the question needs to be approached from the perspective of human rights.

Educational institutions need to refrain from religious education which is the responsibility of the families and the community but the state ought to be concerned with mainly compulsory education for all.

The educational institutions that have become centres for imparting religious teachings, need to function in conformity with Government statutes. The knowledge, transmission and practice of religion is purely personal and private connection even if people share private spaces like churches/mosques.

Modern science and psychology being twin pillars of secularism, the youth need to be trained on firm thought of secularism with a scientific outlook and a sense of commitment to nation building. The youth also need to clarify their own values in a learning environment by enhancing academic achievement value based education encourages the youth to adopt human values that are positive and leading to an all round development promoting . The Radhakrishnan Commission (1949) opined that the search for truth through scientific and intellectual pursuits is an important task of education concerned with values. The Kothari Commission (1964-66) and the national policy on education (1986) both recommend cultivation of social and moral values through education based on a curriculum programme that teaches different values.

Declamation and writing contests, and stage performances on human values that helped to imbibe qualities of good conduct, self-confidence making the youth not only good professionals but good citizens should be encouraged. Multi-culturalism which is a special feature of India is the most significant aspect of the multi-religious and multi-ethnic society .It voices the

rich legacy of tolerance that India has absorbed from the cultures in variant forms of the aliens who visited India as guests or invaders or blunders imparting moral values through lessons on hygiene , community living , gender equality , sexual morality and social values like familial and social responsibilities and respect for individual rights , the law and the constitution is the need of the hour.

Such a humanitarian approach inculcated actively through educational institutions can curtail crimes such as consumption of drugs , liquor , tobacco , cyber crimes and other criminal offences among the youth. Involving the youth in social service through National Service Schemes and NGOs should be made mandatory in all educational institutions. Such a resourceful generation is to be molded through the curriculum ,through classroom interactions that build their capacity, and through a compulsory Academic Improvement Plan in all the educational institutions. Regular programs in collaboration with UNICEF and other similar groups need to be initiated to channelize the vibrant energy of the youth to positive actions of head , hand and heart nurturing proper emotional intelligence through tests and training for being successful human being.