



THE RELEVANCE OF THE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA TO THE CURRENT INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT:

The education system of a nation evolves in response to the present requirements of society and its citizens, shaped by the ideas and adaptations put forth by the educationists. India has produced numerous potential educationists contributing on the educational structure of different countries all over the world. Indian education system is immensely influenced by the thoughts of those great Indian educationists. Though Swami Vivekananda was an Indian reformer and educationist from 160 years ago, his educational philosophy has several possibilities for proper application in the present Indian education system. It seems to be magnificently relevant to the contemporary education pattern. The present study aims to explore the relevance of Swami Vivekananda's educational philosophy to the current Indian education system. The researcher utilised secondary sources to conduct the study and employed content analysis methodology for interpreting the acquired data.

Keywords: Swami Vivekananda, Indian education system, Educational philosophy, Swami Vivekananda's educational philosophy

INTRODUCTION:

After independence, Indian education system has gone through a complete reformation process. The most influential and beneficial education policy so far in Indian context seems to be National Policy on Education, 1986. Its most recent iteration is the National Education Policy 2020, which represents a pivotal and crucial step towards the advancement of the Indian education system. However, every education policy possesses some philosophical base suitable to reach the goals the contemporary education policy has. This philosophical foundation, generally, relies on the educational philosophies of both Indian and Western thinkers, especially on Indian philosophers.

India is the splendid motherland of many great personalities with greater contribution to the world in various sectors. Swami Vivekananda is one of those icons who glorified India in front of the global world. He was a philosopher, social reformer and also an educationist. His definition of education was quite unique and thought-provoking. He believed that any external imposition is not education, it is the manifestation of perfection already in men. He is one of those Indian thinkers whose educational philosophies have golden contribution to Indian education system. Vivekananda's educational philosophy reflects many new methods of learning, concentration and activities for the students which are quite relevant even in today's Indian educational context. It is needless to say that incorporating Swamiji's philosophical principles into our educational process will undoubtedly contribute to the construction of a more prosperous nation. Therefore, in this research, the investigator aims to investigate the pertinence of Swami Vivekananda's educational philosophy within the contemporary Indian education system.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Virajananda (1914), portrayed a detailed life-sketch of Swami Vivekananda. Prabhananda (2003), explored Swami Vivekananda's deep insight on the importance of education in Indian context. Sarkar (2015), highlighted Vivekananda's educational philosophy and his perspectives on the aims of education. Radha (2019), pointed out Vivekananda's involvement in man-making education. Mukhopadhyay (2021), discussed Swamiji's visions on women empowerment and its relevance to the present India. Mukherjee (2021), described Swami Vivekananda's views on youth empowerment. However, the researcher could not find any extensive study on the relevance of Swami Vivekananda's educational philosophy to the current Indian education system. Hence, the author attempts to point out the applicability of Vivekananda's educational principles to the present Indian education system.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To know about Swami Vivekananda's educational philosophy
2. To explore the relevance of the educational philosophy of Swami Vivekananda to the current Indian education system

METHODOLOGY:

The researcher applied content analysis as the methodology for conducting the study and secondary sources of data are utilised to gather information about Swami Vivekananda's educational philosophy. The articles and books on Swamiji are considered as secondary data, the most reliable specimens of knowledge to conduct this study.

HIGHLIGHTS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY:

Swami Vivekananda gives a complete outline of educational process with clear aims of education, nature of education, method of teaching and role of the teacher:

- **Aims of Education:** Swamiji thrives on the physical and mental development of the pupils, character formation, development of moral and spiritual aspects, awakening of innate power of man and growing confidence among the disciples as the salient aims of education.
- **Nature of Education:** People should have life building, man-making, and character-making assimilation of ideas leading to lifelong education. Swami Vivekananda's pivotal concern lies not in the doctrine and dogma of the faith, but in the true nature of humanity, which he considered divine.
- **Method of Teaching:** The practice of Yoga and meditation is widely acknowledged by Vivekananda as the most effective strategy to tranquilize students' minds and awaken their inner strength. Swamiji states that students should be taught to work diligently, form good habits and take lessons from mistakes.
- **Role of the Teacher:** According to Vivekananda, "Without faith, humility, submission and veneration in our hearts towards the teacher, there cannot be any growth in us". A teacher should be an ideal person

with a good moral character possessing a pure heart and mind. His teaching activities should match with the mental level of the students. In Swamiji's words, "The true teacher is he who can immediately come down to the level of the student, and transfer his soul to the student's soul and see through and understand through his mind".

The main pillars of Vivekananda's educational philosophies are as follows:

- **Education, the manifestation of perfection already in man:** Swamiji's educational philosophy focuses on nurturing the complete individual, not merely the external aspect composed of physical attributes, as commonly emphasised by many educationists, but also the inward self comprising both the physical and spiritual dimensions.
- **Physical and Mental Growth:** Vivekananda suggests that our learning is more effective when it involves exercises, games, and various physical activities rather than relying solely on memorizing information from books. By becoming physically fit individuals, we can practically apply knowledge in our daily lives, leading to personal growth and happiness. According to Swamiji, education should enable the pupils to be physically well-developed and courageous future citizen with a strong self-concept, mental stability and fearless mind.
- **Character development:** Vivekananda stated, "The character of any man is but the aggregate of his tendencies, the sum total of the bent of his mind". The most effective method for character development is the observation of the teacher's personal demonstration of high moral values and good character by the disciples. For character development, Vivekananda stressed the importance of practising Brahmacharya, as it contributes to the growth of mental, moral, and spiritual faculties, ultimately leading to the purity of thoughts, speech, and actions.
- **Moral and Spiritual Development:** The greatness of a citizen, who serves as the core of a nation's greatness, can be achieved through their moral and spiritual growth, which education should actively promote. The students must concentrate on their moral and spiritual development by cultivating the utmost moral and spiritual qualities such as truthfulness, purity, integrity, determination, bravery, resilience, compassion, service to all, modesty, humility, and courteous behavior.
- **Self-power and confidence:** Throughout his life, Swamiji consistently encouraged the disciples to have unwavering faith and confidence in their own abilities. One should explore the innate power latent in oneself and self-confidence emerges out of the awakening of the latent spirit.

RELEVANCE OF THE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA TO THE CURRENT INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM:

According to Vivekananda, "Man is a compound of animality, humanity and divinity". Our educational system should be designed to assist individuals in progressing from a primitive state to a divine state through self-actualisation, practical thinking, and appropriate training. The contemporary educational landscape has incorporated Vivekananda's philosophy for the advancement of the students:

- Swami Vivekananda's genuine vision of education revolves round the realisation of one's inner self. New education Policy (NEP) 2020 embraces a similar ideology, aiming for the holistic development of individuals. The modified education system thrives on introducing the value-based and skill-based education with the requirement of active body and mind, an integral part of Swamiji's educational viewpoint.
- Swami Vivekananda advocated for an education that extends beyond mere bookish knowledge, and this perspective aligns with the principles of the NEP 2020, which abolishes rote memorisation and places a stronger emphasis on skill-based learning. Such education is envisioned to empower individuals with

positive attitudes, confidence, and strong character. Furthermore, the NEP 2020 seeks to cultivate self-reliance in individuals, a principle that resonates with Swami Vivekananda's educational philosophy.

- The values and culture occupy a very significant position in Swamiji's educational thought. NEP 2020 also places a strong emphasis on education grounded in values and culture.
- The contemporary education system gives prominence to the moral and character development of individuals, an important educational input by Swamiji. Value education, focused on fostering moral and character growth, has become an essential component of every educational curriculum.
- Vivekananda called for vocational education. It is imperative to offer vocational education and education in Western science and technology to eliminate poverty from the nation. In the present day, various vocational centers have emerged, providing training in professional courses such as teaching, engineering, fashion design, tourism, hotel management, photography, and more. These centers equip people with the skills they need to earn a livelihood and this was an aim of education as per Swamiji's opinion.
- He aspired for all children to receive an education, for youths and adults to become literate. His vision has inspired today's education system to establish general, compulsory, and free education, as well as adult and women's education programs. Some examples of the Government initiatives that reflect these ideals include the Universalization of Elementary Education, the Right to Education Act of 2009, distance learning, correspondence courses, and other relevant educational strategies in the present context.

As observed, several educational areas become advanced with the appropriate incorporation of Swamiji's educational ideas. Still, there are certain aspects of the educational landscape where the integration of Swamiji's educational viewpoint is currently overlooked and requires immediate attention:

- The young minds of today lack humanity, the quality which makes us human beings. Swami Vivekananda envisioned the development of individuals who are not only intelligent but also compassionate, aiming to create individuals who are "great in heart and great in mind". With the help of illuminated humanistic ideas by Swamiji, the present education system should rekindle the essence of humanity within the realm of education by indulging in growing sympathy, love and cooperation among the students.
- Our current education system prioritizes grades over character development, resulting in individuals who are aimed at only economic progress, akin to machines. There is an immediate need to rejuvenate the spirit of humane qualities and the coordinating actions, as these values are deteriorating day by day. To inculcate values in the disciples, Swamiji's value education can be the best strategy.
- In this modern age, there are diffident kinds of tempting allurements to provoke the students. Education should introduce lofty ideals to students and help in eradicating the negative inclinations of our minds which can be done by infusing Swamiji's educational ideas to the contemporary education system.

CONCLUSION:

Swami Vivekananda was an outstanding reformer, thinker, idealist, pragmatist and promoter of education. Swamiji's educational philosophy holds significant relevance in today's educational landscape. It is through the educational framework envisioned by Swamiji that we can imbue in our future generations a zeal for excellence and a sense of compassion to serve and share. UNESCO also duly recognized his contributions by acknowledging him as "one of the eminent educators of the world". His educational concepts and ideas are actively implemented in the present Indian education system in many educational spheres. The essence behind the adoption of the NEP 2020 can be seen as a substantial reflection of Swami Vivekananda's concept of 'man-making education' which is of utmost significance to futuristic education in India. The current Indian education model strives for value-based, skill-oriented, and activity-based practical education, which are also integral components of Swamiji's educational principles. Therefore, to conclude, it is evident that the goals and ideals of the contemporary Indian education is in harmony with Swami Vivekananda's educational philosophy.

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