

**Talk on 'Deterioration in Educational System' by
Dr. K.S. Radhakrishnan, Chairman Kerala Public Service Commission
was held at Hotel AIDA, Kottayam on 09.11.2012**



Dr KS Radhakrishnan, Chairman of Public service commission Address the gathering.

TRAMA departed from its topics on economic and management importance to a social relevant topic of Deterioration in educational system for its November gathering. Dr KS Radhakrishnan, Chairman of Public service commission was the best person to handle the topic with his vast and varied experience in education, research and administration.

The speech could have easily become a cynical reflection of the gloom and despair of the system but the speech reflected hope and of continuous repair. He regarded the primary level of education imparted in the state as one of the best but the standards gradually decline in higher education. The essential softskills are not developed for the students to become employable and the responsibility lay with the teachers and society as a whole.

Dr Radhakrishnan spoke eloquently on three paradigm shifts in the education.

Firstly the very definition of education has changed. Education from being an integrated development to raise the moral standards of the child has now become an economic activity guided by the market forces. Market aims at profit maximization and that too in minimum time. Teaching centres are now becoming "Coaching centres " and coaches are now the respected lot. Institution in the past were known of erudite scholars but now for the percentage of placements and the pay packets the student fetches. Field of Management is the youngest of social sciences and the most sought after where the entire body of the best work could be read in mere 2 years but still most aspire to become an MBA as it fetches them a Job in the market. Students, teachers, parents have become stakeholders in the education process and each one demanding their value for money. This change has meant that students are no longer mere participants in the system but are deemed contestants where the only goal is winning and to look down on others in the process.

Quoting Jean-Paul Sartre the French existentialist and philosopher who said "Hell is other people."(In his work Huis-clos (No Exit)"L'enfer, c'est les autres,")

Secondly the methodology of teaching has changed. The students from being mute spectators who believed that the teachers is always right and what they spoke is the gospel truth has now changed. The emphasis now is on Text Context dialogue. Where the context could be everything related to the child including the nature. The texts have now evolved to include the context of the child which the speaker found very refreshing and should be welcomed. The process of interaction should be of dialogue and not of debate as debate sometimes hides the truth as seen in television "Newstainment" at 9 pm in all news channels. Lamenting the fact that students from kerala were traditionally discouraged to raise questions in class which prevented them in developing their presentation and communication skills. This resulted in their poor performance in competitive exams. Nobody is infallible and the teachers have to encourage dialogue he said.

*The third major paradigm shift is the process of knowledge being replaced by information
In the whole transformation of changing knowledge to information perhaps the
credibility and whole truth is lost and this is sad aspect*

Quoting from TS Eliots work The Rock to drive home his point

"The endless cycle of idea and action,

Endless invention, endless experiment,

Brings knowledge of motion, but not of stillness;

Knowledge of speech, but not of silence;

Knowledge of words, and ignorance of the Word.

All our knowledge brings us nearer to our ignorance,

All our ignorance brings us nearer to death,

But nearness to death no nearer to GOD.

Where is the Life we have lost in living?

Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?

Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

*Dr Radhakrishnan also quoted from WB Yeats, THE SECOND COMING to the danger of the
information overload and of the media loosing the credibility*

" Turning and turning in the widening gyre

The falcon cannot hear the falconer;

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;"

Pondering over in the end he said that we have to stop blaming others for the decline.

*Quoting from famous line from Shakespeare's play Julius Caesar he quoted the line 'The
fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, But in ourselves, that we are underlings.'*

*We have to do a deep introspection of the values we hold. The education system is going
through a churn and it is just a temperory phenemenon. The young generation is
extremely bright and with their moral integrity and courage they would lead us to a
better future.*

- Compiled by Nitin Suresh, Assistant manager, Malayala Manorama