

## Swami Vivekananda's Educational Proposal in Present Context

**\*Dr.Amit Kumar**

### Abstract

Vedantic concept of education might offer a solution to the crisis of the Indian Education. What the child gets in the name of education in the purely academic atmosphere in our schools is an incomplete view of life, which does not enable him to face boldly and completely every problem of his life in the competitive society. Education in the Vedantic sense promotes the unity of mankind at both the national and international levels. Education system for its proper functioning demands responsibility equally from the teachers, students and guardians and it must be discharged in the best interests of the country. Teachers and administrators are not enthusiastic enough to execute in the class room the psychological methods of teaching as suggested by experts.

**Key Words: Swami Vivekananda, Vedant, Education**

### Introduction

The 19<sup>th</sup> century India produced a galaxy of great men who have enriched our national life by their talent and personality. Swami Vivekananda was one of them. Vivekananda believed in essential unity of man and God. He was an eclectic educationalist too. He tried to unite Indian spirituality and western materialism. He desired happy mingling or fusion of the two. He also wanted to unite Para Vidya and Apra Vidya. He was revolutionary in the field of education and touched every aspect of it. His ideas on various aspects of education are more relevant and are needed more today than probably during his life time. Although Vivekananda did

not write a book on education, he contributed valuable thoughts on the subject of education that are relevant and viable today. He had firm moorings in oriental culture, yet he had the broadness to welcome all that is worth borrowing from the west (Ghosal, 2012). No wonder that today, over a century after his death, we still try to enrich ourselves with the gems of Vivekananda's thoughts on education. If we attentively study the writings and lectures of Vivekananda, we will find that his views on education are products of original reflection. Let us discuss the different aspects of Vivekananda's scheme of Education.

### **Defining Education**

Swamiji who describes religion as 'the manifestation of the divinity already in man' defines education as 'the manifestation of the perfection already in man'. '**Manifestation**' implies that something already exists and is waiting to be expressed. The main focus in learning is to make the hidden ability of a learner manifest. '**Already in man**'. This refers to a human being's potential, which is the range of the abilities and talents, known or unknown that is born with. '**perfection**' in the Swami's definition of education is also very significant. The Greek word 'teleics' translated as 'perfect', and suggests the idea of attaining a goal or an end. The English word 'perfect' implies completion, or something being made whole.

Thus, according to Vivekananda, education is the discovery of the inner self i.e. self revelation. It is not an imposition on the individual of certain borrowed ideas from the external sources, but a natural process of enfoldment of all the inherent powers which lie in dormant condition in an individual. Education is development from within. His thoughts on education ought to be seriously re-examined today.

## **The Objectives of Education**

The ultimate goal of all educational effort is to strive towards character development characterized by the development of will-power, leading to courage, stamina and fearlessness. Through education the individual should develop adaptability and able to meet the challenge of a changing society, and this can be able through education and training that he or she receives from his parents and teachers. Education should lead to a feeling of brotherhood and the unity of mankind. According to Swami Vivekananda, work is worship, so to serve the masses is to serve God, so education should lead us to recognize this and to fulfil this end. Education should lead us to acquire the spirit of renunciation.

## **Method of Teaching**

Vivekananda's method of education resembles the heuristic method of the modern educationists. In this system, the teacher invokes the spirit of inquiry in the pupil who is supposed to find out things for himself under the bias-free guidance of the teacher. Anticipating the much acclaimed modern, student- centred method of learning where the teacher plays the role of a facilitator, Vivekananda asks the teacher to come down to the level of the learner and 'give him a push upwards'. So there should be least intervention and the ideal teacher should consciously under-teach so that the learners get ample scope for learning themselves : 'No one can teach anybody. The teacher spoils everything by thinking that he is teacher'. Unfortunately today's teachers and administrators are not enthusiastic enough to execute in the class room the psychological methods of teaching as suggested by experts.

## **Role of Teacher**

It is true that today's education does not produce properly developed personalities having faith, hope, confidence, motivating power, balanced outlook on life, conscious of their rights as well as their duties. The reason does not lie with the youth or with their mind as such as but with the agencies responsible for moulding a person's character—parents, teachers, social conditions in which he/she grows, and the system of education to which we trust his/ her future. Our schools and universities still continue to be merely examining bodies turning out mechanically every year in huge numbers men and women destitute in faith and poor in culture – in the knowledge of our ancient literature, arts unable to think originally , incapable of standing on their own feet, and virtually untouched by religion which Swami Vivekananda regarded “the innermost core of education”. The teacher should share with the student the conviction that they are both truly one in Spirit – at the same time cultivating in the student a feeling of dignity and self-respect”. As Vivekananda said “The only 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 the student's eyes and hear through his ears and understand through his mind. Such a teacher can really teach and none else”.

## **Women's Education**

Vivekananda explains the point about how female illiteracy retards the progress of a society: ‘It is not possible for a bird to fly on only one wing’. The main objective of female education is to make them strong, fear-less and conscious of their chastity and dignity. Swami Vivekananda felt, the thermometer to progress of a nation is its treatment of its women and it is impossible to get back India's lost

pride and honor unless Indians try to better the condition of women. He considered men and women as two wings of a bird, and it is not possible for a bird to fly on only one wing. So, according to him, there is no chance for welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. Education of women is essential for both all round development of the nation and also for the improvement of women's condition in India. But the magnitude of illiteracy among women is very high in India. 35 per cent of women are still illiterate as per 2011 census. It reflects that India is not utilizing the potential workers in a proper way. There is either unutilisation or under utilization of women's capacities and skills. Even though the education system expanded very rapidly, the gap between male and female literacy still persist. Therefore, in this paper an attempt has been made to reflect the gender gap in literacy rate and highlight current policies formulated and implemented by the government to promote and foster the growth of women education in India. In the conclusion, this paper will suggest recommendations in consideration with Swami Vivekanand's vision, to overcome the problem of illiteracy among women in India.

### **Medium of Instruction**

As regards to medium of instruction, Vivekananda strongly advocated for mother-tongue. He a true nationalist and a champion of national education argued instruction through mother-tongue. He visualized to Indianise Indian education. He also wanted to spread mass education through mother-tongue so that it will reach to everyone. But as today it is the era of globalisation where whole world is one so it is the need of time to consider the English language as mother tongue of world and as important as individual's mother tongue .

## **Conclusion**

The exposition and analysis of Vivekananda's scheme of education brings light its constructive, practical and comprehensive character. Vedantic concept of education might offer a solution to the crisis of the Indian Education. What the child gets in the name of education in the purely academic atmosphere in our schools is an incomplete view of life, which does not enable him to face boldly and completely every problem of his life in the competitive society. Education in the Vedantic sense promotes the unity of mankind at both the national and international levels. Education system for its proper functioning demands responsibility equally from the teachers, students and guardians and it must be discharged in the best interests of the country.

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