

Swami Vivekananda's Perspective of Indian Education System in 21st Century

Abstract

Swami Vivekananda was not only a social reformer, but also the educator, who sought to modernize the nation of its social and cultural harmony. Swami Vivekananda's contribution to educational thought is of paramount importance. He defines education as 'the manifestation of perfection that is already in man. As an educationalist he believes in absolute values which have to be realized by a good system of education. Education should be the preparation for life. It should develop a feeling of nationalism and international understanding. According to Swami Vivekananda, the Education lead us to acquire the spirit of renunciation.

Keywords: Swami Vivekananda, Education, Manifestation, Nationalism, Renunciation.

Deepa Tiwari

Assistant Professor,
Deptt. of B.ed,
A.S.S.Mahavidyalaya,
Kanpur

Introduction

Vivekananda's original name was Narendra Datta. He was born in 1863 in a very well to do family. His father provided best arrangements for the education of his son. Narendra Datta was very brilliant student & he graduated with honors from Kolkata University. He was very much interested in the study of philosophy and religion. For sometimes he worked as a teacher. His search for truth took him to Ramakrishna, a mystic who was regarded as an embodiment for the teaching of Vedanta. Meeting with his greatest seer in 1888, transformed the life of Narendra Datta & intensified his aspiration for God realization. So he left home, broke all earthly ties, travelled all over India and became a wandering monk.

He made his mark in 1893 when he delivered the message of peace and harmony to the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago. He gave a memorable and soul address. Vivekananda's fame spread far and wide and was invited at various places in foreign countries to lecture on the Vedanta. He lectured at the universities of Harvard and Oxford. He with his beginning bowl wandered all over India. In 1897, he started the Ramakrishna Mission with the help of his disciples. The Ashram worked for the education of the poor. It helped people in distress. It organized relief camps in times of flood etc. At present there are numerous centers. They are also engaged in the spread of the gospel of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda.

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 Apara 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 write a book

Anthology : The Research

on education, he contributed valuable thoughts on the subject of education that are relevant and viable today.

The Ramakrishna Mission has attracted scholars and swamis to its fold from all over. Vivekananda founded the Vedantic Society of San Francisco. He died at a very young age of 39 years. Vivekananda wanted all round development of education to heart and mind, to strengthen character and national consciousness, to help in the cultivation of strength and energy, nurture the brain and intellect and stir feelings of kindness and sympathy. He emphatically said: "We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded and by which one can stand on one's own feet. What we need is to study, independent of foreign control, different branches of the knowledge that is our own and with.

It is man making theories that we want. It is man making education all round that we want. "According to Vivekananda, education is a process in which the young minds, will receive strength, energy and vigorous character. By the way of getting this process, the individual will mould themselves of their life. "All knowledge and all powers are within. What we call power; secrets of nature and force are all within. All knowledge comes from the human soul. Man manifests knowledge, discovers it with himself, which is preexisting through eternity. "Education is a man making and nation making process. It is the process which awakens the sleeping soul to self-conscious activity. It will become a powerful instrument to achieve the developmental qualities among the people. The prime aim of education is to achieve the full perfection already present in a child. According to Vivekananda, all the materials and spiritual knowledge are already present in the individuals mind, but it is covered by certain ignorance. The second aim of education is the physical and mental development of the child. "For stressing the mental development of the child, Swami, wished education to enable the child to stand on his own legs economically rather than becoming a parasite on others."

Aim of the Study

1. To Study the Vivekananda's Philosophy of Education.
2. To Study the Vivekananda's Principles of Education.
3. To Study the Vivekananda's Views on Education.
4. Relevance Of Swami Vivekananda's Ideas In Modern Education

Review of Literature

The Available Literature in the Area of Swami Vivekananda's Perspective of Indian Education System In 21st Century received extensive. Some of the Work Has Been Outlined Here

According to Ghosal, (2012) Vivekananda 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.

Chandra S (1994) studied about the educational thoughts of Swami Vivekananda and concluded that his educational thought has very great significance today because modern education has lost much of its connection with the values of human life. Therefore, he suggested that education should not be for stuffing some facts into the brain, but should aim at reforming the human mind. True education to him, was not for the carrier, but for the contribution to the nation.

According to Dr. Sudipa Dutta Roy, (2001) Vivekananda, in his scheme of education, meticulously includes all those studies, which are necessary for the all-around development of the body, mind and soul of the individual. These studies can be brought under the broad heads of physical culture, aesthetics, classics, language, religion, science and technology. According to Swamiji, the culture values of the country should form an integral part of the curriculum of education. The culture of India has its roots in her spiritual values. The time-tested values are to be imbibed in the thoughts and lives of the

Anthology : The Research

students through the study of the classics like Ramayana, Mahabharata, Gita, Vedas and Upanishads. This will keep the perennial flow of our spiritual values into the world culture

Analysis

Aim 1

To Study the Vivekananda's Philosophy of Education

The real education according to Swami Vivekananda is that which prepares the individual for struggle for existence. Education prepares a man for social service, to develop his character and finally imbues him with the spirit and courage of a lion. For getting degree is not an Education, the proper education must be viewed on the basis of character, mental powers, intelligence and inculcates. Self-confidence and self-reliance in the individuals. Swamiji has emphasized that all the knowledge which we get from worldly or spiritual lies embedded in the human mind. It was covered with a veil of darkness and ignorance. Education is a tool to open from the darkness and ignorance, after getting of education, the knowledge will shine out dazzlingly. The teaching and learning are the one way of process. The teacher only guides, suggests, points out and helps the student. Self-learning and self-getting knowledge is the real education. The teacher only motivates and encourages the students to find out the hidden treasure of knowledge that lies dormant within him. He condemned and refused the bookish learning and rote memory education. Condemning the theoretical and academic education, he spoke emphatically for practical and experimental education. He warned his countrymen saying "you will have to be practical in all spheres of work. The whole country has been ruined by mass theories." Again Swamiji has observed that in many cases it is not 'discovered', but remains 'covered' and when the covering is being slowly taken off, we say, 'we are learning'; and the advance of the knowledge is made by this process of uncovering. The man from whom this veil is being lifted is the mere 'knowing man's'; the man upon whom it lies thick is ignored, the man from whom it has entirely gone is all knowledge omniscient. Vivekananda explains this with an example. "Like fire in a piece of flint,

knowledge exists in the mind, suggestion is the friction which brings it out. All knowledge and all power are within. What we call powers, secrets of Nature and forces are within. All knowledge comes from the human soul.

Aim 2

To Study the Vivekananda's Principles of Education

Like Rabindranath Tagore, Vivekananda also prescribed the same ancient spiritual methods of teaching, where Guru and his disciples lived in close association as in a family. The following are the basic principles of education.

1. Education is not only for getting information; rather it should develop character, mental powers, intelligence and inculcate self-confidence together with self-reliance.
2. Education should develop the child physically, mentally and spiritually.
3. While giving educational qualification, the technical education was necessary for the industrial growth which would lead to the economic prosperity of the nation.
4. Practicing of Brahmacharya is very essential for getting knowledge. The concentration is the key to all the knowledge.
5. Religious education should be imparted through sweet impressions and fine conduct in preference to books.
6. Education should be foster spiritual faith, devotion and self-surrender in the individual and should foster full development through service and sacrifice.
7. Education should develop character, mental powers, intelligence and inculcate self-confidence together with self-reliance.
8. All the subjects must be included in the curriculum which promotes the material and spiritual advancement of a child.

Aim 3

To Study the Vivekananda's Views on Education

The ultimate goal of all educational effort is to strive towards character development characterized by the development of willpower, 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

Anthology : The Research

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. 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 biasfree guidance of the teacher. Anticipating the much acclaimed modern, studentcentered 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 underteach 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.

Aim 4

Relevance of Swami Vivekananda's Ideas in Modern Education

Vivekananda felt that modern education all over the world has so far concentrated on 'the learning to do' aspect and not on the 'learning to be' faculties of education. He says that education must focus on the requirement of the human mind. His philosophy of education is based on universal principles of morality and ethics. He wanted to teach the common masses of India the ideals of synthesis, tolerance and universal harmony. His philosophy gives equal importance to the claims of spirit and matter. To him diversity is as real as unity.

Value Education

Here, education is conceived in the broad sense; everything in the society plays an educational role. The formal education system is but part of the culture and values in the system are inevitably determined by the culture.

Education is seen as an instrument for harnessing human drives, and as consequences, it becomes to some extent a method of behavior modification. Education preserves rather than changes social values. Education is seen to abide by existing culture norms of the society.

Peace Education

Constructive education for peace must aim to reform humanity so as to permit the inner development of human personality and develop a more conscious vision of the mission of mankind and the present conditions of social life as was so emphatically averred by Swami Vivekananda as well. What we need today is an education that is capable of saving mankind from the present predicament. Such an education involves the spiritual development of man and the enhancement of his value as an individual and preparing the young people to understand the time in which they live.

Environmental Education

Environmental education is viewed as an integral part of the education process. It is taken to be centered on practical problems and can be an interdisciplinary character. It should aim at building up a sense of values, contribute to public wellbeing and concern itself with survival of the human species. Its force, therefore, should aside mainly the initiative of the learners and their involvement in action and it should be guided by immediate and future subject of concern. Environmental education enables them to manage the environment in which they live through a judicious use of resources.

Citizenship Education

The concept of citizenship education should target to mould the future citizens into the frame of a civic society where citizens are aware of their rights, respect democratic ideals and work for a welfare society with shared responsibility. Education for democratic citizenship is a set of practices and activities aimed at making young people and adults better equipped to participate actively in democratic life by assuming and exercising their rights and responsibilities in society.

Anthology : The Research

Vivekananda's Influence

Viewed in the light of contemporary thought, Vivekananda was actually an epoch capsule into a life span of less than forty years updating his mother country to fight against all kinds of social evils. 'Equilibrium' and 'synthesis' were the watchwords of Vivekananda. Contemplation and devotion to duty were unified in his personality. He had gone deep into the social and political decline of India and attempted to prescribe a workable formula to eradicate all social inequalities. The awakening and liberation of modern India as viewed by him was a stage for the realization of universal love and brotherhood. He gave his fellow brethren, a dynamic gospel of supreme fearlessness and strength. He mercilessly denounced the arrogance and sophistication of the upper classes of Indian society. He was one of the great thinkers in India to offer a sociological interpretation of Indian history.

Conclusion

Swami Vivekananda was actually the greatest synthesizer of ever time. He wanted to remove the evils of the society by giving re-orientation to politics, sociology, economics and education. Swami Vivekananda laid stress on education as a powerful weapon for this change. As an educationalist he believes in absolute values which have to be realized by a good system of education. Education should be the preparation for life. It should develop a feeling of nationalism and international understanding, it should lead to the development of character and make individuals self-dependent. Today there is a deterioration of cultural ethics and standards. The supreme need of the hour is to counteract this emotional, moral and cultural collapse. Only a process of a good system of education can bring about a healthy political and social life. Swami Vivekananda stands for this and his message is for all time. From the analysis of Vivekananda's scheme of education, the uplift of masses is possible only through education. His views on education bring a light of its constructive, practical and comprehensive character. By giving education, he tries to materialize the moral and spiritual welfare and upliftment of humanity, irrespective of caste, creed, nationality or time. By the way of his

scheme of education, we can get the strong nation with peace and harmony and without caste and creed. He builds a strong nation for our sake.

Suggestions

According to Swami Vivekananda, the prime aim of education is spiritual growth and development. But this does not mean that he did not advocate material prosperity and physical well-being. He feelingly advocated the inclusion of all those subjects and activities, in the curriculum, which foster material welfare with spiritual advancement. For spiritual perfection Swamiji prescribed Religious, Philosophy, Upanishads, Company of saints and their preaching's and for material advancement and prosperity he recommended Languages, Geography, Science, Political Science, Economics, Psychology, Art, Agriculture, Industrial and Technical subjects together with Games, sports and other Physical exercises. Swamiji lays a lot of emphasis on the environment at home and school for the proper growth of the child. The parents as well as the teachers should inspire the child by the way they live their lives. Swamiji recommends the old institution of gurukula (living with the preceptor) and similar systems for the purpose. In such systems, the students can have the ideal character of the teacher constantly before them, which serves as the role model to follow.

References

1. *Ajit Mondal & Dr. Jayanta Mete: Swami Vivekananda: Some Reflections on Education, International Journal of Multidisciplinary Educational Research, ISSN: 2277-7881, Vol.1, Issue 3, Aug. 2012.*
2. *Avinashilingam, T. S. (1943): Education – Swami Vivekananda, Sri Ramkrishna Math, Mylapore, Chennai (5th ed.).*
3. *Chandra, S. (1994): Swami Vivekananda's Vision of Education, In: Roy, S. & Sivaramkrishnan, M. (Eds), Reflections on Swami Vivekananda : Hundred Years After Chicago, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi. Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda (8 Volumes).*
4. *Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata, 1985. Ghosal, S. (2012): The Educational Thoughts of Swami Vivekananda: A Review, University News,*

Anthology : The Research

- 50 (09), Feb. 27 –March 04, 2012, New Delhi.
5. Jitatmananda, S. (1998): *Swami Vivekananda: Prophet and Pathfinder (4th ed.)*, Shri Ramkrishna Ashrama, Rajkot.
 6. P.Nithiya (2012), *Swami Vivekananda, s Views on Philosophy of Education*, Asian
 7. Vivekananda, Swami (2007): *Shiksha Prasanga*, Udbodhan Karjalaya, Kolkata.
 8. Walia, Kiran Ed. (2008): *My Idea of Education –Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata.