



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

EDUCATIONAL THOUGHTS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA - A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

***DR M MOHAN REDDY**

DEPT OF EDUCATION,

S.V University, Tirupathi-517502, A.P.

**** DR V MALLI KARJUNA REDDY**

DEPT OF HISTORY;

S.V University, Tirupathi-517502, A.P.

ABSTRACT

Education is not the amount of information that we put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested, all your life. We must have life building, man making, and character making assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library. Swami Vivekananda felt that the education that young boys and girls receive is very negative. He thinks they do not gain confidence or self-respect from this education, so according to Swami Vivekananda only positive education should be given to children. Swami Vivekananda told, if young boys and girls are encouraged and are not unnecessarily criticized all the time, they are bound to improve in time. He also told the youth:

This Theoretical paper Discuss about Swamy Vivekananda thoughts and Ideas of education

KEY WORDS ; Education, self -Respect, Spiritual Values

INTRODUCTION

Vivekananda was a great educationalist and he revolutionized almost the entire field of education. His educational views were immensely influenced by the eternal truths of Vedanta. He inspired the millions of Indian youths by his revolutionary ideas of education. He gave the clarion call, “Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached”. He infused a new spirit in the national blood. He strongly advocated national education on national lines and based on national cultural tradition.

Vivekananda believed education is the manifestation of perfection already in men. He did not think it a pity that the existing system of education did not enable a person to stand on his own feet, nor did it teach him self-confidence and self-respect. To Vivekananda, education was not only collection of information, but something more meaningful; he felt education should be man-making, life giving and character-building. To him education was an assimilation of noble ideas. Set yourselves to the task of spreading education among the masses. Tell them and make them understand, "You are our brothers—a part and parcel of our bodies, and we love you and never hate you."

His great contributions in the field of education include self-knowledge, self-reliance, concentration, universal mass education, women's education, physical education, man-making education, character-building education, education through the medium of mother-tongue, religious and moral education, value education, selfless dedicated teachers etc.

EDUCATION IN INDIAN SOCIAL CONTEXT

Vivekananda advocated for the national system of education in order to make the minimum education available to all and to inculcate essentials of Indian culture in each and every child of the country. He wanted that education should start with the family of the child. Then it should include his village, society and the country. Gradually, with the development of wider understanding the child will begin to consider himself as a citizen of the entire world. Thus, the spirit of universal brotherhood will also develop in him automatically.

Swamiji was always against the British system of education in India which ignored the fundamental aspirations of our nation. Therefore he advocated the introduction of a national system of education on the basis of Indian educational and cultural heritage and national ideals. He criticized blind imitation of the west. He favoured the introduction of new things, but was against the idea of replacing. He argued, “Of course new things have to be learnt, have to be introduced and worked out, but is that to be done by sweeping away all that is old just because it is old?”

Philosophy of Education of Swami Vivekananda

The educational philosophy of Swami Vivekananda is a harmonious synthesis between the ancient Indian ideals and modern Western beliefs. He not only stressed upon the physical, mental, moral, spiritual and vocational development of the child but also advocated women education as well as education of the masses.

Characteristics of the educational philosophy of Swami Vivekananda are idealism, naturalism and pragmatism.

- As a naturalist, he emphasized that real education is possible only through nature and natural propensities.
- As an idealist, he insisted that the aim of education was to develop the child with moral and spiritual qualities.
- As a pragmatist, he emphasized the need of Western education of technology, commerce, industry and science to achieve material prosperity.
- Vivekananda stressed the need for physical education in curriculum.
- Vivekananda advocated education through the medium of mother tongue.
- He said “Besides mother tongue, there should be a common language which is necessary to keep the country united”.
- Vivekananda appreciated the greatness of Sanskrit.
- Vivekananda said, “Religion is the innermost core of education. Religion is like the rice and everything else, is like the curries.
- Vivekananda considered Gita, Upanishads and the Vedas as the most important part of the curriculum.
- According to Vivekananda, ethics and religion are one and the same. God is always on the side of goodness. To fight for goodness is service to God.
- Moral and religious education develops self confidence among young men and women.
- Individual development is not the full development of our nation, so it is necessary to give education to the entire society or common people.
- It is not only confined to the well-to-do persons only but also the poor people. Vivekananda emphasized on the improvement of condition of the masses and for this, he advocated mass education.
- He looked upon mass education as an instrument to improve the individual as well as society.
- He said-“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 more well-educated, well-fed and well-cared for.”

- Self-education is the self-knowledge. That is, knowledge of our own self is the best guide in the struggle of our life.
- He said, “Make women strong, fear-less, and conscious of their chastity and dignity”.
- He insisted that men and women are equally competent not only in the academic matters, but also in other spheres of life.
- 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.
- Vivekananda pleaded for universal education so that the backward people may fall in line with others. He said, “Education should spread to every household in the country, to factories, playgrounds and agricultural fields. If the children do not come to school the teacher should reach them.
- Thus, Vivekananda favoured education for different sections of society, rich and poor, young and old, male and female.

Aims of Education According to Swami Vivekananda

According to Swami Vivekananda the following should be the **main aims of education**:

1. Physical and Mental Development Aim

The second aim of education is the physical and mental development of the child so that the child of today, after studying Geeta, is able to promote national growth and advancement as a fearless and physically well-developed citizen of tomorrow.

Stressing the mental development of the child, Swamiji, wished education to enable the child to stand on his own legs economically rather than becoming a parasite on others.

2. Moral and Spiritual Development

According to Swami Vivekananda, a nation's greatness is not only measured by its parliamentary institutions and activities, but also by the greatness of its citizens. But the greatness of citizens is possible only through their moral and spiritual development which education should foster.

3. Character Development Aim

According to Swamiji character development is a very important aim of any education. For this, he emphasized the practice of Brahmacharya which fosters development of mental, moral and spiritual powers leading to purity of thoughts, words and deeds.

4. The Aim of Development Faith in One's Own self, Shraddha and a Spirit of Renunciation.

All through his life Swamiji exhorted the individuals to keep full confidence upon their powers. They should inculcate a spirit of self-surrender, sacrifice and renunciation of material pleasures for the good

of others. Education should fast, all these qualities in the individual. He gave this call to his countrymen. “Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is achieved.”

5. The Aim of Searching Unity in Diversity

The true aim of education is to develop insight into the individuals so that they are able to search out and realize unity in diversity. Swami Vivekananda has further asserted that physical and spiritual worlds are one; their distinctness is an illusion (Maya). Education should develop this sense which finds unity in diversity.

6. Religious Development Aim

To Swamiji religious development is an essential aim of education. To him, each individual should be able to search out and develop the religious seed embedded in him and thus find the absolute truth or reality.

Hence, he advocated the training of feelings and emotions so that the whole life is purified and sublimated. Then only, the capacities of obedience, social service and submission to the teachings and preaching's of great saints and saviors will develop in the individual. Education should foster this development.

7. The Aim of Reaching Perfection

The prime aim of education is to achieve fullness of perfection already present in a child. According to Swami all material and spiritual knowledge is already present in man covered by a curtain of ignorance. Education should tear off that veil so that the knowledge shines forth as an illuminating torch to enliven all the corners by and by. This is meant by achieving fullness of the latent perfection.

Curriculum According to swamy 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.

Methods of Teaching According to Swamy Vivekananda

Swamiji laid stress on meditation as a method of attaining knowledge. He advocates that since the human mind is perfect in itself, there is no necessity for it to receive knowledge from outside. Hence learning is nothing but a process of discovery of knowledge within the mind. However he has suggested following methods of teaching to be followed in a teaching learning situation.

Methods of Realization: Vivekananda considers realization as the chief aim of life. He advocated Yoga as the most ideal method of realization. Yogas are four in number. 1. Karma Yoga, 2. Bhakti Yoga, 3. Raja Yoga and 4. Jnana Yoga. The scope of all these Yogas is one and the same – removal of ignorance and enabling the soul to restore its original nature.

Discussion and Contemplation Method: Borrowing the idea from ancient Indian gurukula system of education Vivekananda also advocated discussion and contemplation to be followed in education.

Concentration Methods: Swamiji considers concentration as the only method of attaining knowledge. It is the key to the treasure house of knowledge. Concentration method helps the child to withdraw his different senses from temptations of life, and concentrate on the subject matter of instruction. He believed that Brahmacharya is necessary for developing the power of concentration. He said, “*Brahmacharya should be the burning fire within the veins*”.

Imitation Method: Children like to imitate the activities of others. Vivekananda, therefore, advocated utilizing such qualities of children for educational purposes. A teacher should present higher ideals and nobler patterns of behavior before the children to help them to imitate such activities for the formation of their character and personality.

Individual Guidance and Counselling: Vivekananda advocated the method of individual guidance and counselling in the teaching learning process to develop divine wisdom.

Lecture Method: Spiritual ideas are abstract ideas. It becomes difficult on the part of a child to understand spiritual doctrines. Therefore Vivekananda advocated for the introduction of lecture method to explain the spiritual ideas in a simple way to the students.

Activity Method: Swamiji accepted learning through activities as an ideal method of teaching. It can provide direct experience to the children. He advocated that activities like singing, storytelling, drama and dance should be performed by the students. He also advocated for the introduction of activities like excursions, camps etc., to help the students to understand the value of social service.

Discipline

According to Vivekananda discipline is an important aspect of a person's character. He believed that teaching a child or disciplining him from outside is only a myth. We cannot see outside what we are not inside. Whatever we are comes from disciplining our mind and body. He wants each of us to teach ourselves. The external teacher offers suggestions and the internal teacher starts working. Undue

domination and excessive authority would only stunt the natural growth of a child. He said, “If you don’t allow a child to become a lion, he will become a fox”. Do’s and don’ts’ have to be reduced and the right environment must be created.

An individual’s good character is said to be established when he is completely under the influence of the good tendencies. Instead of trying to discipline the child the teacher can set an example with his own life. Children imbibe more from the teacher’s own than they do from books and lectures. Discipline therefore, is to be caught rather than taught.

Man making Education

The educational philosophy of Swami Vivekananda is a harmonious synthesis between the ancient Indian ideals and modern Western beliefs. He not only stressed upon the physical, mental, moral, spiritual and vocational development of the child but also he advocated women education as well as education of the masses. The essential characteristics of educational philosophy of Swami Vivekananda are idealism, naturalism and pragmatism. In a naturalistic view points, he emphasized that real education is possible only through nature and natural propensities. In the form of idealist view point, he insists that the aim of education is to develop the child with moral and spiritual qualities. In the pragmatists view point, he emphasized the great stress on the Western education of technology, commerce, industry and science to achieve material prosperity. In short, first he emphasized spiritual development, then the material prosperity, after that safety of life and then solving the problems of flooding and clothing of the masses.

Women education

Vivekananda considered women to be the incarnation of power. He rightly pointed out that unless Indian women secure a respectable place in this country, the nation can never move forward. . The important features of his scheme of female education are “Make women strong, fear-less, and conscious of their chastity and dignity”. He insists that men and women are equally competent not only in the academic matters, but also in other spheres of life. 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.

Education for weaker section of society

Vivekananda pleaded for the universal education so that the backward people may fall in line with others. To uplift the backward classes he chooses education as a powerful instrument for their life process. Thus education should spread to every household in the country, to factories, playing grounds and agricultural fields. If the children do not come to the school the teacher should reach them. Two or three educated men should team up, collect all the paraphernalia of education and should go to the

village to impart education to the children. Thus, Vivekananda favored education for different sections of society, rich and poor, young and old, male and female.

Education of Masses

In the times of Swami Vivekanand, education was not available to the common people. It was confined to the well to do persons only. The poor, the miserable and the lowly placed used to starve and die for hunger. Swamiji yearned to improve the condition of the masses and thus advocated mass education as the only way to achieve any improvement in individual as well as society.

Swamiji exhorted 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 more well educated, well fed and well cared for.”

Place of Child

Like Froebel, Vivekananda emphasized the education to be child centered. According to him the child is the store and repository of all learning material and spiritual. Like a plant a child grows by his own inner power naturally.

Hence advising the child to grow naturally and spontaneously, Vivekananda asserted-“Go into your own and get the Upanishads out of your own self. You are the greatest book that ever was or will be. Until the inner teacher opens, all outside teaching is in vain.”

Place of Teacher

Swamiji believed in self-education. According to him each of us is his own teacher. The external teacher only guides and inspires the inner teacher (soul) to rise up and start working to develop the child. Hence discussing the role of teacher Swami Vivekanand said- “Teacher is a philosopher, friend and guide helping the educand to go forward in this own way.”

Wonderful Thoughts on Education by Swami Vivekananda’

- Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man.
- All power is within you; you can do anything and everything.
- Arise, Awake and Stop not till the goal is reached.
- The secret of life is not enjoyment but education through experience.
- You are the creator of your own destiny.
- There is only one purpose in the whole of life education.
- We may read books, hear lectures, and talk miles, but experience is the one teacher, the one eye-opener. It is best as it is. We learn, through smiles and tears we learn.

- The present system of education is all wrong. The mind is crammed with facts before it knows how to think.
- Educate our people, so that they may be able to solve their own problems. Until that is done, all these ideal reforms will remain ideals only
- It is man-making education all round that we want.
- Books are infinite in number and time is short; therefore the secret of knowledge is to take what is essential. Take that and try to live up to it.
- The very essence of education is concentration of mind.
- Complete continence gives great intellectual and spiritual power.
- No one was ever really taught by another; each of us has to teach himself. The external teacher offers only the suggestion which rouses the internal teacher to work to understand things.
- What is education? Is it book learning? No. Is it diverse knowledge? Not even that. The training by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful is called education.

Conclusion:

Educational needs of modern India are reflected in the preamble to our constitution. It is clear that educational aims, contents and methods of teaching and in fact the entire process of education must be based on these pillars – Secularism, Socialism and Democracy. Vivekananda also visualized the educational needs of independent India and accordingly he set forth his philosophical thought. His views are quite relevant today.

Vivekananda was a great educationalist and he revolutionized almost the entire field of education. His educational views were immensely influenced by the eternal truths of Vedanta. He inspired the millions of Indian youths by his revolutionary ideas of education. He gave the clarion call, “Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached”. He infused a new spirit in the national blood. He strongly advocated national education on national lines and based on national cultural tradition.

His great contributions in the field of education include self-knowledge, self-reliance, concentration, universal mass education, women’s education, physical education, man-making education, character-building education, education through the medium of mother-tongue, religious and moral education, value education, selfless dedicated teachers etc.

The teachings of Swamiji are of great importance in the reorganization of our present system of education.

References:

1. Swami Vivekananda, The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda in Eight Volumes, Tenth Reprint, Mayavati Memorial Edition, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, 2003.
2. Agrawal, J.C. Thoughts on Education, Arya Book Depot, New Delhi, 1967.
3. Agrawal, J.C., Theory and Principles of Education, Vikas Publishing House Pvt., Ltd., New Delhi, 2002.
4. Bunch, M.B. (Ed.), Fourth Survey of Research in Education, NCERT, New Delhi, 1993.
5. Buch, M.B.(Ed.), Third Survey of Research in Education, NCERT, New Delhi, 1987.
6. Das Gupta, R.K. Swami Vivekananda on Indian Philosophy and Literature, Ramakrishna Mission, Calcutta, 1996.

