

# *Preventive System* as structural and practical Pedagogy from the views of Don Bosco and its impact in the present context

Leojoseph. A  
PG Department of English  
2<sup>nd</sup> M.A English  
Don Bosco College (Co-Ed),  
Yelagiri Hills  
[sdbleo153@gmail.com](mailto:sdbleo153@gmail.com)

## Abstract

System of education differs according to various situations. Educating is a noble aspect. To be educated is something precious where, an individual receives from an educator. In Ancient days, the system of education had brought lot of impact. Only noble people had the opportunity to be educated. When the days went on, the perspective (looking deeper) of approaching the education changes. It was considered that only high level people in the society, had the chance to receive education. We say, that education opens the eye of wisdom and knowledge. If we consider the middle ages, the Catholic Church had its greatest impact. Only the kings and their generation had the right for education. There was no proper method that had followed. There was a gigantic leap and gap between the poor and the rich. Centuries passed on. It was in the time of 19<sup>th</sup> Century that industrial revolution occurred. There were less opportunities for an individual to get a basic job. If there is loss of job or work, absolutely occurs the poverty. Then the basic needs for the people gets affected. During this great problem, people started to send their children for work in the cities. It was at this time, came a great man Don Bosco, an educationalist and the visionary. He saw the difficulties of the boys who were roaming on the streets. There was great thirst for him to do something for the young, who were struggling at the streets. The paper could explain that how it was possible for him, to think what is being implemented today, in long centuries before head. And how in today's context that this pedagogy (Preventive System), could build up the educational institutions and in different angels, would be ideas that will emerge in this paper.

**Keywords:** Pedagogy, structuralism, Reason, Religion, Loving kindness, dignity, responsibility, Social involvement, Moral values. Repressive, Preventive, Psychological impact

## Introduction:

Education is the greatest weapon in the society. It is useful to create as well as to destroy the creation. Don Bosco as an educator had his humble beginnings in Becchi, Piedmont province in Northern unified Italy. He struggled to complete his schooling but then went on to become a priest in Turin. His own cultural background is Piedmontese, which is a tough and rough demeanor but full of religious faith.

The political upheaval then was one of an unsettled Italy, still languishing under the Napoleonic legacy. "The whole of the Italian *peninsula* in 1812 was a French dependency. But, while the South, in spite of French reform, remained unsettled with an air of impermanence, the North that is, the Kingdom of Italy extending from Milan the Venice and Bologna, was the scene of important and permanent reforms. The Napoleonic period attempted seriously to dispossess the Church; to make is a powerless society. However, the Church, eventually stripped off much of its earthly power, survived through the strength of its spiritual power. It is in this climate of uncertainty that the educational ambience prevailed. During Don Bosco's time, Jansenism (of Port Royal of 16<sup>th</sup> century) and Naturalism (of *J.J. Rousseau* of 18<sup>th</sup> century) had a deep influence on the social and educational life of Northern Italy. These impacts were the result of the French cultural impact on the local Piedmontese. Life. The culture of education and social life was so heavily dependent upon the environment of the times that Don Bosco did not fail to notice its importance when he opted to work for the young ruffians on the streets of Turin. So, he himself set out to create of safeguard the cultural aspects of Northern Italy of his time even though his boys frequenting his oratories lacked any of it. He worked out a religious, educational and social milieu that was suited best for his boys' growth. That culture was a combination of the situation, and the needs of and prospects for the youth, which can in best be described as a preventive system of education

There are two systems which have been used through all ages in the education of youth. The preventive and the repressive. The Repressive system consist in making the law known to the subject, and afterwards watching to discover the transgressor of these laws, and inflecting, when necessary, the punishments deserved. The Preventive System, and the contrary, makes a friend of the pupil, who looks upon his educator as a benefactor who advises, wishes to make him good, to save him from trouble, from punishments, and from dishonor. The educator having one succeeded in gaining the heart of his subject can afterwards exercise a great influence over him, can caution, advise and even correct him, although he may already occupy some position in the world.

"This system is based entirely on reason, religion and above all on loving-kindness" (Don Bosco)

- A Pedagogical Method (Pedagogy)
- A Proposal for the Evangelization of the Young (Pastoral Ministry)
- A Spiritual Experience (Spirituality)

### **Passion for Education:**

Education was not equalized for all the citizens, during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Only royal people could have a great afford for education. The greatest fear amidst the royal class was the educated would question. But this great man, Don Bosco broke the barriers. He went into the streets, searching for the poor and

abandoned boys. People called him mad priest, running behind the boys. There was a great passion for him, on the poor boys. He had a thought that no one should feel that they are not educated and no one to care for them. The experiences that he had as a small boy, made a great impact, that everyone should be educated. He was in a great dilemma, in what way the education method should be.

### **Repressive System:**

The Repressive System makes known the rules and regulations of the institute and the educators withdraw. They are watched to see whether they are transgressing. The defaulters are immediately punished. The superiors are seen only during the time of punishment. It is less troublesome. It is less troublesome. This system is suited for adults and mature people and can be employed in training camps, the army, etc. Here are some features that promote the repressive system. Laws are made known to the pupils. Pupils are watched to see whether they are transgressing. If they do it, immediately punish them, without reasoning. Authority is obtained by keeping distance. The superiors are seen only during the time of punishment. But it is less troublesome. There is no understanding between the students and teachers. It will create a great agitation amidst the students and the staff. The greatest solution for this system is the Preventive System.

### **Raise of Preventive System:**

It was in the year 1841, in the church of St. Francis of Assisi, Don Bosco was entering in the sacristy to get ready for the Mass. He found the sacristan, who was beating a boy, compelling him to be an altar server for the mass. Don Bosco stopped the sacristan, and called the boy Barthalomew Garaliee, taught him with loving kindness. It was the greatest impact, where the boy still remembers with love, the incident which had brought a greatest change in his life. This is place where the preventive system has come in to existence. Before knowing the preventive system one should know the opposite side of preventive system that is Repressive system.

### **The Preventive System as Pastoral Ministry**

This original proposal for evangelizing the young departs from the point of encounter with the young right where they are to be found, by valuing the natural and supernatural patrimony that each youngster has in his or her self, and in an educative environment which is rich in proposals; it is carried out via an educative approach that privileges the poorest and neediest; it promotes the development of the positive resources they have and proposes a particular form of Christian life and youthful holiness. This original project of Christian life is organized around certain experiences of faith, certain choices of gospel values and attitudes that constitute Salesian Youth Spirituality (SYS).

## **The Preventive System as Pedagogy**

The Preventive System is also a pedagogical method characterized by: the wish to be amidst the young sharing their life, looking sympathetically at their world, attentive to their real experiences and values; the unconditional acceptance that becomes a tireless capacity for dialogue and power for their growth; the preventive criterion which believes in the strength of the good already present in every youngster, even the most needy, and which seeks to develop this through positive good experiences; the centrality of reason which becomes reasonableness of requests and rules, flexibility and persuasiveness in proposals; and of religion understood as developing the sense of God present in every person and the power of Christian evangelization; and of loving-kindness expressed as an educative love that enables growth and brings about a meeting of minds and hearts; a positive environment shot through with personal relationships, enlivened by the loving and reliable presence of educators and one which is also active, energizing and on behalf of the young; with a style of animation that believes in the positive resources of the young.

## **The Preventive System as Spirituality**

Preventive System finds its source and center in the experience of God's charity that through His Providence 'comes before' (the real meaning of 'preventive') each creature. This charity accompanies and saves (gives life to) the individual. This experience predisposes the educator to welcome God in the young, convinced that in them God offers the grace of encounter with Him, and calls the educator to serve God in them, recognizing their dignity, renewing faith in their resources of goodness and educating them to fullness of life. This pastoral charity creates an educative rapport fitted to the adolescent, indeed the poorest of them. It is a fruit of the conviction that each life, even the poorest, most complex, most precarious existence, carries within it the power of redemption and the seed of happiness – through the mysterious presence of the Holy Spirit.

## **The Preventive system and its application:**

It is different and opposed to repressive system. The pupils are under the vigilant eye of educators. The educators take the lead and place the pupils in the impossibility of committing faults. Students are forewarned. When they falter they are brought to the notice of the teachers and they are gently corrected and accompanied like a friend. This friendly gesture appeals to the students and they reason to see that it is just that they are chastised for their mistakes. Thoughtlessness leads to mistake. If a friendly voice had forewarned them, then they would have avoided. Repressive system stops the disorder, but it does not help the student to grow out of their mistakes. Sometimes they grow revengeful for the punishment received at school or in any other place. Preventive system helps the student to better the relationship with

the educators. The educator advises, counsels and corrects. The educator devotes himself to the students completely. He does not absent himself at any cause. If he is not able to be present he appoints someone else in his place to look after. Educators should be men of acknowledge morality. They need to avoid any sort of sentimentality in their relationships. They should not leave the students unoccupied and must precede the students to any place where they assemble. Students need liberty to Jump, play or run. Games, music and theatre are necessary to obtain discipline, spiritual and bodily health. Vigilant presence is needed during games time. To be on the outlook to avoid any bad books, companions that can bring in bad morality into the institution.

### **Advantages of Preventive system:**

The system is aimed at the educating the students in civil, moral and intellectual realms. This system places the educators in inconvenience but they are called to fulfill it. Students look at their educators as their educators as their life-long friends, guides and they are grateful to the love received and they remain in a consolation to their families. “Even the worst of the students can become better according to this system,” said by Don Bosco. The influence of the bad companions will not be more, as the assistance is always there and it will intervene.

### **Aspects of Punishment in the Preventive system:**

One who follows the preventive system should not have recourse to punishments. If necessity demands stern measures. Let the following to be borne in mind. One should withhold the kindness to the boys. Reproachful look, praise/blame for work done. One should not correct the students in public rather the corrections should be given in private. We need to use reason and religion to make one accept the mistakes. Prudence and patience are required for this. Physical punishment should be avoided. They irritate the boys and degrade the educators. Disciplinary measures, including rules and punishments are to be made known to the boys in advance.

### **The three pillars of Preventive system:**

Each system has got its own purposes to draw. Preventive system exists under the three pillars. They are Reason, Religion and Loving Kindness. Here is a quote from the constitution that explains the aspect of preventive system.

*“Don Bosco has handed on to us his Preventive System as a means for carrying out our education and pastoral service. This system is based entirely on Reason, Religion and Loving Kindness. Instead of constraint, it appeals to the resources of intelligence, love and the desire for the Creator, which everyone has in the depths of his being. It brings together educators and youngsters in a family experience of trust and dialogue...accompanying them, that they may develop solid*

*convictions and gradually assume the responsibility for the delicate process of their growth as human beings and as men of faith.”*

These three pillars are the fundamental aspects for the present educative society. Education is not something that is on the air, where one could easily buy it. It should teach the values for the students who approach. It should make the students understand the difficulties and the feelings. Here is a clear explanation for all the three things.

Reason – it is a rational relationship between the thoughts and action. If a student commit some mistakes even after knowing the rules and regulations being announced. What would be the reaction of the educator or the teacher? Here lies the real patience and the involvement of student. There are various aspects where reasons can be categorized. The first aspect is Reason in General. Reason in general indicates that all of us have this faculty of rationality in us. This rationality embodies objectivity and truth. It also governs the four basic principles of equality, fraternity, liberty and justice. We need to love at the reasonableness of the student. More often than not students falter not out of malice but due to thoughtlessness. The educator’s role is to point out the unreasonableness of their actions and help them to change. The second aspect is Reason in the Young (students whom we are educating). Reason stands for the wise and progressive enlightenment of the minds of the young, opening them to the world, to culture and to realities of life. It also implies enlightenment of the mind on truths concerning moral behavior by sound and systematic teaching. Reason calls for persuasiveness and a spirit of dialogue on the part of every educator and the students. The third aspect is Reason in the Educator.

Reason is the tool of the educator to influence students positively. If the educator is not careful he/she can fall a prey to: “Man is a rational animal that lives talking nonsense.” By reasoning the students they should feel that the reasoning on once issue will make them to think more deeply and make them an ethical being of knowing what is good and bad. Religion is an aspect where it makes the student to live more closely to the creator and to experience the purity within themselves and to come closer towards the feelings of humanity and towards the society. The educator should make the student to feel that he/she is closer to the creator. Don Bosco learned an important mantra from his mother, “God sees you.” According to Don Bosco religion meant experiencing God rather that cult and practice. Preventive system is to be an experience of ultimate joy, ultimate good and ultimate presence. This system can be called as divinized pedagogy.

Loving Kindness creates a loving relationship between two human beings. The necessity of loving kindness between the educator and the students. Students need love and understanding to grow in body, mind, heart, soul and spirit of the youngster grow in a loving kindness atmosphere. Without loving kindness no responsibility, no zest in their life, no leadership, no success in studies, no happiness, no joy and no meaning in their lives. If this continues depression overtakes them. The educator must make sure that the students know that they are loved. This is the secret of this system.

## Impact amidst the students

This system gives an impact where the students will never realize in the present time. But this impact will be seen as a student who will become the future leaders in the society. The experience of this pedagogy, had given a greater impact in the meetings that had held during the reunion of the batch 2009 in Dominic Savio higher secondary school, Tirupatur. There are three aspects to be mentioned.

- Empowering as Pedagogical man.
- The guiding presence – in the aspect of Spiritual, Intellectual, social and cultural aspects
- It up brings the students to be talented person and good leader in the society.
- At the outcome the overall view for a student is, “To be a Good God fearing person and honest citizen.”

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