

Swami Vivekananda's Vision On Indian Education System

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Abstract

Unlike a drop of water which loses its identity when it joins the ocean, man does not lose his being in the society in which he lives. Man's life is independent. He is born not for the development of the society alone, but for the development of his self. A great man is different from an eminent one in that he is ready to be the servant of the society. Thus the role of Swami Vivekananda lies in the fact that he believed in interdependence between man and society. The purpose of human life is incomplete unless he finds his role in the society. The growth of individual is actually the growth of the society. This very responsibility of changing scenarios and changing in education system has been taken into consideration as a biggest responsibility for mankind by some enlightened souls of different countries and continents of the world. Among such enlightened souls, Swami Vivekananda demonstrated his extraordinary appearance to take this very responsibility by performing his most valuable ideas through his educational philosophy to the upcoming generations.

Keywords: The Ocean, Swami Vivekananda, Dependence, Growth of individual, Growth of Society.

Introduction

Swami Vivekananda was a well-known thinker, priest and educator who transformed almost every aspect of education. The education system and the role of teachers in Indian education are the most significant in our modern society. His educational perspective addresses a wide range of concerns that have emerged in recent years. At a halt, his famous words-“conscious, come up and do not stop until the goal is reached”- reverberated across the nation's youth, sparking their social consciousness and energizing their wet spirits. He further elaborates, “to provide education for the lower classes and the entire young generation, to rebuild their lost individuality”. Give them knowledge since that is the only help they desire, and the rest will follow as a result. His significant contributions to education include self-knowledge, self-reliance, concentration, overall mass education, women's education, physical education, man making education, character building education, education through a mother-tongue medium, religion and moral education, value education, being an enthusiastic teacher and so on. This is correct and still holds weight in our country today. Teacher holds a great responsibility in shaping a great nation as they educate the young generation.

Swami Vivekananda's Ideas and Philosophy of Education

Life Sketch

Swami Vivekananda was born in a Bengali family on 12th January 1863 and died on 4th July 1902 at an early age of 39. He was an Indian Hindu monk and chief disciple of the 19th century Indian mystic Ramakrishna. He was a key figure in the introduction of the Indian philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga to the Western world¹ and is credited with raising interfaith awareness, bringing Hinduism to the status of a major world religion during the late 19th century². He was a major force in the revival of Hinduism in India, and contributed to the concept of nationalism in colonial India³. Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna math and the Ramakrishna Mission⁴.

Education Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda

“Real education is that which enables one to stand on one's own legs”⁵. Education prepares a man for social service, to develop his character and finally infuses him with the spirit and courage of a lion. For getting degree is not an education, the proper education must be viewed on the basis of character, mental powers, intelligence and inculcates, self-confidence and self-reliance in the individuals. Swamiji has emphasized that all the knowledge which we gets from worldly or spiritual lies embedded in the human mind. It was covered with a veil of darkness and ignorance. Education is a tool to open from the darkness and ignorance, after getting of education, the knowledge will shines out dazzlingly. The teaching and learning are the one way of process. The teacher only guides, suggest, points out and helps the student. Self-learning and self-getting knowledge is the real education. Swami Vivekananda views that education is not information of knowledge which will insert into the mind of a child by force. In his own words-“Education is the manifestation of perfection already in man”⁶.

According to Vivekananda, the means for education is love. Love and character building are the best means for education. Love is the best inspiration in character building. Love in the minds of the educator is the real source of his influence upon the educated. The true education, gives the growth and expansion of personality. He wanted that the education for total human development was the main vision. “Character, efficiency and humanism should be the aim of all education. Vivekananda strongly pleaded that development of character through the service of his fellowmen, the utilization of his talents for ensuring the happiness and welfare of the millions of his less fortunate fellow-citizens should be the aim of the education”⁷.

Vivekananda's Views on Different Aspects of Education

1. Vivekananda's Aims of Education

The chief aim of education should be to help the growing soul to draw out that in itself which is best and make it perfect for a noble use. This attempt at perfection is part of the evolutionary game of the divine. Educational aim consists in the development of the head, hand and heart. Education should help the individual to develop physically, mentally, morally and spiritually. Unlike in the west, In India education, life and religion are intertwined. As such the value aspect of education is kept in close touch with the aims of education⁸. As Vivekananda says, “Education is not the amount of information that is put into the brain and runs riot there, undigested, all your life we must have life-building, man making, character-building assimilation of ideas”⁹. A

hundred thousand men and women, fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified with eternal faith in the lord and nerved to lion's courage by their sympathy for the poor and the fallen and the downtrodden, will go over the length and breadth of the land, preaching the gospel of salvation, the gospel of help, the gospel of social raising up, the gospel of equality. This zeal of holiness and the lion's courage come only with such an education, which essentially starts with spiritual growth or the journey towards self-knowledge. Swami Vivekananda says, The ideal of all education, all training, should be this man making. But, instead of that we are always trying to polish up the outside. What use in polishing up the outside when there is what man making education of Swamiji is all about. This education ensures man's organic growth from within outside and not as an attempt to keep on adjusting from outside-in (which more than often than not, shuts the inner man in a chamber of obscurity and forgetfulness¹⁰).

2. Man Making Education proposed by Swami Vivekananda

Analysis of man making education proposed by Swami Vivekananda is immense, intensive and holistic in its nature depending upon the need, time and circumstances. His philosophy of education is considered to be the blueprint or fundamental foundation for a meaningful existence. He professes lifelong learning for the common good and nation building with integrity and values. The SWOC analysis¹¹ is carried out to analyse the dimensions of Man making Education¹² proposed by Swami Vivekananda here below strength. Inherent knowledge of individuals needs to be unfolded in multifaceted ways: Real education will wipe out ignorance from an individual. Man making education leads to character building. Manifestation of inner self will strengthen the mind. Unfolding inherent abilities will enrich physical strength education is completely value driven by it. It professes every potential soul to dedicate selfless service to mankind. It promotes mass education it trains individuals to consciously know their self. It encourages women's empowerment. It deals with the manifestation of the inner potential gifted to each individual. It delivers spiritual education. It aims towards personality development. It promotes nation building. It believes in the utilization of youth power for futuristic change.

3. Women's Education

Women education is not in the hands of others, the powers are in the women. Vivekananda considered that women to be the incarnation of power and asked men to respect them in everywhere. He rightly pointed out that unless Indian women secure a respectable place in this country, the nation can never march forward. The important features of his scheme of female education are to make them strong, fearless and conscious of their chastity and dignity. He insists that men and women are equally competent not only in the academic matters, but also must have equal companion in the home and family. Vivekananda being a keen observer could distinguish the difference in perception about the status of women in the west and in India. "The ideal women in India is the mother, the mother first and the mother last. The word woman calls up to the mind of the Hindu, motherhood and God is called mother¹³."

4. Scheme of Curriculum According to Swami Vivekananda

Swamiji advocated the inclusion of all such subjects in the curriculum which foster material welfare with spiritual development. For spiritual perfection, he prescribed- religion, philosophy, Puranic lore, Upanishads, company of saints and listening to their lectures. For material advancement and prosperity, he prescribed- Languages, Geography, Science, Political Science, Economics, Psychology, Art, Agriculture, Industrial and

technical subjects. For physical development he recommended Games, Sports and other physical exercises. He favoured a common language for the unity and integrity of the country. He is of the opinion that all education must be provided in the regional languages or mother tongue of the child. He included arts in education. He believes that art is an essential part of human life. He recommended the study of Sanskrit in order to preserve and transmit our cultural heritage and past greatness. He considers Sanskrit as the source of all Indian languages. Swami Vivekananda is in favour of the study of vocational subjects such as agriculture, industrial and technical subjects in order to develop vocational efficiency in the child so that he could become economically self-sufficient.

5. Role of Teacher

Teacher as a guide: The teacher is a friend, philosopher and guide of the student. He is a tyagi imparting knowledge to the child. Quality of the teacher: Swami Vivekananda lays on stress on the personal life and character of the teacher. According to him, the personal life of the teacher is more important than the knowledge he possesses so that he can impart in the child all good things. Only a dedicated and selfless person can be a good teacher. He must have love and sympathy for his children. He should be pure in speech and deeds. Provider of sustainable environment: Swami Vivekananda emphasizes the fact that education should be child-centred. Like a plant, a child grows by his own inner power naturally. Hence, the function of the teacher is to remove the obstacles in the way of the self-development of the child and help him in making the potential actual. The main duty of the teacher is to provide a suitable environment for the all-round development of the child.

6. Education of Masses

The individual development of our nation, so he needs to give education to the society or common people. The education is not only confined to the well-to-do persons only but also to the poor people. Vivekananda emphasis to improve the conditions of the masses and he advocated mass education. He takes this education as an instrument to improve the individual as well as society. By this way, he exhorted to his countrymen to know- “I consider that the great national sin is the neglect of the masses, and that is one of the causes of our downfall. No amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses of India are once well – educated, well-fed and well-cared for”¹⁴.

7. Morals and Religious Education

Religious education is an essential piece of a sound curriculum. Vivekananda thought about the Gita, the Upanishads and the Vedas as the most significant educational program for strict instruction. For him, religion is self-acknowledgement. It isn't just for the person's improvement yet in addition for the change of absolute humanity. The genuine religion can't be constrained to a specific spot of time. He argued for solidarity of world religion. To Vivekananda, morals and religion are one and the equivalent. God is consistently in favor of goodness. To battle for goodness is to serve to God. The good and strict instructions build up the self-assurance among the youngsters and women. The basic attribute of the instructive way of thinking of Swami Vivekananda are optimism, naturalism and practicality. Swami Vivekananda a visionary on the most fundamental level¹⁵.

8. Importance of Yoga

Vivekananda wants to place maximum emphasis on concentration and meditation in the teaching- learning process. In the practice of yoga as it is in the practice of general education, five elements are necessary involved- the teacher, the taught, the aim, the subject and the method. He convinced of the fact that all knowledge is in the human mind and that the same can be experienced by practicing concentration and meditation.

9. Physical Education

Without the knowledge of physical education, the self-realization or character building is not possible one must know, how to make our body strong through physical education, to attain a complete education, it is necessary to develop both the mind and the body. In particular, Vivekananda stressed the value of physical education in curriculum. He said, “You will be nearer to Heaven through football than through the study of Gita. You will understand Gita better by your biceps, your muscles a little stronger. You will understand the Upanishads better and the glory of the Atman, when your body stands firm on your feet and you feel yourself as man¹⁶.”

10. Outlook of Swami Vivekananda on Educating the Youths

The life teachings of Swami Vivekananda are truly inspiring¹⁷. The thoughts and ideologies of Swamiji have impressed millions which made him a youth icon. He believes that youth are the treasure house that can build a strong nation. Since from contemporary period, India has been suffering from social evils, poverty and ignorance. The wiping off of these societal lacunas is possible only through real education. Educating plays a pivotal role in transforming walks of life. In this regard, youth shall have to develop iron muscles, nerves of steel and a strong mind from within. The mind with knowledge is inherent and to be uncovered. Selfless Social Service is the foundation upon which a strong nation could be built which has either less or no social evils. Swami Vivekananda with a firm belief in the power of youth in nation building has always emphasized. The education of all, building character and personal integrity¹⁸. Vivekananda had kept a broader outlook to eradicate social problems with man making education¹⁹.

Relevance of Swami Vivekananda's ideas in modern education

Here, education is conceived in the broad sense; everything in the society plays an educational role. The formal education system is but part of the culture and values in the system are inevitably determined by the culture. Education is seen as instrument for harnessing human drives, and as consequences, it becomes to some extent a method of behavior modification. Education preserves rather than changes social values. Education is seen to abide by existing culture norms of the society.

Conclusion

In the current education, Vivekananda's education plays the role of a friend, philosopher and guide. The ideas of Swami Vivekananda value and character build is bearing a great significance role in the field of present education. The present education system is highly mechanical. It is a race for both parents and students and the educators further add fuel to fire. Most of the educational institution are the profit making concern with pompous classroom and decked up teachers. He strongly advocated national values on the basis. National lines and national value completely based on cultural tradition. Swami Vivekananda's words and her education not been forgotten.

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