



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND ITS EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT: AN ANALYSIS IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF MODERN EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract

Swami Vivekananda is a renowned philosopher, thinker, and educationist who lived in India in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He was a key figure in the Indian renaissance, and his ideas have had a profound impact on the country's culture, politics, and education. This paper analyses Swami Vivekananda's educational thought in the perspective of the modern education system.

The analysis of Swami Vivekananda's educational thought begins with a review of his philosophy, which emphasizes the importance of developing a holistic approach to education that focuses on the integration of body, mind, and spirit. He believed that education should not only focus on the acquisition of knowledge but also on the development of character and a sense of social responsibility.

Furthermore, Swami Vivekananda's educational thought emphasizes the importance of education as a tool for social transformation. He believed that education should aim to create individuals who are not only self-reliant but also committed to the betterment of society. He stressed the need for education to be accessible to all, regardless of their social status or economic background.

The analysis also examines Swami Vivekananda's views on the role of the teacher and the student in the educational process. He believed that the teacher should not only impart knowledge but also act as a role model and mentor to the student. He also emphasized the need for students to be active participants in the learning process, rather than passive recipients of information.

In conclusion, the analysis of Swami Vivekananda's educational thought reveals the relevance and significance of his ideas in the context of the modern education system. His philosophy emphasizes the need for a holistic approach to education that goes beyond the acquisition of knowledge to include the development of character and social responsibility. Additionally, his emphasis on accessibility and the role of the teacher and student in the educational process remains relevant today.

Key words: Philosopher, Holistic Approach, Emphasizes, Knowledge, Accessibility

“Education is the manifestation of perfection already in man”

--Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda tried to stir up India from different directions and his contribution to modern thought cannot be denied. He wanted to awaken the religious consciousness of subjugated Indians to restore their self-confidence and thus, he is especially known as a religious leader to the common people of India. However, his theoretical contribution in the field of education and culture is no less significant. He presented before the world the scientific interpretation of Indian Upanishads and Vedanta and urged the people of India to move towards that goal. Although he did not get any opportunity to apply his educational thought practically, his pedagogy is so scientific that his thinking has indirectly influenced modern education.

According to him, knowledge is a matter of the human heart and does not come from outside. The human mind is the repository of knowledge of the universe and all knowledge is stored there. What we call 'learning' in the general sense is not correct; it should be called 'self-discovery'. When we remove the veil from the mind, our self-knowledge is revealed, just as flint ignites due to friction and fire does not come from outside. Because there is a source of knowledge in the mind, it is revealed through perception. According to him, education is the manifestation of the sincere being, not an external effort and this process will happen naturally. Although Vivekananda's educational thought is based on the most complex theory of Indian philosophy, it contains scientific elements and scientific analysis is closely related to this theory. Analogy to modern education doctrine is present. According to Vivekananda, education is the manifestation of inner greatness. The two words in this definition that are of particular importance are Perfection and Manifestation. By inherent greatness, Vivekananda meant an individual's own qualities. He was initiated into the mantra of humanity, so he saw all individual beings as great. This entity can be called the aspect of human individuality in modern psychological terms, and the individual will develop according to their own characteristics and uniqueness. From this perspective, Vivekananda wanted to establish individualism in education.

On the other hand, an analysis of the meaning of the word 'manifestation' indicates another direction. It is natural for something to be expressed in a particular medium. No matter how much inherent power a person has, it is of no value if it is not manifested in a particular environment. Therefore, Vivekananda gave equal importance to its manifestation as much as he gave importance to the essence. The greatness that is inherent is worthless if it does not manifest itself in the right environment. Human society is the only place where this inherent greatness of the individual can be manifested. In his words 'Prakash,' there is an indication of social importance. From this point of view, Vivekananda supported the socialist view. Therefore, it can be said that Vivekananda tried to achieve a meaningful combination of individualistic and socialist views in his educational philosophy.

Vivekananda combined spiritual consciousness with social consciousness while defining the goals of education. He said, “Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there undigested all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making, assimilation of ideas.” Swamiji declared in unequivocal terms, “The end of all education, all training should be man-making. The end and aim of all training is to make the man grow.” Man-making education includes physical and health education. He was also greatly concerned about the proper care of the body and the healthy development of one's physique. He urged, “Be strong, my young friends, that is my advice to you. You will be nearer to heaven through football than through the ‘Gita’. These are bold words, but I have to say them to you. I know where the shoe pinches. You will understand the ‘Gita’ better, your biceps, your muscles a little stronger.” He emphasized repeatedly, “Strength is goodness. Weakness is sin.”

Swamiji did not discuss anything special about the curriculum as usual. In his Indian and Western educational thought, one finds more theoretical ideals than practical aspects. He believed that “A nation is advanced in proportion as education and intelligence spread among the masses”. Among the curriculum he spoke of sporadically in the discussion of various fields for this universal education, he spoke of the introduction of religious education with emphasis on the spiritual development of the

people. He spoke of imparting all education through the mother tongue and practicing mother tongue. Besides, he said that since all the main books of Indian thought were written in Sanskrit, Sanskrit practice should be included in the curriculum. Apart from that, he also said that the curriculum should provide students with scientific thinking and believed that the efficiency of human life can be increased through science. So he considered science as a very necessary subject in the curriculum. Besides, he also talked about the lessons of history, geography, literature, etc. Through his curriculum, he sought to inspire Indians with ancient Indian ideals on the one hand and on the other hand to equip them with knowledge of science to make them equal to the performance of Western countries.

Swami Vivekananda gave special importance to self-direction as a medium of education. "No one was ever really taught by another". Each of us has to teach himself. The child will develop at his own pace. Nothing can be forced upon him, and his development will be aided by concentration. The greater this power, the more knowledge he will be able to acquire. Vivekananda said, "High achievements in arts, music, etc. are the result of concentration". It can only be achieved by focusing the mind on any object. Ancient Greek philosophy speaks of such external concentration. Indian Yoga also speaks of internal concentration. Either way, concentration is a necessary technique for learning. Energy is needed; it will come through celibacy. He says through celibacy, biological energy can be transformed into spiritual energy, thus much energy is available for concentration. Also, in teaching, he has given special importance to self-confidence. Learning through concentrated self-effort is the main method of education. Besides, he talks about the application of psychology (Science of Mind-psychology) in teaching—"The utility of this science is to bring out the perfect man and not let him wait for ages, just as a plaything in the hands of the physical world, like a log of cheek food carried from wave to wave and tossing about in the oceans".

Vivekananda considered ancient Indian learning environment acceptable as learning environment. He said the student would be influenced by the Guru's ideal life by living in the Gurugriha, "My idea of education is Gurugriha-vasa, without the personal life of the teacher, there would be no education". For this reason he gave special importance on the character traits of teacher. So the influence of personality and character of the teachers will remove all narrowness of the child. He said "One should live from his boyhood with one whose character is a blazing fire and should have before him a living example of highest teaching". Swami Vivekananda's approach to education can be summarized as a combination of spiritual and social consciousness with a focus on man-making education. He believed that education should not just be about imparting information but should also aim at character-building and assimilation of ideas. Physical and health education was also important to him and he emphasized the need for a strong body as well as a strong mind.

In terms of curriculum, Swami Vivekananda believed that education should be imparted through the mother tongue and should include religious education with emphasis on spiritual development. He also believed that science was a necessary subject in the curriculum and that knowledge of science could help Indians become equal to the performance of Western countries. Other subjects that he believed were important included history, geography, and literature. In his educational thought we find elements of Indian Vedanta philosophy as well as the application of western scientific knowledge. The main characteristic of his educational thought is this combination. So Swami Vivekananda's direct impact on theoretical and practical aspects of modern education may be minimal but his overall contribution cannot be denied. His main contribution to education was his support for modernism.

Swami Vivekananda gave special importance to self-direction and concentration as mediums of education. He believed that each person had to teach himself and that the child should be allowed to develop at his own pace. Concentration was seen as a necessary technique for learning and he emphasized the need for self-confidence in teaching. Swami Vivekananda also believed in the application of psychology in teaching, with the goal of bringing out the perfect man and not letting him is a plaything in the hands of the physical world.

In the present times, Vivekananda's educational thought continues to gain relevance as modern education aims to move beyond the traditional classroom settings and embrace technology and digital modes of learning. His philosophy can be considered a guide for educators and learners to make education more meaningful and impactful. Drawing on his ideas,

modern education can strive towards creating a learning environment that fosters creativity, critical thinking and lifelong learning. Overall Vivekananda's vision of education is a vital contribution to the contemporary educational discourse, inspiring us to think beyond the narrow confines of academic achievement and focus on the holistic development of learners.

“Learn everything that is good from others but bring it in, and in your own way absorb it; do not become others.”

----- Swami Vivekananda

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