

The concept of self-realization and teaching methods of the Buddha

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Abstract

There is a great necessity for the current global society the teachings methods practiced by Buddha. The purpose of the Buddha's teaching is to create a viable society with social relationships and to make changes in the attitude of the followers towards one-self and others. The teaching methods like Student-centred Method, Lecture Method, Discussion Method, Practical Method, Problem Solving Method, and the Remedial Teaching Method used by the Buddha besides making know oneself and Enlightenment. Though Buddha did not use many tools as today, it is very clear that he used hearing and visual aids for the fulfilment of his teaching objectives and at the same time, capable of making a change in the attitude of the student. The objective of the education of the Buddha was to create the virtues among his disciples to establish mental purity. Unquestionably, the skill to educate oneself and others is willingly demanded by today advancing world.

Keywords: Buddha, teaching methods, dhamma, ethics-interpersonal skills, dhamma, present education, philosophy

Introduction

Buddha was born around 400 BCE in Lumbini, which is now in Nepal, close to the Indian frontier. He was brought up in a palace with all luxury's potential. Siddhartha, who later became known as Buddha – or The Enlightened One – was a prince who abandoned the luxuries of a prince hood to pursue enlightenment. He realised the vital emptiness of the world and experienced the bliss of enlightenment. He spent the rest of his life teaching others how to avoid the endless cycle of myth, birth, and death. It is necessary for the current society to examine the practicability of teaching methods highlighted by Buddha to achieve many objectives in teaching-learning process. Based on the pedagogic skill, Buddha was the first to be awakened and then convinced others to be awake, are mainly linked with "Pedagogic skills" of the Buddha. He shares the Dhamma and why He becomes the greatest and noblest teacher. Unquestionably, the skill to educate oneself and others is willingly demanded by today advancing world. There are many teaching clusters for various subjects all over the world. Many teachers utilize and create different teaching methods to produce fruitful outcomes for themselves and their students. Therefore, it is necessary to discern why Buddha is the most eminent and trustworthy teacher.

In this paper, the principle methods of teaching of Buddha is started to analyse. And teaching through question and response will be meticulously analysed. This paper aimed to justify the teaching style with interpersonal skill for knowing oneself. Additionally, some effective teaching methods of the Buddha have been examined. However, it is not able to cover all the exceptional technique of Buddha who preached more than 10,000 Suttas to suit various times, for a variety of persons with different tempers. Although the lectures were mostly intended for the benefit for the emancipation of the world, and deal with the practice of the pure life and with the exhibition of the teaching, there are also several other studies which deal with the material and moral progress of the scholars.

'Know Yourself' is the Basic Principle of Buddha

Buddha's teaching styles with interpersonal skills, one can see the advantages of Dhamma and excited, active, and feel fresh to follow the lessons. Buddha motivated his disciples in various ways to live in accordance with the Dhamma. He successfully motivated and inspired his followers to renounce the world of suffering. Another way of his teaching is to avoid bad deeds through worry-based motivation. Buddha typically delivered the consequences of doing bad deeds. He depicted the evil and terror of hell that await the evil doer after death and exemplifies the amount of suffering in the hell. Such doctrine becomes good motivator to avoid bad deeds and to do good deeds. He encouraged his disciples to enhance their understanding and practicing through coaching.

Buddha taught to overcome their greatest hindrance by helping them access their inner wisdom and power by coaching what they should do and what should they speak. He explained sensible verbal actions and insensible verbal actions with his speech directly and explained healthy mental actions and unpleasant mental actions with his thought directly. He knows others' mind directly with its objects. Buddhism is very revealing about the nature of all sorts of person. He revealed how people are unique in the method of thinking, reflecting, and communicating with their direct speech. Anecdotes can be used as a method to teach ethics, values, and cultural standards. They function as a tool to pass on knowledge in education. Stories tend to be based on experiential learning. Stories are effective educational tools because learners become engaged and therefore recollect. Buddha acquired the power to recollect past births of himself and others. As a result, he could figure out, directly on seeing a person, that his thoughts and ideas were a such a past. He used stories widely when he was teaching.

The Buddhist teaching is generally based on causes and effects. In every Sutta, Buddha pointed out what is cause of something with its effect to lead termination of suffering.

Four Noble Truths, and Dependent Origination are also composed of causes and effects. Buddha always instructs 'what to do or what to avoid'. All Suttas are filled with 'dos and don'ts regulation' so the teachings of the Buddha are not merely for the objective of writing down in books and maintaining them in shelves for adoration, but to follow. Among the three kinds of miracle, miracle of instruction is one of the best among.

Buddha benevolently shared what He has known. In nature, all can be categorized as good and bad, right, and wrong, positive, and negative. All the major doctrines: Educators recognize that teachers need to have expertise in the skill of questioning as the core of efficient teaching. Buddha performed His educational service by questioning, by responding to queries from followers.

On attaining enlightenment, Buddha's first concern was to discover things and person who should be admired, and to obtain advice from. However, He did not identify another person like him so that not to say anything about a person who could be recognized as His teacher. He identifies himself and indicated to others the Noble Eightfold Path. All Dhamma are directly come from his direct knowledge, not from any other person nor books. In fact, He shared his own experience to educate his disciples. There is no way of the best teaching method because all of learners do not follow the same. Different students like to learn in different strategies. Different methods will help nurture learning in distinct approaches. He used many instructional methods to be effective to remember and easy to understand. He never uttered a word that the listeners could not understand. He spoke in figurative languages that all could comprehend.

Buddha's Teaching Methods

Student Centric Method: This method associated with learning is education. Teaching means guiding or directing to make a long-lasting change in the conduct and actions of students. Therefore, teaching or education means making a behavioural change by this means (Nordberg, 1962) ^[11]. This points out that the scholar must accomplish this. At the same time or in the process, the changes that occur in the behaviour are said not the true learning. Wellbeing of schoolboy is expected by the education. It should be step forward or progressed with the activities of children. Childhood is a very complex phase. Therefore, it is the duty of elders to motivate children to get the things through their practices without putting their thoughts into them by force (Lindgren, 1962) ^[8]. The student-centred teaching method has been used by the Buddha to globalise ethics for creating a balanced society. When the Buddha's teachings are examined, the Buddha has preached the principles of the student-centred method and put them into action. This student-centred concept has been presented as a philosophy in Kālāma Sutta (AN-i, PTS, P190). These free attitudes of the Buddha are considered in connection with a small student, though it seemed to be a deep philosophy, which clearly shows about the freedom that students should retain in the process of education. It is necessary for all the students irrespective of their age and size. Without forcing, improving knowledge and abilities, is necessary to provide an opportunity to develop them on their own.

According to Buddha it is the flaw of the teaching method used by the teacher and decided that the student is weak and neglected him. In student-centred approach, it is necessary to create the environment for the student to study without

restrictions. He followed a unique system to this because his target was to give person the basic ethics for eternal joy or to take a person to the right path to go beyond this planet or for the Liberation. He used open places for his lessons and he also advises students to engage in studies, having been to forest, to the root of a tree or to an empty house and reflects (AN-i, PTS, P147). Therefore, the mind of the student may not wander. According to the student-centred education system, there is an opportunity to find remedies for the physical and mental weaknesses. A result of this is there is not categorisation of students into weak or backward. It is possible to get proofs to prove this fact from the teachings of the Buddha who made aware of the truth by the student-centred teaching method.

The final aim of Buddhist education and mental development process is to get free all the worldly ties. It is necessary to make that situation depending on the power of each person's mental development and speed. The teacher only guides and encourages in this most difficult activity. But the teacher also has a great obligation. By knowing the variations of each student, having formed lessons in an appropriate way, the teacher must present courses. According to those courses, attaining the complete understanding is the obligation of student (Keneth, 1972, P452)? ^[7] From this idea, the student-centred education system operated in Buddha's education philosophy or in Buddhism, can be realized very well. The purpose of using this method is to globalize ethics for creating balanced society in a productive way.

Lecture Method: Buddha has made use of the lecture method for globalising ethics. If a person with a good knowledge of a subject describes the proposition or the topic to a person or group of persons, it can be presented as a lecture. Unlike at present, in the past, since there was a lack of crucial books and other materials for understanding, lecture method had become the main method of teaching. The well-educated person was known as Bahusuta (the individual listened to several concepts) and it is because he has enhanced his knowledge by listening to the lectures of the instructor. At present, though some have opined that the lecture method is a great waste of time of both student and teacher, they have been unable to take it out of the teaching field.

In basic education, the use of lecture method is in a smaller amount; it is very advantageous in secondary level education. It is possible to use this method more efficiently with the advancement of modern science and technology. Buddha has mentioned that a lecture to be successful it should be good at three places: beginning, middle and end) (SN-I, PTS, P99 In this manner when a lecture with all the modules is done the students can receive five kinds of benefits. It has been revealed in a discourse of the Buddha as follows. "Hear what has not been heard, the heard is refreshed, doubts are dispelled, the view is rectified, and the mind becomes pleased (AN-iii, PTS, 248)." Because of these five results of listening to a lecture, it will become a rewarding one to the student. This proves that the Buddha's lecture method became a very successful teaching method. If even the modern educationists follow this approach, it will not be required to propose to put aside the lecture method in the field of education even in this age of science and technology.

Discussion Method: When the discourses are examined, they have grown to be more fruitful and meaningful due to the discussions on the concepts. Sometimes, a lecture has been started with a discussion (Ariyapariyesanasutta, MN-i, P161). It is clear from this that the lecture has been started with a discussion. When a discussion is organized, there is the exchange of ideas among one another. So, this is a good way for understanding the intelligence level of each other (AN-i, PTS, P187).” There are two ways of discussion. 1. The discussion that takes place among the same aged individuals: for this, it is possible to include the discussion among students and the discussion among the students of the same subject. 2. Irregular discussion: the discussion between teacher and student and the discussions that take place among students studying various subjects. It is possible to take for both kinds of discussions from the teachings of the Buddha. Whatever the discussion, there is the priority to inquiries. There are four ways of answering questions said in Buddhism (AN-ii, PTS, 46).

Practical Method: Whatever the principle or method is, it is necessary to put into action to see its accomplishment. Therefore, among the teaching methods, the most practical method gets the main concern. This practical method is launched in the terms of “Understanding through Action”, “Active Education” and “Exercise Method”. In the modern era, among those who underlined this method, there are renowned souls like Rousseau, Montessori, and Mahatma Gandhi. Their educational objectives can be considered as they are connected to the physical world. They intended to give a complete understanding to the person about the physical world and then to teach individual how to live with it by making use of the physical resources on his behalf organizing them according to the needs of a person. In present education, for extending the understanding through activities, a variety of equipment, or tools are used for teaching student about physical materials or elements. It is known as ‘visual and auditory aids. Though this is said about eye and ear, having presented the things subjected to the five sense organs, it is intended to knowledge through it. Whatever the system is, it should be used in an appropriate way to the mind of the student. Buddha has used such method on the most suitable stage and manner.

Problem Solving Method: Problem solving method can be presented as a way of going forward by solving a problem planned in the classroom. It is necessary to manage the problem in a way that is a challenge or an encouragement for a student. Problem can be considered as something that cannot be solved or responded quickly and at the same time it is a difficult one to solve. In day today life, we must face a variety of problems that are difficult to resolve and it is a challenging task to resolve them and at the same time it is an inspiration. For those instances, there is no objective or utilization of the books which are written with the intention of discovering answers to them. During that time, we must have the passion to find the essential facts to resolve them, collect data, assess and to analyse them critically. Then, it is possible to solve the problem successfully (Harry, 1943) ^[5]. Man, who faces numerous categories of problems considers solving them as a routine experience. This situation and for making activity in students, this method has been formed by making use of lasting social skill or situation. Having presented a lesson as a problem and in the way it is solved,

the lesson is formed. At the end, with the presentation of solving a problem in a lesson, due to the active contribution of a student about it, educational objectives will be fulfilled (Cūlamalunkyasutta, MN-ii, PTS, 426). When the teachings or the discourses of the Buddha are observed, before the modern educationalists, the Buddha has put this method into practice more effectively. The noble truth understood by Siddhartha Gautama is Four Noble Truth. It was presented to the world and it has been formed or built up under problem solving method. Firstly, the problem is presented to the followers. “What is suffering?” is the first problem.

This is not a problem for one person, but it is a problem that the entire beings of the world have happened to face. Secondly, the reasons mainly affecting for arising this problem are put forward or presented. Thirdly, the situation after ending those reasons or the solving of the problem is presented. Fourthly, how to solve the problem is pointed out (VP-i, PTS, P10). When these four factors are completed, educational objectives of the Buddha will be fulfilled. Since the objective of Buddha’s education was to relieve beings from suffering and to give the Liberty, he presented suffering as the first problem. But, not only suffering but any problem can be made the topic here. When the Four Noble Truth is looked at as a method of teaching, it is possible to say there are only two factors. 1. A problem and the reason for its origin. 2. Solving of the problem and the way to solve. Persuading to a lesson, explaining facts and giving knowledge are the facts that a teacher can make use of problem-solving method food like himself. To make that mental change, Buddha made use of problem-solving method. When problems are examined, there are two types of problems in Buddhism. There are problems of students and Problems created by teachers. There will be problems about various facts and incidents for the student engaging in studies. It is necessary to solve them with the teacher. The examples for such incidents are possible to find in the teachings of the Buddha.

Remedial Teaching Method: Remedial teaching method means teaching those who are weak or feeble of organs of the body and mentally, with ways of remedy to them. At present, this method has been created significantly. Buddha is a teacher who used the remedial teaching method to establish a balanced society. Most of the time, he taught to those who are emotionally weak. In the Buddha’s way of teaching, there are evidence where both physically and mentally distorted persons have found treatments for their challenging and got education. Mainly, having treated for the psychological weakness of a person, it has been tried to make them happy with the therapy. For the Venerable Pūtigattatissa (DA, P159) who was greatly suffering from a disease of rash, the Buddha preached the doctrine to him for the realization of the truth after having treated him properly by washing his wounds and when he got the relief from his pain. Even from the story that for the poor farmer who lived in Alav city and who was with hunger, first ordered to give food and then preached the doctrine, having found solutions to the physical weakness or disabilities, later, the doctrine, which are for the super-mundane life has been preached for the realization of the deliverance or for the benefit of super-mundane life. The Buddha has seen and mentioned there that since hunger is a serious or unbearable illness, it is not possible to understand anything for the person who is suffering in hunger (DA, P463). Buddha treated or gave

remedies to those who are mentally sick and gave their lives the prosperity. According to Buddhist point of view, every person with violations is certain kind of mentally sick person. Having become serious with that illness and confused in mind due to various reasons, some came to the Buddha for consolation. Buddha treated them in suitable ways to their conditions.

Conclusion: Definitely, Buddha stands a leading place among teachers, professors and philosophers who have an expert mastery over educational science, technique, and psychology. To shield the world or to live freely or to spread the Buddhism, there need to teach or learn the teaching of the Buddha. Pedagogic skills performed by the Buddha become a necessary part of Buddhism. If every single teacher today would take this way of teaching critically, all students would gain the benefit. In consequence, the society is filled with only educated persons, living standard will be high, there is no bloodshed, and everyone develop the noble qualities of life.

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