

## **Holistic Education Necessary for Harmonizing Human Consciousness and Economic Development**

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### **Abstract**

The duality in this world has brought us to a level where whatever it is we are doing; we are not content. Economic cut-throat competition has led to gross inequality in income opportunities and ways of living. “The richest 1% now have more wealth than the rest of the world combined. Power and privilege is being used to skew the economic system to increase the gap between the richest and the rest” as reported by Oxfam (Global Research,2016). This is causing serious conflicts in society, families, and individual lives. This paper points out that even the highest economic growth rates of the most developed nations are not sufficient to bring happiness and wholesomeness in our lives (World Happiness Report of the UN,2016). India has always illuminated the world with many dynamic concepts like the Theory of Karma (deeds), Reincarnation (Soul’s Immortal Journey) and Universal Brotherhood “VasudhaivaKutumbakam” (the world is one family), as well as holistic education based on high moral values and character building. The researcher in this paper places an emphasis on revamping global education on the basis of the ancient “Gurukul” education system of India that has taught multiple disciplines fused with high moral values and higher consciousness of living in the form of Yoga, Meditation, and Healing in a holistic manner, so that human mind to bring harmony at all levels. This is the utmost need of the hour for the sustainable development of our Planet Mother Earth.

**Keywords:** Economic development, Human Consciousness, Happiness Index, Pranic Healing.

## **Introduction**

The world is observing the two contradictory phenomena of ruthless economic growth and the awakening of human consciousness. The duality in this world has brought us to that level that whatever we are doing we are not content. Economic cut-throat competition has led to gross inequality in income opportunities and ways of living. “The richest 1% now have more wealth than the rest of the world combined. Power and privilege is being used to skew the economic system to increase the gap between the richest and the rest” as reported by Oxfam (2016). This is causing serious conflicts in society, families and individual lives. This paper points out that even the highest economic growth rates of the most developed nations are not sufficient to bring happiness and wholesomeness in our lives (World Happiness Report Update,2016). India has always illuminated the world with many dynamic concepts like the Theory of Karma (deeds), Reincarnation (Soul’s Immortal Journey) and Universal Brotherhood “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” (the world is one family), as well as holistic education based on high moral values and character building.

## **Methods of Research**

The method of research is exploratory in nature where an attempt has been made to emphasize the revamping of global education on the basis of the ancient “Gurukul” education system of India that has taught multiple disciplines fused with high moral values and higher consciousness of living in the form of Yoga, Meditation, and Healing in a holistic manner, so that the human mind understands a new consciousness of awakening, freedom of thought, words and actions required to bring harmony at all levels. This paper draws on various references from ancient Vedic texts like *RigVeda*, *Upanishad* and the politico-economic treatise *Arthashastra*, which focuses on holistic education based on high moral values that can bring a balance between material and spiritual development. It also throws light onto modern research being conducted around the world on integrative skills and energy healing modules, in order to realize our true self and potential.

## **Discussion**

The latest Global Disparity Indexes and Global Happiness Report clearly depict that the highest economic growth rates of the most developed states in the world are not sufficient to bring happiness and wholesomeness in the lives of humanity. There is a contradiction in the basic definition of growth and attainment of happiness, as both are different dimensions of life. One works at the physical level and the other at the emotional and mental level, thus affecting the human consciousness in general. But the Western concept of watertight development of each aspect of human life, i.e. political, social, economic, and spiritual, has caused serious challenges and conflicts worldwide.

Today the whole world is going through a paradigm shift in terms of how we define our growth. Governments around the world are recognizing the importance of measuring subjective well-being as an indicator of progress (Huppert,2011). Classical Economists like Adam Smith, J. BSay and others equated happiness with only material things. That’s when the economic development began to be measured only in terms of income, employment, savings, capital formation, and so on. The classical concept of a free market economy was challenged by J.M. Keynes and this led to the growth of a new dimension of state intervention in Keynesian economics, which brought the concept of maximum social welfare centre stage. Most countries

post-world war II had been engaged in either developing their macro-economic variables, such as national income per capita, capital formation, savings and investments, or they focused on shifting their growth strategies on the development of human welfare through the social sector, i.e. health education, housing etc., as well as increasing the standard of living of people directly. However, more recently it has become accepted that neither of these two approaches have been accurate because they did not bring happiness to people, but rather created more consumerism, which then led to greed for more power, and high levels of exploitation of natural and man-made resources, resulting in emptiness inside many human beings. After the rise of globalization in the late eighties, the world started shifting from measuring economic development through pure monetary transactions to social sector development, and the new concept of a Human Development Index came into being, which focused on social aspects but to a very limited degree. It has been validated by the global financial crisis of 2008 that we have never adopted a holistic system of development. It was realized, at the end of the Keynesian and Neo-Liberal phases, that economic growth had led to gross inequalities in allocation of resources, distribution of goods and services, income and assets, and that it had created a wide gap between the haves and have-nots. Thus, the whole global village became the playground for a segregated class of conflicts arising at every corner. This has made the proponents of globalization rethink different models of economic development in which quality of life was also given importance alongside quantitative development. We see that the countries that give due importance to quality of life of its people, and not just to infrastructural and industrial growth, have become predominantly better off, e.g. the Scandinavian nations like Sweden, Denmark, and Finland, which have all ranked much higher in terms of their HDI. This was reinforced by the UN accepting the Global Happiness Index of Bhutan in 2012, based on the happiness of its people, as a better benchmark for comparing models of economic sustainable development.

India, being one of the oldest living civilizations, has always illuminated the world with many dynamic concepts like Theory of Karma (deeds), Reincarnation (Soul's Immortal Journey), and Universal Brotherhood "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (the world is one family), and holistic education taught in a 'Gurukul' format is based on high moral values and character building with equal importance being placed on building reasoning and knowledge. The new parameter of measuring growth through the holistic model of Bhutan's Global Happiness Index is exactly what India has been practicing since time immemorial. Most of the Asian nations focus on bringing a balance between modern Economic Development Indexes and a Happiness Index, thus focusing on inner growth of soul consciousness, with a right balance between material and spiritual life, and based on abundance, prosperity, self-sufficiency, skill development, and knowledge based on an empowered society enjoying the richness of human life in its totality.

### **Relevance of Indian Vedantic Philosophy of Life in the Current Global Context**

Today's New Economic World Order is talking of raising mass human consciousness for holistic socio-economic development in which political, social, economic, and environmental aspects of humanity will be integrated, which would be only way of sustaining our lives on this planet. This is the exact philosophy of our ancient Indian holistic system of living. We never segregated our lives in watertight compartments of making the economy different from the socio-cultural lives of its people. We never had any models of education separated from the economic growth of its people because this is a very westernized way of thinking. Rather, we had wholesome families(Kul), villages(Jana), and political dynasties (Rashtra), which were self-

sustaining systems in which people had divisions of labour even within the first urban civilization, i.e. the Indus Valley Civilization of India dating back to 2800-2350 B.C. The written scriptures are yet to be deciphered but they show the highest form of educated civilization, which existed in a pre-historic age in India. Later the Rig Vedic Aryans (1500-1000 B.E.) named it the “Varna” system in which class division was based on performing different tasks in the society but no caste rigidity existed. The present form of caste and class conflicts came much later, namely in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D.

The ancient education was free and equitable for all in Gurukul’s ashrams where students from all walks of society, irrespective of their caste, colour, or income status, resided with their Gurus and learnt not only subject knowledge but mastered every discipline of physical, medicinal and life sciences whilst acquiring skills to harmonize the environment and society. The role of the teacher was to enlighten their human consciousness to the highest level so that every act of theirs became a lesson for future generations. The vast treasures of knowledge were passed on verbally through the disciples chosen by masters since time immemorial.

We had great seats of learning like Taxila, Nalanda, Vikramshila, Kashi in the third and second centuries B.C., when the so called developed western world was not even born. Those great seats of learning were so popular that students from all different nations came to study and acquire not only subject-based knowledge but also learnt how to become champions in life by creating a proper balance between learning different subjects like philosophy on the one hand, and Vedic physics or Vedic maths on the other. The whole purpose of education was to develop an inner consciousness towards nature, families, societies, and the whole universe, of which we are a nano- particle. The Pareto optimality conditions of being better off without making anyone worse off was at its core. The concept of Vasudev Kutumbakam, i.e. Universal Brotherhood, which has been known to us for millennia, was aptly depicted in our philosophy of cosmology, which believed that everything in this world is interconnected and every particle of energy has an effect on others. This has since been well-proven by the modern physics experiment of the Double Slit of Quantum Mechanics.

One such holistic educational institution is Banaras Hindu University in Varanasi, India, which is Asia’s largest residential University with 156 different departments teaching anything from Sanskrit to Science to Engineering to Medical Sciences on one architectural campus, and the researcher is truly proud to be an alumnus of this great seat of learning. Mark Twain, the American author, who was enthralled by the legend and sanctity of Benaras, once wrote that Benaras is older than history, older than tradition, older even than legend and looks twice as old as all of them put together.

The Indian people lived their lives in a most scientific manner by dividing the average life span of 100 years into four different phases of 25 years called the Ashram system. The first 25 years were dedicated to pure attainment of knowledge and wisdom by following “Brahmacharya” (Chastity), followed by 25 years dedicated to “Grihastha” Ashram (25-50 years) during which marriage was the most sacred ritual and formed the basis of our joint family life based on love, compassion and sacrifice, whereby every family member adjusted to the needs of others, not because they were compelled to do so but because they loved each other unconditionally. The next 25 years of “Vanprashtha” Ashram (50-75 years) were meant to fulfill all worldly responsibilities and to prepare oneself to become free from worldly desires and begin one’s journey towards spiritual growth. The last 25 years of Indians’ (75-100 years) lives were spent in “Sanyas” Ashram in which they denounced their families and worldly pleasures and went to the mountains and caves in the deepest search for their inner self and to find ways to

attain salvation(Moksha).Such high values and ethics were rooted in our ancient cultures because of which, even after 1200 years of subjugation, approximately 1000 years by Muslims and 200 years by the British, even now India stands high spiritually and ethically.

One of the most advanced politico-economic treatises of all times is Chanakya's *Arthashastra*, written in the third century B.C. during the Mauryan Empire. The code of conduct mentioned in *Arthashastra* for all civilized people of the society was very high and depicted a clear picture of high moral values being practiced by ancient Indians. It was the sole responsibility of the King to treat all his subjects as his own children, therefore the Raja was the custodian and guardian of his people. The state had to take care of the livelihoods of all its subjects, which would have been the basis of the welfare economics of modern times. The Pareto Optimality Theorem depicts the true nature of egalitarian societies of India.

However, the deformation in our culture began by the mid sixth and seventh centuries, when the dominance of few classes became the basis of caste rigidity, and thus, exploitation and subjugation began as a result of the coming of Arabs and Turks who started to practice Islam in the Sind and Kutch areas extensively. The colonial rule by the British in India broke the very basis of our society by strategically replacing our Gurukul education system with English education and by breaking the rich self-sustaining villages to slums of poverty by commercialization of agriculture and de-industrialization of village-based small-scale industries. This was strategically established by the British Governors after the First War of Independence in 1857.

Lord Macaulay's speech in the British parliament, on February the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1835 is testimony to why the British wanted to replace our ancient models of education. "I have traveled across the length and breadth of India and I have not seen one person who is a beggar, who is a thief. Such wealth I have seen in this country, such high moral values, people of such caliber, that I do not think we would ever conquer this country, unless we break the very backbone of this nation, which is her spiritual and cultural heritage, and, therefore, I propose that we replace her old and ancient education system, her culture, for if the Indians think that all that is foreign and English is good and greater than their own, they will lose their self-esteem, their native self-culture and they will become what we want them, a truly dominated nation." This he said when already India had witnessed 1100 years of dominance by Muslims and the British. They had distorted the very structure of our culture and tried to reshape the society according to their own vested needs. The Drain Theory of Dadabhai Naoroji, and *Economic History of India* by R.C. Dutta very clearly establish these facts but unfortunately historians like Max Mueller and Alexander Cunningham have misread and misinterpreted the ancient history and culture of India, and they are still being followed by the West.

We were intentionally partitioned into three halves (East and West Pakistan and India), which tore us apart in 1947, and we were left at the mercy of the international community to help us with our basic needs. The slow economic development, which was tagged as the Hindu rate of growth at 3.5 percent of GDP, was also due to the fact that no nation in the world has faced such atrocities as we did in terms of facing five wars (1947 partition, 1962 China, 1965 Pakistan, 1971 Pakistan, and the 1998 Kargil war Pakistan) just in a span of fifty years. In spite of all such odds India today stands high and strong and is one of the fastest developing economies in the world because of its internal strength and higher consciousness.

## **Findings**

In order to attain this new paradigm of development, alternative approaches are becoming increasingly popular. People are resorting to various therapies for healing, meditation and Yoga, and they are resorting more towards awakening their inner consciousness. India has always been a champion of introducing various scientific spiritual practices like Yoga and meditation and it has reached out to the global masses, which helps in de-stressing body, mind and soul.

### **Relevance of Holistic Education in Creating Happiness**

The highest function of education is to bring about an integrated individual who is capable of dealing with life as a whole (Krishnamurti)

This is a philosophy of education based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to humanitarian values such as compassion and global peace.

Therefore, the purpose of Holistic Education is to prepare students to meet the challenges of living as well as academics, to be able to know about self, to have connectedness with self and maintain healthy relationships and pro-social behavior, for social, emotional and mental development, to be able to recognize wholeness and resilience in life, and to see beauty, have awe, experience transcendence, and appreciate some sense of truths (Krishnamurti,1980).

### **Why do we need to replace the global education system with holistic education?**

Today's global education is promoting market consumerism but there is no urge to gain knowledge. There is a complete breakdown of value systems everywhere and man (sic) is behaving in bounded rationality quite like robots without any human compassion and sensitivity. The whole of Western natural philosophy is undergoing a sea change again, forced upon us by the experimental findings of quantum theory (Lanza, 2017).

The desire to know his own self is dying fast in the cut-throat competitive edge and it is needless to mention that most humans end up in wrong relations, depression, anxiety, frustrations, and suicidal tendencies, due to rampant isolation, feeling unwanted and dejected towards the self and society. Working parents, school, colleges, and universities all are running a race against time in this age of technology-driven development, which is causing big emotional, social and financial challenges for youth globally. It is time now to have integrative skills incorporated in our education system like ancient Gurukuls of India, where Music, Martial Arts, Ayurveda, Natropathy, Yoga, Meditation and various energy healing modalities were part of the curricula. Deep foundations of character building and right attitude were laid down in such Ashrams and a deeper understanding of universal laws were the order of the day. Einstein, Leonardo da Vinci, Aryabhata, Varahmihir were all great masters who knew these ancient secrets of the universe.

Many energy healing spiritual schools, various branches of Yoga, Reiki, Magnet Therapy, Theta Healing, Angelic Healing, Art of Living etc. are still practiced in India and worldwide. One of the advanced energy healing technologies are Pranic Healing and Arhatic Yoga, based on the universal law of energy. Bio-energy is the life sustaining energy of the universe. There are close to 50 cultures around the world that have been identified as understanding the concept of 'life energy' in one form or another, e.g., Ki (Japanese), Chi (Chinese), Prana (Sanskrit), Neyatoneyah (Lakota Sioux), Num (Kalahari Kung), Ruach or Roohah (Hebrew), Rooh

(Persian), Lung (Tibetan), and so forth. All of these cultures have their energy healing modalities.

Pranic Healing is a highly evolved and tested system of energy medicine developed by GrandMaster ChoaKok Sui who utilized prana to balance, harmonize and transform the body's energy processes. Its 'no touch' energy modality can be used as a complementary method to modern medical science for the successful treatment of various chronic and psychosomatic diseases like blood pressure, depression, diabetes, anxiety, fear and phobia, and stress to name a few (World Pranic Healing). It is based on the fundamental principles that the body is a self-repairing living entity that possesses the ability to heal itself, and that the healing process is accelerated by increasing this life force that is readily available from the sun, air and ground to address physical and emotional imbalances. The therapy essentially involves the treatment of energy — called 'chi' or 'ki' — as the basis of all existence. "All bodies in the Universe possess an energy field around them and exude energy that is their own into a vast medium where it mingles with energy released by other bodies" (Mahapatra, 2006).

The founder of Modern Pranic Healing and Arhatic Yoga, Master ChoaKok Sui, was a chemical engineer and businessman of Chinese descent who grew up in the Philippines and researched extensively on oriental forms of therapy to come up with the concept of advanced healing techniques. For seekers on the spiritual path, he developed Arhatic Yoga, which is an advanced meditational technique that proportionally balances three aspects of Universal Love, Intelligence and Will. This powerful energy modality uses ancient spiritual technology in order to activate and align the chakras and to awaken the Kundalini energy or the "sacred fire" (US Pranic Healing). One of the most unique feature of Pranic healing is scanning of energy body taught at the basic level for diagnosis of the root problem in the etheric and physical body. The affected body part, along with the Chakras of the patient, is then treated energetically and gradually the problem is healed (Global Pranic Healing).

### **Meditation is the Key to Balancing Body, Mind and Soul and Awakening Human Consciousness**

Meditation is very important for those who want to achieve calmness and stillness, or to have a healthier body, purer mind, or soul, and Master Choa's Meditation on Twin Hearts (MTH) is such an advanced technique for stress management. It brings peace, illumination, and self-awareness.

Research and scientific studies have been completed on the neurophysiological, psychological, sociological and psycho-spiritual effects of Meditation on Twin Hearts. These studies have been conducted in the most part by Glenn Mendoza, M.D. in New York City, USA, and by Dr. Vrunda and Supriya Ghorpadkar and Mr. Sundaram in Bangalore, India (Pranic Solutions, 2017). Other such research, conducted by senior practitioner Dr. Anna Graziano, a pure lifestyle trainer and coach, brought to light that Twin Heart Meditation has a very positive effect on psychological functioning of the brain. Meditation on Twin Hearts showed measurable changes on the pattern of electrical activity through the brain by electroencephalograph (EEG). Comparing EEG studies before and after meditation, there was a dramatic transition from beta waves to alpha waves and delta-theta waves in 14 meditators and non-meditators.

This advanced mode of healing may seem to challenge Faculties of Science, but the successful applications of Pranic healing over the last twenty-five years, with various patients done by the doctors themselves, have brought a drastic change in the perception of the medical

fraternity. This advanced scientific energy system intends to bring permanent change in our different levels of the body namely emotional, mental and spiritual, or causal, as mentioned by Maharishi Patanjali in *Yogasutra* and all the books of Theosophy.

Human beings cannot see much of the visible light spectrum, and there is a whole world of unseen energy that can be difficult for the mind to grasp without scientific measurements for verification. One method to bridge this gap is bio-electrophotography. The goal of this is to capture energy fields, seen as a light around the body. Several doctors also testify to Kirlian photography and aura imaging, which has proven the presence of an energy field around entities, and the fact that living beings exist within an energy field has been given the nod by science, according to R.K. Tuli, a qualified doctor, and currently head of the department of holistic medicine at Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, Delhi. "Modern medicine has its limitations, in that it can only heal the physique, but falls flat when it comes to emotional healing. It is only with alternative therapy that a complete cure can be arrived at" adds Tuli, who has been dabbling in alternative therapy for more than three decades.

It was to unite the conventional with the alternative and get the best out of both practices that the Apollo group of hospitals founded a holistic medicine department at its Chennai unit ten years ago, after the successful cure of Dr. Pratap Reddy, the chairman of the Apollo Hospital Group Chennai by Pranic Healing. Subsequently, they opened similar departments in Delhi and Hyderabad, to offer patients a complete wellness package. Apollo Hospital's Wellness Centre in Chennai witnessed a demonstration of Pranic Healing by Grandmaster ChoaKok Sui on August 18, 2004. Dr. Pratap C. Reddy, Apollo Hospital's Chairman, provided the audience with a background to the Wellness Centre and said the "millennium vision was to move away from illness to wellness. The Wellness Centre provides alternative healing systems such as Aroma Therapy, Pranic Healing, Ayurveda and a dietetics programme.

Another such example is Dr. Swarna Das MBBS, MD, working at Apollo hospital Chennai, who has much experience in using Pranic Healing with IHD Patients, as documented by Gas Discharge Visualization and Cardiovascular Cartography at the International Symposium on Yoga and Lifestyle, Dharan, Nepal. She has authored a curriculum book for an AICTE certified course on Pranic Healing Health Management (Apollo hospital). Various clinical applications fused with Pranic Healing have been recorded by Dr. Ramesh and Sir Cliff Saldana.

The World Pranic Healing Foundation Research Center was established in 2012 in Mysore and in the USA it does extensive research on the application of Pranic energy on various aspects of the biosphere of planet Earth and higher consciousness. One such controlled group survey was conducted on 150 people by the Pranic Healing Research Institute in collaboration with the Aayush Department, which brought out the amazing experiences of different people on emotional levels like happiness, stress, and anxiety. Karnataka Open State University has accepted Pranic Healing as a part of the Yoga curriculum.

Modern quantum physics has already shed some light on the role of consciousness and reality. There are multitudes of studies and phenomena that also show how they are intertwined. One example includes human aura and intentions. A Russian scientist and Princeton Biophysics Professor, Dr. Konstantin Korotkov, demonstrated that the human energy field called Aura is responsible for changing the physical material world. It is the action of the mind on matter. They are developing the idea that our consciousness is part of the material world and that with our consciousness we can directly influence our world. With our emotions, with our intentions, we can directly influence our world (Viva,1999).



Another such experiment is the “Global Consciousness Experiment” initiated by Nelson Roger in the Institute of Noetic Sciences in Princeton University. The detection of bio-electric activity is old, and many contemporary ideas of it were actually developed years ago. Bio-electric and bio-magnetic fields, formed by the body, have a direct effect on the physical material world. This is one example of known science within the mainstream, which could have tremendous implications for health care and more (The Global Consciousness Project).

### **Conclusion**

It can be concluded that modern medical science has now started accepting the existence of bio-energetic force called life energy, which has a tremendous effect on our every level of existence. We Indians should be very proud that our ancient Vedas and Upanishads knew these long ago but now the world is looking upon us to take the lead in bringing spirituality and science together. In this respect, the alternative therapies like Pranic Healing and Arhatic Yoga play a significant role in harmonizing it in our day to day life for a healthy, wealthy, wiser, holistic life and motivating us to inculcate a balance between material and spiritual life.

Furthermore, the global world’s basic issues of inequality, poverty, and unemployment can only be addressed if the human race understands that the mutual harmony is the most essential condition for our all-round development and it cannot be achieved by ignoring any one aspect of our existence, be that nature or modern scientific technological development. The balance between both is an essential condition for our sustainable development on this planet. As rightly pointed out by Einstein, spirituality without science is blind, and science without spirituality is lame. Hence, for shifting the vibrations of our planet to higher dimensions and reaching the point of critical mass, it is imperative for all of us to move ahead of our vested caste, creed, colour, and monetary conflicts, and bring in a new paradigm of development where every country would share the Happiness Index equally and every member of the civil society would have equal rights to live with dignity, peace and abundance so that each person advances to self-realization and human consciousness.

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