

EDUCATION AS ENVISIONED BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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ABSTRACT

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), India's great thinker and reformer, accepts education as the very mission of his life, which for him signifies 'man-making.' An attempt has been made to concentrate on the fundamental theme of his theory in this article, which aims to expound and examine Vivekananda's views on education. Whether it concerns the meaning or purpose of education, or its component parts, all of his thoughts, we will remember, stem from this dormant theme of his philosophy that has its Vedanta bearings.

Keywords: *Swami Vivekananda, Philosophy, Man-Making, Civilisation, Education.*

Introduction

Vivekananda understands that society is going through a crisis. The immense focus on the science and mechanical forms of life is rapidly reducing man to a machine's status. There is an undermining of moral and religious beliefs. Civilisation's basic values are being neglected. Disregard is the look of the day for anything old. Vivekananda, by education, seeks solutions to all these social and global evils. He feels the desperate need to awaken man to his spiritual self with this end in mind, wherein, he believes, lies the very meaning of education. Educational thinking by Swami Vivekananda is known as the most important instrument of social change.

Education is the manifestation of perfection already in man.

The core of Swami Vivekananda's Teachings on Education is this argument. It is only with proper education that such information is turned into a tool for all-round growth.

The Goal or Objective of Education

The teachings and principles of education by Swami Vivekananda gave equal weight to both material and spiritual growth. According to him, the purpose of the curriculum should be to grow the body, mind and soul in an all-round way. In all these areas, we, including our younger generation, need to have proper training to make ourselves a complete human. Only a complete person is capable of advancing the nation and that is what is required in any nation. Swami Vivekananda insisted that we need *nerves of steel, muscles of iron and minds like a thunderbolt*. One of the central points of Swami Vivekananda's teachings is, 'Youth should be ready to live for his motherland. They should continue to carry it forward through their ideals and be strong enough to defend it through physical strength.

Vivekananda notes that the shortcoming of today's education is that it has no clear aim to follow. Similarly, a sculptor has a good understanding of what he wants to shape from the raw material. A painter decides what he's going to paint. But the instructor has the least understanding of his target. As mentioned in the introduction, Swami Vivekananda attempts to create through his words and deeds that the motto of education is man-made. He prepares the scheme of this man-making education in the light of his over-all philosophy of Vedanta. The essence of man resides in his spirit, according to Vedanta, which he possesses in addition to his body and mind. That is why he may say that 'the manifestation of

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perfection already in man' about education. The purpose of education is to manifest perfection in our lives, this perfection is the realization of the infinite force that exists in all and everywhere-existence, and once this perfection's fundamental nature is understood, we can associate it with our inner self. One would have to remove one's ego, ignorance and all other false identities to do this.

Therefore, in the view of Vivekananda, education helps one to perceive one's self as one's self everywhere. Through education, the fundamental unity of the entire universe is understood. Man making for Swami Vivekananda, therefore, stands for rousing men to the realization of their true selves. Training does not, however, point to the growth of the spirit in isolation from the body and mind. We have to note that Advaita, which preaches harmony in diversity, is the foundation of his ideology and that is the reality in this country itself. Man making for him, therefore, implies a harmonious creation of the body, mind and spirit.

In his scheme of education, Swamiji lays great stress on physical health because a sound mind resides in a sound body. He often quotes the Upanishadic dictum 'nayamatmabalahinenalabhyah'; i.e. **the self cannot be realized by the physically weak**. However, along with physical culture, he emphasized on the need of paying special attention to the culture of the mind. According to Swami Vivekananda, through meditation, concentration and practice of ethical purity, the minds of the students must be regulated and conditioned. The outcome of the power of focus is all performance, in every line of work. A part of Brahmacharya, which is one of the driving mottos of his education system, is focus, which inevitably implies detachment from other things. In a nutshell, Brahmacharya stands for the self-control practice of securing equilibrium of the impulses. Vivekananda thus brings home, through his philosophy of education, that education is not a mere accumulation of knowledge, but a holistic training for life. He said :

Training is not the sum of data that is placed into your brain and undigested, all your life, runs riot there. For him, education implies that the mechanism by which character is formed, strength of mind is improved, and intelligence is sharpened, so that one can stand on one's own feet as a result.

Way Forward

The next issue that inevitably emerges, having examined the purpose or aim of education, is about the process of imparting education. As a result, he draws our attention to the fact that the teacher's job is only to help the child manifest his knowledge by minimizing the obstacles in his path.

Thus Vedanta says that within man is all knowledge even in a boy it is so and it requires only an awakening and that much is the work of a teacher.

The method of education of Vivekananda resembles the heuristic approach of modern educators. In this method, under the teacher's bias-free instruction, the teacher invokes the spirit of curiosity in the pupil who is expected to find out things for himself. For the proper development of the child, Vivekananda lays a lot of focus on the atmosphere at home and school. Both parents and teachers should be motivated by the way they live their lives.

While Vivekananda believes that the mother tongue is the best medium for social or mass education, as picked up by the NEP 2019, he also prescribes the learning of English and Sanskrit. Sanskrit leads one into the depths of our vast store of classics, while English is required for mastering Western science and technology.

Implementation

The blind imitation of the West is strongly influenced by our education. In his education scheme, Vivekananda meticulously includes all those studies that are required for the overall development of the individual's body, mind and soul. The broad heads of physical culture, esthetics, classics, language, faith, science and technology will put these studies under these this often. The cultural values of the nation should form an integral part of the educational curriculum, according to Swami Vivekananda. India's culture has its origins in its spirituality. Without the teaching of aesthetics or fine arts, education, according to Swamiji, remains to be elucidated.

Swami Vivekananda reiterates that the innermost heart of education is religion. Religion, however, does not mean any unique kind of religion, but its basic character, which is the realization of the divinity that resides in man. He reminds us time and again that being religious means living life in such a way that, in our feelings, words and deeds, we manifest our higher nature, reality, goodness, and beauty. Naturally, all the desires, thoughts and acts that lead one to this goal are harmonized, ethical and moral. It is in this sense that the philosophy of religion and education by Swami Vivekananda shares the identity of intention.

Education Aligning With Indian Civilisation

The teachings of Swami Vivekananda never dismissed the principle of incoming information from foreign cultures. Yet he maintained that we were the first to conform with our civilizational wisdom. He often wanted to preserve balance between the conventional Indian values and the modern values brought about by science and technology developments. Our education system must have the portion of our cultural sensitivity embedded in it, taking a cue from the depth of Swami Vivekananda's teachings on similar lines. Among India's future leaders, the curriculum should have topics from Gita, Upanishad, etc. that can drive spiritual, metaphysical and social education. It will also instill this land's age-old traditions.

In his strategy for India's regeneration, Vivekananda constantly emphasizes the need to eliminate poverty, unemployment, and ignorance, which are evidence of his thoughts on material needs. We need technical education and everything else that can grow industries, he says, so that men can earn enough to provide for themselves instead of finding service, and save anything against a rainy day. He thinks it is important for India to take positive things from the nations of the West. Each government, however, has its individuality, which is not to be destroyed. In her spiritual culture lies the individuality of India. Therefore, in Vivekananda's opinion, we must combine the dynamism and scientific attitude of the West with the spirituality of our country for the creation of a balanced society. In addition to spiritual heritage, the entire educational program should be structured in such a way that its youth will contribute to the country's material development. Women's education is another significant feature of Swamiji's education scheme. He recognizes that if our nation's women get the correct kind of education, they will be able to solve their own problems in their own way. The primary aim of his women's education scheme is to make them strong, fearless, and mindful of their chastity and dignity. He states that while men and women are equally competent in academic matters, women still have a specific skill and competence for home and family-related studies. He therefore suggests that subjects such as sewing, nursing, domestic science, culinary art, etc., which at that time were not part of education, be added.

Conclusion

Exposing and examining the education system of Vivekananda brings to light its positive, realistic and detailed essence. He recognizes that the uplift of the masses is only possible through education. To refer to his own words: 'traveling through many European cities and seeing the comforts and education of even the poor people in them, the condition of our own poor people was brought to my mind and I shed tears. What has made this difference? 'Education' was the response I got.'

He notes emphatically that education needs to reach everyone-high and low-if society is to be reformed, because individuals are the very constituents of society. When he becomes aware of his inner spirit, and that is the very meaning of education, the sense of integrity rises in man. He seeks to harmonize India's traditional values with the modern values brought forth by science and technology advances. It is in the transformation of man through moral and spiritual education that he finds the solution for all social evils. Founding education on the firm ground of our own philosophy and culture, he shows the best of remedies for today's social and global illness. Through his scheme of education, he tries to materialize the moral and spiritual welfare and upliftment of humanity, irrespective of caste, creed, nationality or time. However, Swami Vivekananda's scheme of education, through which he wanted to build up a strong nation that will lead the world towards peace and harmony, is still a far cry. It is high time that we give serious thought to his philosophy of education and remembers his call to every-body- 'Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached.

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