

Aklavya and The Need for Adherence To Values in Present Educational System

The Child:

The child has a vivacious yet shy nature. The sights and sounds of the nature and environment never fail to amaze him. The child is inquisitive and curious by nature and has an umpteen number of questions that push his guardians and teachers to delightful agony. The challenge the educator of today faces is to tap into the potential of this particular facet of the nature of the child and engage and catch his attention amidst the myriad of ever increasing distractions that surround the environment of the child of today. Technology provides educators with varied assortment of tools and means that enable the educator to do just that.

What is Education?

Education is a word that has had diverse denotations and connotations throughout the existence of its concept, during the time of the coinage of the word and even before. When one utters the rather ominous or at least the controversial term "Education", one evokes different responses in different people. The situation in India is rather distressful as students have long lost the love of learning and continue in its stolid path due to the compulsions of modern life. It has sadly become to some solely a means to a luxurious life, full of worldly and materialistic riches. In such a system it is normal for the values which should be associated with civilized life to be conceived as thing that is not essential and can even be disposed of with. The truth is that education of today is more about marks and grades rather than the idealistic enlightenment for the mind which it should be.

Power of Education:

The power and utility of education as a social or political force has been harnessed since the beginning of civilized human society. Sadly though not according to the highest standards of ethics that such a power and potent force should be used with. Anything that upsets the social or political order is frowned upon often in the strictest of terms. Does the names of Socrates and Christ ring a bell? Indoctrinating the youth according to suitable belief sets might be a tempting option but it is seldom in coherence with the ideal of the pursuance of truth which to me is civilization in a nutshell.

Duties of Education:

As an activity that has on its shoulders the responsibility of rearing up the future of our race and species, Education can rightly use all the grave and weighty words associated with it. It is a matter of great interest than fun and happening terms such as e-learning, m-learning, gamification, game based learning have found their pride of place in the education lexicon. These provide glimpses of how education will evolve in the hopefully near future.

The Raging Debate:

Before we continue this piece we must recollect a few clinching arguments that tilt the balance in favor of absolutism vis-à-vis relativism.

The individual search for truth is an abiding absolute.

Ideals like Merit, Truth, Justice also transcend the barriers of time.

Value Based Education:

This is an aspect of education that has high potential for being tapped by game based learning systems such as Aklavya.

The imbibing of values and eventually having the intended result of those values being reflected in action is a challenge in which few have met with success and even those who have succeeded have been able to do so marginally. So what is value based education? In a nutshell I broadly categorize it as acting according to the precepts of eternal ideals.

Moral Science has tried to achieve this and regrettably perhaps vainly so. According to me there might be three primary reasons:

The child does not successfully identify with the protagonist and usually the moral lesson is out of context of present society.

The moral is not appropriately grasped (in the context of its need and effects or consequences) and its significance remains unknown.

There is acute lack of engagement of the learner with the moral lesson in question.

But fear not, Aklavya with its introductory level “The Return of the Legend of Baital (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baital_Pachisi, 2015)” such hindrances are reminiscences of times past.. Primarily targeted towards 6-8 year old kids this educational game seeks to introduce alphabets and numbers and their correct pronunciation along with identification of animals and plants that feature quite commonly in human habitats. And it seeks to do so through a fun-filled adventure full of puzzles and challenges that Aklavya and his friends must overcome as an initiation towards their truly heroic destiny.

But where the moral aspect unique to Aklavya holds ground is present in the fact that Aklavya, in its fullest conception is that the child is to have Aklavya as a contemporary, a friend who grows up along with him and faces many of the similar life condition. Aklavya is morally upright and this value should be able to be transmitted to the child as the child identifies with his friend and admires him and is likely to imitate Aklavya in his moral strength of character.

Training of the Mind

Just as the fit body requires exercise and training, a subtle mind that is agile in its dexterity requires proper foundation. Game based learning is portal of the future that lets you achieve those very goals. just that. Under the guidance of suitable experts and the host of technological tools available to us, even complex subject like derivatives in finance, cutting edge science all may be presented in small and easily understandable and absorbable parts. Aklavya takes the vaunted leg forward and resolve to keep game programming mechanics that the subject matter is tailed according to the needs, aptitude and abilities of the child.

Instruction:

It is indeed a fact that has assumed the tragic form that these days education has become synonymous with instruction to the layman. No doubt, it is a fact that education has an intrinsic relationship with livelihood but education is something that is far greater in scope

Evaluation Through Aklavya:

It is true that proper evaluation of such learning may indeed pose a great challenge. But that is not something that is insurmountable. The data and results churned out by the game needs to properly interpret by specially trained teachers. The evaluation method itself might be a radical ratio based game marks points. And thus we bid adieu to the dreaded boards and instead replace it with national periodic

assessment system that records the child's development through the years, throughout the year and which might be treated to be at par.