ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

• The concept of formal, non-formal and informal aspects of education as revealed in Adhyatma Ramayana.

• Concept of education in Adhyatma Ramayana with reference to
  a. Aim,
  b. Content,
  c. Method and
  d. Teacher-pupil relationship

• Sociological significance of education as described in Adhyatma Ramayana

• Relationship between spiritual and temporal objectives and related practices of education envisaged in Adhyatma Ramayana

• The principles and practices adopted in Adhyatma Ramayana are applicable to modern educational system especially for national integration, international understanding and peace.
 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

It is to be noted that Adhyatma Ramayana is narrating the story of Rama, who is considered as God himself, born as man to establish Dharma and educate people regarding the ways and means for achieving liberation from the worldly life so as to attain self-realization or the identification of the self with the ultimate reality. In accordance with Vedic concepts of values known as Purusharthas (Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha), the life of Rama demonstrates how an individual should perform his duties in life so as to attain Moksha. That is why it is very often stated that Valmiki describes how man can rise to the level of God by following the role model of Rama because he is the personification of Dharma. In Adhyatma Ramayana depiction of Rama as God is more suitable for creating devotion and consecrated to God. Along with Rama, there are large numbers of other characters depicting the positive and negative qualities of personalities. Another great character is Sita who not only equals but also surpasses Rama by her virtues of womanhood and motherhood. Ezhuthachan
pointed out that Sita is but Goddess Lakshmi, the supreme mother who is also known as Prakrithi or Sakthi.

Ezhuthachan reveals that he composed Adhyatma Ramayana, which illustrates the principles of Vedas for the benefit of uneducated people. Through the story of Rama the poet instructs the common man to acquire an insight into the concept of Vedanta, which enables one to realize the non-duality. He requests that every intelligent person should hear this story with full devotion. According to the Indian concept, Vedas are the source of ultimate knowledge. The word Veda has originated from the root ‘vid’ meaning knowledge. This is the ultimate and complete knowledge which when acquired; there will be nothing more to know. The ultimate aim of an individual is the realization of the truth, which is attained, by self-realization. The principle ‘That Thou art’ (Thatwamasi) is known as Vedanta or the end of Vedas. In other words it is the realization that ‘I am Brahman’ himself (Aham Brahmasmi). But this does not mean that we should neglect the temporal world and sciences. The sciences are known as vedangas. In the totality there is no separation between temporal and spiritual life. Hence even sciences are considered as limbs of
Vedas. The values of life as defined in Vedas are Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Here Dharma is the basis for acquiring the other three values. So the basic necessity is to know ‘what Dharma is’ for starting a good life. Symbolically Dharma is depicted as an Ox with four legs; the four legs being truth, compassion, sacrifice and purity. This symbolic representation of Dharma is known as Nandhikesa the vehicle of Lord Mahesa. Dharma is the basis of acquiring Bhukthi (temporal rewards) and Mukthi (the ultimate liberation from the worldly life). If Truth (sathyam) is considered as a coin, Dharma and Jnana form the two sides. Jnana without Dharma is meaningless, and Dharma devoid of Jnana is empty.

The temporal values of Artha and Kama (wealth and aesthetic pleasures) are to be acquired through activities acceptable to social and moral principles. Sree Sankara says:

“Nija karmo patham vitham
Thena vinodaya chitham”

This means that one should acquire wealth and enjoy in accordance with his ordained duties prescribed on the basis of Dharma. Mere enjoyment of the temporal world is not the aim
of life. The ultimate aim of life is liberation from the worldly life and the attainment of Salvation or Mukthi. To acquire Dharma one has to concentrate on Brahman-, the ultimate truth. The first stage in life is devoted for acquiring the true knowledge and thereby getting the concept of Dharma. Only after the successful completion of this stage namely Brahmacharya, an individual passes on to the second stage i.e., the householder (Garhasthya). The householder’s duty is very important because the society depends upon the services of the householder for its existence. After discharging the duties of the householder, one retires to isolation, which is known as Vanaprastha. After this an individual attains the stage of non-duality (Advaitha). This stage is known as Sanyasa. ‘Sanyasi ’ is a liberated soul who sheds off his selfhood by identification with Brahman, the ultimate reality. Such a person is known as an enlightened soul. This is the essence of the Vedic concept of liberation. Adhyatma Ramayana represents Rama as an enlightened soul (‘Atma-rama’ who is but Brahman itself). Rama is depicted as an ideal son, student, husband, friend, ruler, warrior and above all the symbol of Dharma with the values of sacrifice and love.
There are other great personalities such as Dasaratha, Bharatha, Lakshmana, Sathrughna, Guha, Hanuman, Jambavan, Vibheeshana and Sugreeva with unique characteristics. There are great teachers and saints like Vasishta, Viswamithra, Agastya and Sutheeshna who are the embodiment of knowledge and virtue and serve the society as teachers. In addition to this, the saints like Sabari, Swayamprabha and women with distinction such as Kousalya, Kaikeyi, Sumithra, Thara and Mandodari stand out with distinct qualities of womanhood and motherhood. Even the characters such as Ravana, Kumbhakarna, Indrajith and Bali are revealing some good qualities even though the evil nature is dominant in them. On examining the characteristics of each personality it may be noted that wherever there is ego and selfishness, there is downfall. Lack of proper education leads to Avidya that is contributing to the ego and selfishness, which pave the way for the pursuit of sensory pleasures, ultimately taking the person to destruction. Similarly the women characters like Mandhara, Surpanakha and Thadaka illustrate how the evil feelings lead a person to dangerous consequences. The violence of Thadaka, the revenge of Mandhara and the
amour of Surpanakha are well illustrated. A detailed study of the personality of each character reveals how the type of personality varies with unique trait and motivation. The trait-composite theory of personality may be relevant in explaining the personality of each character in Ramayana.

The findings of the study are analyzed and summarized below separately under different headings in relation to the objectives of the study.

**Objective -1**

*To study the concept of formal, non-formal and informal aspects of education as revealed in Adhyatma Ramayana.*

**Formal Education**

Vasishta, the great saint conducted the initiation ceremony of Rama and his brothers in accordance with the prescribed rules of Vedas. The content of their education consisted of Vedas, Vedangas (sciences), sub-divisions of sciences, rules of laws, and code of conduct (smrithies). The children learned these subjects very easily without any
difficulty. It is wonderful to note that all these lessons are only the breathings of these great ones. This means that true knowledge is the ultimate knowledge, which is related to Brahman or Supreme Lord. For divine children, knowledge is inseparable like breathing and life itself. The education included physical training and warfare also. Education was imparted at the residence of the guru with strict discipline. Vasishta, the guru was not only a great scholar in vedas and vedangas but also a role model for teachers with the qualities like humility, love and devotion to God. He was devoid of ego, selfishness, jealousy, hatred and desire for worldly pleasures. He is a typical representative of an ideal teacher. After the formal education, Viswamithra subjected Rama and Lakshmana to an ordeal to see if they could safeguard his Yagna from the demons thereby proving their competency in facing crucial situations. The saint Viswamithra gives them further training and additional knowledge with regard to use of arms and techniques for defense. The capacity of the physical strength and mental stamina of Rama and Lakshmana were verified and their courage and mastery in the use of weapons were manifested in the killing of the demons and protecting the
sacrificial fire of sage Viswamithra. In this context, Mareecha begs for pardon and Rama kindly spares his life. Rama represents the Supreme, and hence he is always merciful to anybody who surrenders to him. The training given by Viswamithra is a typical example of non-formal education. This may be considered as a situational approach followed by comprehensive evaluation of the young ones by a sage, like Viswamithra. Finally Rama’s qualities of humility, velour, self-confidence and strength are demonstrated when the mighty bow of Siva is broken at the court of Janaka which leads to the marriage of Sita with Rama.

The qualities of Rama are again revealed in his encounter with Parasurama. When Parasurama challenges and threatens Rama, the latter politely requests him to spare him from an encounter taking into consideration his age. He accepts the challenge only on compulsion. Even after success Rama does not show any kind of jubilation or pride. With the result, Parasurama blesses him by transferring his spiritual powers to the prince. The humility, resourcefulness and the dignity of Rama are revealed in his behavior towards Parasurama.
Descriptions of the formal educational institutions are given regarding the ashrams (hermitages) of Bharadwaja, Valmiki, Athri and Sutheeshna. From these it can be inferred that there were a large number of hermitages for imparting formal education. The teachers were generally great saints who lived in the deep forest isolated from the society so that the inmates were isolated from worldly pleasures and political disturbances. They lived in constant communion with Nature. These teachers were devoted souls who brought up the children in their own small households. The teacher was a spiritual father to the students. They did not get any rewards or fees, and led a very simple life. Ashrams were ideal places for education, where learning, research and extension work were conducted. These educational institutions guided the activity of rulers by giving advice whenever needed and the whole society including the emperor prostrated before the teacher who was respected equal to God. Women were also given education according to their need and nature. During the journey to forest Sita tells Rama about the duties of a wife and this shows the type of excellent value education imparted in those days, to women.
Training of Rama and Lakshmana by sage Viswamithra:

The renowned sage Viswamithra visited Dasaratha and requested him to send Rama and Lakshmana for protecting his Yajna, which was polluted by Rakshasas (demons). The king hesitated at first, because he thought that Rama and Lakshmana were too young to face the demons. Sage Vasishtha advises the king to comply with the request of Viswamithra, who takes the young princes to the deep forest where his hermitage was situated. On the way they meet Thadaka, the terrible demon who obstructs their way and tries to eat them. Viswamithra tells Rama that this Rakshasi (she-demon) is the inhabitant of that part of the forest and nobody can walk through that way because of the fear about her. He requests Rama to kill her. Rama sends an arrow that hits her and she falls dead. From her huge corpse which lay as a mountain a beautiful angelic soul comes out, prays before him and says that she has been emancipated from her sin.

Again they continue their journey. The young princes feel thirsty and hungry. The sage prescribes some mantras (Bala
and Athibala) for quenching the thirst and satisfying the hunger. Finally they reach the hermitage and the sage reveals the secrets of some divine weapons for defeating the enemies and when he starts his Yajna, the demons appear on the sky and try to pollute the sacred fire by sprinkling blood and dirty materials like bones and lumps of flesh. Rama and Lakshmana face the demons boldly and one of their leaders, Subahu falls dead by the arrow of Rama. When the leader and all the followers are dead another chief namely Mareecha runs away; but wherever he goes the arrow of Rama follows him. When he finds that he cannot escape from Rama’s arrow Mareecha implores for pardon at the feet of Rama who spares his life.

After a few days, Rama and Lakshmana were taken to the court of Janaka where Rama breaks the heavy Saiva Chapa (Siva’s bow), which nobody else was able to raise from the ground till then. With this performance, the training of Rama was completed. It has to be remembered that the great sage Viswamithra wanted to train the princes for facing any situation and to develop self-confidence through his guidance. When Viswamithra wanted Dasaratha that his two sons should be sent with him to drive away the demons, the king was
doubtful about the capacity of the young boys because he was afraid of the consequences. After Viswamithra’s non-formal guidance they broke the Saiva Chapa, married the daughters of king Janaka and even defeated the attempt of Parasurama on their return journey. So Dasaratha accepted his sons with full pride and satisfaction. Now he knows that his children are not common men but persons with unusual capacity for facing any situation successfully.

**Non-formal Education**

Education as revealed through Ramayana was systematically and naturally integrated with life and environment so that it is very often difficult to distinguish between formal, non-formal and informal aspects of education. For example Adhyatma Ramayana itself is a narration by Lord Mahadeva to his sweet heart Parvathi Devi who wants to know the secret of Brahman by understanding properly the story of Rama. So the principle of “Ask and thou shall be given ”\(^3\), pointed out by Christ as the starting of educational process, can be identified here. The glory and sanctity of the story of Rama is clearly illustrated by Mahadeva at the introduction,
which is an ideal way of motivation necessary for effective educational process. The greatness of Rama is summarized very effectively for creating full attention and devotion in the student who tries to learn. The whole Ramayana is summarized in nutshell at the introduction. This helps the learner to get a gestalt view of the whole story. The seriousness and the value of learning Ramayana cannot be more highlighted. If Parvathi Devi herself learns it with great desire and interest from none other than Lord Mahadeva himself who is the teacher of teachers and the master of the Devas. Thus psychologically the introduction is ideal, perfect and very effective. This is a typical example for an effective introduction, which motivates the learner to the fullest.

Non-formal education is very often integrated with life situations as revealed in Ramayana. Most important instance is the ‘Lakshmanopadesam’ in three phases.

These are the advices given to Lakshmana by Rama mainly in three stages:

a) In Ayodhya Kanda,[Ap-4.1]  
b) Aranya Kanda,[Ap-4.2] and  
c) Kishkinda Kanda,[Ap-4.3]
Lakshmana was fully devoted to Rama because he was aware of the greatness and quality of his brother. When the whole of Ayodhya was jubilant at the declaration that Rama would be crowned as the Junior King, Lakshmana was immensely happy. But later when he learns that Rama has to go to the forest for fourteen years and Bharatha will be crowned at the request of Kaikeyi, he becomes very angry. He says:

“The King has become very old, insane and henpecked. If injustice is done by anybody, he should be punished even if one is a teacher. Here our father has done an injustice; I will put him in prison and crown you as the successor. I have the capacity to do that”. Uttering these words Lakshmana shivered with anger. Here Rama psychologically addresses him as his ‘darling boy’ and says that he is fully aware of his capacity and the devotion to his brother. Then he slowly tells him about the illusory and temporary nature of this world with riches and power. He convinces Lakshmana about the mistakes of actions based on emotions especially anger, which makes a man mad and blind so that he may kill even his brother, father and near and dear ones. With a long and convincing illustration he
pacifies Lakshmana who accepts the advice of Rama and follows him to the forest. This happens in Ayodhya kanda.

After going to the forest Lakshmana becomes more mature as a result of wide and enduring adverse experiences and understands that temporal knowledge is not valuable. So he wants to acquire Vidya or real knowledge. Very politely he approaches his brother and requests him to educate him on Vidya, and help him to distinguish between Vidya and Avidya.\(^6\) (Real knowledge and ignorance). The Secret of the universe, the relationship between body, senses, mind, intellect and Soul; characteristics of the Soul; the code of conduct of a cultured person, the details of a disciplined life – all these are clearly illustrated here.

The third stage of advice to Lakshmana occurs in Kishkinda kanda where Lakshmana requests Rama to enlighten him how to worship Rama or god so as to attain Mukthi or liberation.\(^7\) The details of the worship and the spiritual discipline to be followed are given at this stage.

It has to be noted that at the first stage Lakshmana was subjected to emotions of anger, which made him immature. At
this stage he was educated how to control his emotions exercising intellect. When Lakshmana became more mature he became deserving to know about real knowledge and how to be free from ignorance. At the third stage Lakshmana wanted to know the path to attain salvation. Here the educational principle of “as you have so you are given ” is highlighted. This is a typical example of non-formal education based on the need and aptitude of the individual.

Plenty of such examples of effective non-formal education are available in Adhyatma Ramayana. Some of them are stated below:

1. The conversation between Rama and Bharatha: [Ap-4.4]

When Bharatha understands that Rama has gone to forest renouncing the Kingdom, he is very much grieved and goes to the forest and implores Rama to come back to Ayodhya and rule the country. Rama convinces Bharatha here with logical arguments that they have to fulfill the promise of their father.
2. The meeting and the discourse with Sabari: [Ap-4.5]

Sabari was a devotee of Rama who had been worshipping Rama for a long time expecting his arrival. She was given enlightenment regarding the greatness of sincere devotion and as a result of this enlightenment she attained salvation.

3. The advice to Bali, Thara and Sugreeva: [Ap-4. 6]

When the arrow of Rama hit Bali, he fell down and asked Rama ‘why are you sending the arrow by hiding behind a tree, like an uncivilized forest dweller.’ Bali denounces the righteousness in the action of Rama. To this question and the other complaints Rama gives convincing answers. Bali had committed a great sin by capturing the wife of his younger brother Sugreeva and driving him off the kingdom. According to Indian ideal Daughters, sisters, sister-in-laws or daughter-in-laws are equal to mother; so anybody who attempts to have immoral attachment with women of such categories is a great sinner. ‘You have behaved like an animal by owning your brother’s wife. Animals are hunted and so are you.’ This convinces Bali who realizes his mistakes, repents and seeks salvation by the blessings of Rama.
At the death of Bali his wife, Thara is lost in grief and she weeps loudly. She requests Rama to kill her too because she believes that there is no life without her husband. Rama approaches Thara and consoles her by imparting spiritual knowledge. After hearing the realities of life Thara is freed from her sorrow originated from her ignorance and then attains solace.

After consoling Thara Rama instructs Sugreeva, what he has to do as a King. Angada, son of Bali should be crowned as the heir and the people tended properly. The country should be safeguarded on the basis of ethical codes and the accepted values of the Society.

The problems faced by Bali, Thara and Sugreeva were quite different. But Rama helped them to solve their problems by proper counselling. From this, it is clear that the same teacher should deal in different ways to solve the problems of different persons according to their situations and needs. The natural way in which the problems of different persons are solved is clear from these examples. In short this shows that the non-formal education should be natural, systematic,
psychologically suitable to the learner and socially integrated with the situation.


The army of monkeys was deputed in search of Sita Devi. Four batches were sent in four directions. The most capable persons were sent in the direction of South because of the inference that Devi might be in Lanka, which is located in the South. Angada, Hanuman, Jambavan, Nalan, Neelan and such mighty and wise leaders were included in the group despatched to the South. In the long run they reached the seashores of the South. If they return without seeing Devi, Sugreeva will execute them. So the monkeys lay fasting on the coast in disappointment. No-body was confident of jumping the gap of 100 ‘yojanas’ of ocean between India and Lanka. Every body was frustrated. Hanuman was also sitting without confidence. At that moment Jambavan came forward and addressed Hanuman. “Are you not Aanjaneya, the embodiment of physical and mental strength? Don’t you know that, you are the embryo developed in the womb of Dakshayani as the son of Mahesha himself? Why do you stay at the level of an ordinary monkey? What is impossible for you? Arise, awake and do
your duty. Remember, Rama gave his ring to you for handing over it to Sita Devi? Don’t you know that even at your birth you jumped up to swallow the sun? ” This revelation helped Hanuman to gain insight. After having realized his potential, he grew up to the sky, roared aloud and jumped over the sea to Lanka. One of the mightiest and heroic characters of Ramayana is Hanuman. But for the guidance of Jambavan, Hanuman would not have played his role in a heroic way. This is a typical example of effective non-formal education known as guidance. This example is a model for explaining the principle of guidance in modern pedagogy classes.

5. Statement of Sampathy or Sampathy Vakyam: [Ap-4. 8]

When the monkeys were lying on the seashore, completely disappointed, Sampathy, the brother of Jadayu came there and advised them what to do. The narration of Sampathy regarding the birth of a child, growth and participation in the worldly life is a scientific and systematic narration. Finally he advises to renounce the desires related to the worldly life and live happily as a self-realized soul, free from the charms of the pseudo-pleasures of the world. He also told them that Sita Devi was in Lanka because, he could see far and wide clearly as a kite.
Sampathy persuades the monkeys to fulfill their duty very boldly.

The examples, pointed out above in Adhyatma Ramayana, are samples, which represent how non-formal education plays an important role in education.

**Informal Education:**

The importance of informal education is evident in Adhyatma Ramayana in several occasions. Some of them are mentioned below:

1. When Rama starts from Ayodhya to the forest Kousalya is completely in woe. Then he reminds his mother about the duties of a devoted wife and creates self-confidence.\(^8\)

2. Sita convinces Rama that it is her duty to accompany Rama wherever he goes. So in setting out for the journey to the forest she will be in front because it is the duty of a wife to share the sorrows and happiness of the husband.\(^9\)

3. Advice of Sumitra to her son Lakshmana to accompany Rama to the forest considering Rama as Dasaratha, Janaki as Sumitra and forest as Ayodhya.\(^{10}\)
4. Vibheeshana, Kumbakarna, Mandodari and Malyavan advised Ravana to give Sita back to Rama and save himself and Lanka from destruction. But he did not accept their advice. This results in his complete destruction. Hence the generalization that, when misfortune approaches advices of good people will not be acceptable is well demonstrated.\textsuperscript{11}

5. When Vibheeshana requests for the protection of Rama, Sugreeva does not believe him and tries to punish him on the ground that demons cannot be trusted. But Hanuman says that good people are present in every sect. Henceforth the generalization that a whole group is bad is illogical. Rama accepts this argument.\textsuperscript{12}

Adhyatma Ramayana is rich with such instances of effective informal processes of instruction. Many of them have become proverbs in Malayalam.
Objective -2

To find out the concept of education in Adhyatma Ramayana with reference to

a. Aim,
b. Content,
c. Method and
d. Teacher-pupil relationship

a. Aim

According to Adhyatma Ramayana Mukthi (liberation from the worldly life) is the ultimate aim of education. Lakshmana became very furious when Rama was denied the kingship of Ayodhya and was directed to go to forest. Lakshmana declares that he will see that his brother is crowned as king and anybody who stands in the way will be made a captive. In this context, Rama advises Lakshmana, about the unreality of this world. He describes that this world we see is only an illusion and not a reality. The feeling that the world is a reality is only a partial projection of the ultimate reality, the Brahman. The sensory perception is an illusion and the worldly life is a temporary phenomenon. So one should
be free from emotions originating from ego and selfishness. Of all the emotions anger is the worst and so one should be free from the emotional outburst\textsuperscript{13}.

Lakshmana after going to the forest becomes more matured and requests his brother to enlighten him about real knowledge. Rama describes the nature of the reality and unreality. This consists of the knowledge with regard to wisdom (Vijnanam). When a person attains wisdom he attains salvation or self-realization, which is the ultimate aim of education. This is exactly what Sita Devi tells Hanuman in Balakanda\textsuperscript{14}.

Sita says very clearly that each living being represents the image of the eternal reality (Paramatma). The realization of the Ultimate Truth is explained through a statement like, “That Thou Art” (Thatwamasi). Even Ravana states that he has brought Sita Devi to Lanka so that Sree Rama will come and kill him, thereby liberating him from all sins and worldly life to attain eternal liberation.

From all these statements it is very clear that Mukthi (Liberation from worldly life) or the identification of the self with
eternal reality is the aim of education. This reveals that self-realization is the chief aim of education.

Sita, representing the universal motherhood, highlights the aim of life, as self-realization to her most devoted follower Hanuman who is the symbol of physical and mental strength. So Adhyatma Ramayana very clearly specifies that acquiring the real knowledge is to attain self-realization, which is the ultimate goal of life.

b. Content

Knowledge consists of vidya and avidya. Avidya is leading a person to worldly knowledge, which is only partial and temporary. This may sometime misguide the individuals like the ‘fear of snake at the sight of rope’.\textsuperscript{15}

All the knowledge related to sensory experiences, mind and intellect are only related to the Prakrithi, which is only temporary and partial.\textsuperscript{16} The ultimate reality is Purusha. But Prakrithi that is different from Purusha, manifests itself through ‘Ahankara’ the feeling of self. Mind performs its work through five sensory nerves and five motor nerves. This can be represented as follows:
All the knowledge related to Prakrithi is based on sensory perception, mind and Buddhi (intellect). This knowledge is temporal and unreal. The real knowledge is the knowledge about Purusha or Brahman or Atman. This is confirmed in Bagavath Gita\textsuperscript{17} and is known as Sankhya philosophy.
So the curriculum should give importance to the knowledge related to ultimate reality. This is known as ‘Atmajnana’ or ‘Vijnana’; which is the knowledge of ultimate reality or Brahman or God or Purusha. But this does not mean that the worldly knowledge is unnecessary. The Vedas are learnt along with the Vedangas or the sciences, which are related to temporal knowledge. It is pointed out that even the sciences or temporal subjects lead ultimately to the reality or the absolute truth which can be reached only through the attainment of values such as Dharma, Artha and Kama. As referred to earlier Moksha or Mukthi is attained by acquiring the values of Dharma, Artha and Kama. Thiruvalluvar mentions in ‘Thirukkural’ the only three values namely ‘Aram’(Dharma), ‘Porul’ (Artha), and ‘Imbam’ (Kama). He is of the opinion that if Artha and Kama are acquired on the basis of Dharma, Moksha or liberation will automatically follow. So the curriculum should include spiritual education, temporal education, professional education and social education. In other words we can say that it is a need-based dynamic curriculum that is recommended for education according to Adhyatma Ramayana. The knowledge that ‘I am the body’ is
creating ignorance, which is the cause for selfishness and desires leading to worries. The knowledge that ‘I am not the body’ but the Atman or soul is the reality, which leads to wisdom or Vidya and destroys all worldly worries. Hence the curriculum should consist of both temporal and spiritual subjects.

According to Ramayana the soul is described as follows:

1. It is pure self-illuminating and full of bliss.
2. It has no form and is eternal and complete.
3. It is beyond emotions, permanent and eternal.
4. It is the cause and basis for every thing in the universe.
5. It is the witness of every thing, all knowing and Godly.
6. It has no beginning and end and is beyond time and space.

**c. Method**

As already pointed out the ultimate aim of education is Mukthi or liberation which can be attained only through proper education. For this one should get rid of emotions such as desire, anger, acquisitive tendencies etc. because these are the enemies of man in his endeavor to achieve self-realization. The
emotions obstruct the spiritual progress of the individual. Among these anger is the most dangerous one. So a seeker of truth should avoid desire, anger etc. and contemplate on peace, which is considered as the ‘Kamadhenu’, which gives everything. For this purpose one should practice Manana and Nididhyasana (contemplation and reflective thinking). This may enable a person to realize that the soul is supreme to the body, senses, mind and intellect. The nature of the soul described in Adhyatma Ramayana has been stated in detail earlier.

One should assume in his mind that, he is the eternal reality, which is omnipresent, all knowing and the cause for everything with no form and is beyond the expression of joy and sorrow. This is the process of Nididhyasana mentioned earlier. This may help a person to develop detachment and freedom from worldly worries.

Accordingly Adhyatma Ramayana recommends complete control of the body, the senses, the mind, and the intellect so as to reach the level of soul, which is supreme. For this purpose the Brahmacharies (students) have to follow strict discipline for the healthy growth of the body, senses, mind and intellect. This practice is known as ‘yama’ and ‘niyama’. 
Gradually this helps a person to acquire ‘Jnana’ (wisdom) thereby attaining Mukthi or liberation.\(^\text{18}\)

According to Adhyatma Ramayana the method of education is nothing but the method recommended and followed during vedic period in Gurukulas. Here the education consisted of training at five levels. They are the physical, sensory, mental, intellectual and spiritual as explained by Sri Aurobindo. This is confirmed in Bagavath Gita.\(^\text{19}\)

Life is compared to a journey in chariot in the search for the achievement of Mukthi. Here the chariot is compared to the body; the horses are compared to the senses, the mind is compared to the rope connected to the reins of the horses, the force exerted on the rope is compared to the intellect and the steady driver is compared to the Atman. In education the primary duty is to keep the body healthy, because body is considered as a tool for the performance of Darma.\(^\text{20}\)

This reminds us of the famous Latin proverb “Men’s sana is corpora sana” i.e., ‘sound mind in a sound body’. Strict rules were prescribed for keeping body healthy, including the food habits, exercises, sleeping and posture. Further the purity of
mind was emphasized for mental health. Sensory training was given for selected observation, hearing, tasting, even touching, and breathing. The ‘Yama’, ‘Niyama and ‘Asanas’ helped to keep the physical strength and sensory power at the optimum level of efficiency.\(^{21}\)

Mental health was maintained by strict discipline of the body and the senses and the mind concentrating only on worthwhile matters. The mind is compared to a drunken monkey stung by a scorpion and affected by a ghost.\(^{22}\) The control of the mind was practiced from the very early stages itself. In turn the mind was controlled by the intellect (budhi) and the intellect often depends upon revelation from the level of soul for the right guidance. Education has to train the body, senses, mind and intellect to attain the spiritual level. Hence the method of education was mainly ‘Sravana’, ‘Manana’ and ‘Nididhyasana’. That is selective use of senses, reflective thinking and concentration.

There was individualized instruction depending upon the aptitude and ability of the individual. There was no instruction in the sense as the teacher was lecturing to the students. The students after reflective thinking raised certain questions,
which were discussed with the teacher who helped the students to find out the answer. Individual and group discussions were also conducted for arriving at conclusion. Theory and practice of education were not isolated. Everything was practically verified and applied.

The method for acquiring wisdom or jnana is clearly outlined in the Lakshamanopadesam of Aranyakanda. Rama, Lakshmana and Sita had already gone to the forest and settled at Panchavadi. They were leading quiet humble and simple life by eating roots and fruits. Lakshmana becomes matured after undergoing the rigorous life in the forest. Once he requests Rama how to get ‘Mukthi’ or liberation from the worldly life. ‘Ask and thou shall be given’ is a very important principle in learning. Lakshmana requests for true knowledge and Sree Rama explains the difference between Vidya and Avidya. Vidya is associated with the knowledge of Brahman leading to Ananda; but Avidya is ignorance about the reality and false understanding leading to sorrow. Avidya is associated with ‘Maya’ or illusion. Maya has two dimensions ‘Avarana and Vikshepa’. Avarana here means covering the real knowledge and Vikshepa means projecting something, which does not
exist. All our sensory perceptions have these two limitations. So the feeling that I am the body, senses, mind or intellect is a wrong concept. The details of Atman or Brahman, self-realization and the means to attain realization – all are given at this stage. So one has to concentrate on this reality by meditation.

The need and techniques for motivation, guidance and counselling are given specifically in several occasions. Such examples have already been cited under the title non-formal education.

\textit{d. Teacher-Pupil Relationship}

Disciple is one who learns at the feet of the teacher and discipline is the method of learning on voluntary basis. Here teacher has an exalted position as the spiritual father of the learner. Not only the students, but also the whole society respected the teachers who modified the character and personality of the students by correcting and guiding the society. Teachers were regarded as great scholars and role models, who practiced what they preached.
The students were fully devoted to learning. A student is known as ‘vidyarthi’, meaning one who desires for knowledge (Vidya-Arthi). The education was completely free and the admission purely based on aptitude and ability. The children from backward and royal families learned together without discrimination. There was sanctity in the relationship between teachers and students. Rama and his brothers were the students of Vasishta; but Viswamithra came forward for giving them advanced training and guidance in warfare. This was appreciated and approved by Vasishta himself. Sree Rama got guidance and encouragement from several great sages like Agasthya, Valmiki etc., during the period when he lived in the forest.

The student should be fully willing to lead a disciplined life and is expected to possess a mind, free from the feelings of ego and selfishness. The disciple is expected to serve the teacher in full devotion and keep his mind and body pure. He should work for the welfare of the whole society considering the interest and needs of it more important when compared to his own needs. He should be able to control the body and mind, remembering the transitory nature of the worldly life and fixing
his mind on the ultimate truth by reflecting on the meaning and significance of Vedanta. Such a person realizes that the self is not the body, senses, mind or intellect. This realization convinces one that he is not separate from the ultimate reality or God. The realization that the self and ultimate reality are one and the same is real jnana (knowledge). A person who has acquired jnana is said to have acquired Vidya. Such a person will neither have any desire nor any attachment. This stage is known as Mukthi. It can be achieved only by sincere devotion or Bhakthi, which alone can lead one to Jnana, Vijnana, and Vairagya (knowledge, wisdom, and strong decision). This is really the secret of the path to Mukthi. This information should be revealed only to the devotees of the God at their own request. If a person is a devotee this may be revealed to him, even if he does not request for the same. According to Ramayana there is a sacred relationship between the teacher and the pupil.

In this connection it is interesting to remember that learning is considered as a co-operative endeavour of the teacher and the students to solve the problem as mentioned in the famous prayer of Upanishad.23
‘Let us co-operate together and jointly strive to find out the truth for illumination for the realization of the ultimate reality.’ This is an evidence of co-operative activity of the teacher and the pupil for finding out the truth. Ramayana reveals the sacred relationship between the teacher and the student as is depicted in the following examples:

1. Vasishta the teacher has the complete confidence in the capacity and character of Rama. The confidence of the teacher on Rama is revealed throughout Ramayana, where Rama faces challenging situations such as sending him along with Viswamithra, facing the challenge of Parasu Rama, departing to forest and so on. This psychological identification of the teacher with the student is an ideal relationship for teacher-pupil relationship.

2. Eventhough the duration of the relationship of Viswamithra and Rama is only for a short period, the intensity of mental attachment and confidence is hundred percent.
3. The relationship between Rama and Lakshmana is a glorious example for the life long love and dedication, not only between two brothers but also between a teacher and pupil.

4. Swayamprabha attains Mukthi through self-realization by the blessing and guidance of Rama which is yet another example of golden bond between the teacher as Brahman and the student (devotee) as disciple.

5. The relationship between Rama and Sabari is yet another glorious example of pure love of the teacher and student. Here Rama is the eternal guru (teacher) and Sabari is the devotee (student).

6. Eventhough Thara is the widow of Bali who was killed by Rama; she gets complete relief from sorrow and attains self-realization through the guidance of Rama, the Guru.

These are some examples of sacred relationship between the teacher and the student described in Adhyatma Ramayana. The ultimate concept is that teacher and student are the inseparable parts in the process of education and the bond of love and oneness characterizes their relationship.
Objective -3

To study the sociological significance of education as described in Adhyatma Ramayana

It has already been pointed out that Mukthi is the ultimate aim of life. Hence, the realization of the ultimate reality is the aim of each individual in the society, which consists of individuals with different aptitude, interest and ability. These qualities are known as ‘gunas’ consisting of three categories - Satva, Rajas and Thamas. Symbolically, these are represented by white, red and black colours respectively. This is known as varna (colour).

A person with ‘Satva’ is an even-minded person with no desire or attachment except to the ultimate reality. He is free from all negative emotions like desire, selfishness, hatred, jealousy etc. The characteristics of ‘Rajas’ represent the qualities of courage, self-respect, valour, sacrifice and the capacity to fight against Adharma (corrupt practices) and protect weaker sections in the society. ‘Thamas’ represents ignorance and selfishness and those who are low in intelligence are suitable for manual work.
These individuals are to be given education according to their aptitude. For this purpose the society was divided into varnas depending upon their quality and action. Varna and caste are different. Adhyatma Ramayana clearly states that caste and title are meaningless, but what matters is quality and occupation.\(^{24}\)

This is substantiated by the statement in Bhagavad-Gita also.\(^{25}\)

Accordingly an ideal person should have universal love, self-control with the same attitude of love towards enemies and friends. Such a person devotes his life for the attainment of self-realization through the acquisition of wisdom. This category is known as Brahmana who are eligible to become teachers. Vasishta, Viswamithra and Valmiki are true representatives of great teachers. These three dignitaries were born in the families of Brahmin, Kshatriya and Hunters respectively. But by their quality and action they were considered as brahmins. People with courage and valour and who are capable of protecting the life and property of others and controlling the society on the basis of Dharma are known as kshatriyas. Vaisyas are people with mixed qualities where
the quality of thamas is the least. Hence known as Vaisya meaning the distinguished one. Vaisyas are responsible for the maintenance of society through agriculture, trade and commerce. They are expected to acquire profit only on the basis of prescribed rules. ‘Sudra’ is one with the quality of thamas dominating over him. He is suitable for manual work and physical labour. Their service is also essential because physical work is as important as mental work in the maintenance of society. Gandhi used to point out the importance of physical work by personal example. He stated that if the scavengers were on strike nobody would live in the town. To do the service according to one’s aptitude is beneficial to the society and to the individual. This is also clearly stated in the Bhagavad-Gita.26

This means, “do according to one’s aptitude is beneficial to him and to the world, and to do the work which is not in one’s aptitude is dangerous to both”. This idea is the basic philosophy of guidance, which states, ‘Round pegs cannot be fitted into square holes.’

According to Adhyatma Ramayana society consists of individuals with equal right and responsibility even though
their duties may vary according to their aptitude. It is the responsibility of the ruler to see that the people discharge duties according to their aptitude. An educational system was organized according to this principle. It is interesting to note that about four thousand years back there existed an educational system based on the principle of guidance and the importance of which was understood by in the modern world only in the latter half of the twentieth century. In a society based on Dharma there was no exploitation, because the social, economic and political security of each person was assured. Such a society is known as ‘Rama Rajya’ or ideal society, which was the ultimate goal of Gandhi. A short description of such a society is given in Adhyatma Ramayana.27

Rama protected the people like a father who protects his children. The word Praja in Sanskrit also means son.

Ezhuthachan wonders what more heavenly pleasures do the people of Ayodhya need when they live under the leadership of Rama. The people got all pleasures equal to ‘Vaikunta’ (heaven) and they lived without sorrow or scarcity of anything.
It has to be remembered that only a suitable educational system can create such a society. Ashramas or institutions were established to achieve the social goals. Each individual spent his early days in education to acquire the knowledge regarding the significance of Dharma. This stage was known as Brahmacharya. After education when one acquires the concept of Dharma, and develops the skills related to his vocation he enters the household life (Garhasthya). It is the duty of the householder to provide food and security to others and maintain the society. After Garhasthya a person enters Vanaprastha or isolation through which he contemplates on the reality of life. Ultimately a person gets Mukthi as a result of self-realization. Then he rejects everything relating to the world and enters the stage of sanyasa, the stage of Mukthi.

The institutionalization of the society based on the value systems can be represented as follows:
Values | Asramas in individual life
--- | ---
1. Dharma | Brahmacharya (Student life)
4. Moksha | Vanaprastha (Isolated life) and Sanyasa (Complete renouncement)

It was envisaged that every individual however debilitated, he may ultimately reach self-realization. In other words as the result of education socially conscious, peaceful and loving members of the society based on co-operation and love should be created by means of educational system. It is self-sacrifice and love for others, not conflict and rivalry which should be the basis of the society.

Objective- 4

To study the Relationship between spiritual and temporal objectives and related practices of education envisaged in Adhyatma Ramayana

As stated earlier the ultimate aim of life according to Adhyatma Ramayana is Mukthi or salvation. But it should be remembered that the spiritual aim is not to be isolated from the
temporal or worldly life. The spiritual knowledge is integrated with worldly knowledge or sciences. Hence sciences are known as vedangas or limbs of Vedas. There are mainly the six sciences or sastras – namely

1. Siksha
2. Kalpam
3. Vyakarana
4. Niruktham
5. Chandas and
6. Jyothisa

Sree Rama and his brothers were educated both in Vedas and vedangas which have been described in detail in this chapter earlier.

The education was designed to serve the needs of the society and the individual. Hence the education as envisaged in Adhyathama Ramayana follows an integrated approach including both temporal and spiritual aspects known as Apara vidya and Para vidya. Education consists of professional, social and spiritual contents.
Objective-5

The principles and practices adopted in Adhyatma Ramayana are applicable to modern educational system especially for national integration, international understanding and peace.

According to Ramayana, the basic principle of education is to acquire the knowledge of Dharma and live according to the code of conduct of Dharma. To attain this goal one has to develop the qualities of compassion, truth, physical and mental purity and willingness to sacrifice for the welfare of the universe. Not only the living beings, but also everything in the universe is considered as the manifestation of Brahman.28

Every natural phenomenon is identified as the manifestation of a universal force with immense love. The qualities of Brahman are considered as Sath (Truth), Chith (Mind) and Ananda (Peace). Ananda is the state of bliss when one identifies himself with the ultimate reality and loses his identity. When a person is in deep sleep his self is lost. At this stage one feels immense peace. A person with proper education is unselfish, compassionate and he sacrifices everything for the
welfare of the universe. Karma or action is to be performed without attachment or desire. This means that a person with true education is beyond the sectarian attitudes like caste creed or locality and region. Even creatures and plants are loved and handled with care and tenderness. The balance of Nature is not to be disturbed. Man should live in accordance with Nature. It is very interesting to note that centuries later Rousseau advocates the same idea of ‘Nature based education.’ According to Rousseau ‘Everybody is born pure and innocent but the society corrupts him’ and ‘everybody is born free but everywhere he is in chains’. Here Nature means the internal divine nature of man and the external Nature manifest the glory of God. When a person acquires this knowledge and is trained accordingly to lead a life based on Dharma he becomes a universal man. Such saintly persons love not only the human beings but also every living being. Acquiring true knowledge by following the path of Dharma in life leads one to treat everything with love and tenderness. This is the true education (Vidya) recommended in Adhyatma Ramayana.
When true education is obtained man becomes free from sectarian and narrow considerations and develops a universal outlook.

Acharya Ramamoorthy commission (1991), points out dehumanization as the greatest challenge faced by Indian education. Mere intellectual knowledge will lead a person to selfishness, violence and brutality which are the characteristics of demons. Hence, it is stated, “Sakshara vipareethathwe Rakshasa Bavathi Dhruvam” which means reversal of literacy creates demonic characteristics. In our society human beings are reduced to selfish impulsive individuals, very often reflecting the qualities of demons. This is evident through the violence, exploitation, selfishness and cruelty witnessed throughout the world. Under the guise of globalization, underdeveloped countries are being exploited by developed countries. There is restlessness, misery and exploitation everywhere in the world. People have forgotten their basic Dharma; no body seems to be happy even in their endeavour of making money; commercialization has conquered the soul of the world. The National Commission Report on Education (1964-66) has pointed out that our education system should
combine both Atom and Ahimsa. Here Atom represents the technological, temporal knowledge and Ahimsa represents the spiritual heritage of India. The secondary education commission report of 1952 has also stated that education should give importance to the building up of character. The university education commission report of 1948 has strongly recommended for the spiritual and moral education. All these commission reports point out indirectly the importance of the message of a comprehensive education integrating temporal and spiritual knowledge for the welfare of the whole world based on compassion and service. Learning Adhyatma Ramayana and living according to the principles stated therein will enable the modern society to get rid of the present evils and attain peace and harmony as described in the Rama Rajya.²⁹
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|camßmhm|p¶_nw._w³ |Xn_nw_w

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15. " Изм. |camßmhm|p¶_nw._w³ |Xn_nw_w
|camßmhm|p¶_nw._w³ |Xn_nw_w

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16. C|ambZithpol | mehpw _p³
a|Vêp_² -aqe{|R|nsbh|p|sX|p

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20. A`n{Inbmˡw kpe`w kanXvIpłw?
    Pem`y`nkv mhn`n£amWntX?
    A`nkziàymXm`jWntX?
    ImfnZmk³þImfnZmk³þImfnZmk³þImfnZmk³þ(2004). kÀ¤w 5, ómänæ 33, ón.kn._pîvky ëPv 770

21. 'punkåmPlmXol DëkJplIrX ZpjyIrX
    XkmvoirZymKmbbpPjkz êhmKxALyºkpliwew'
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22. ò`KhZvKoX2/50
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24. PmXnXnxamZnLMK KpKXlp
    t' ZsoñoX _pl-mmpsS aXw
    mtnZXmbdpÁ [A³w v]Xm\n
25. NîmXpÀhÀ®yw abm krySwKpWÁÖhn' mKtx
    Xkg 1À_mca\xknw hnyýºm nmabgwb
    `KhzwKox 4/18

26. fëbmb® kZ\Aé¿h hnPklc\c\A¿m¿yhóXm\nxv
    kZ\Aé¿h \p\wtébX \c\Aé¿h _ bnhx
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29. A²ybmwmbammbianZsa{Xbpp
aXwp±amp taw aXwpk{ph{Imaw
A²yb}w snbytm aÂ^² poÂ^²
apaw k{nhpXmnh kwhbw
ssa{Xolcw }ln{ghr{mZw
iXphn{m}wavnkmkghA²\w

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