



IMPACT OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF SWAMI VIVEKANAND ON EDUCATION AND IT'S RELEVANCE TO MODERN SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

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Abstract

Swami Vivekanand's philosophy is based upon Vedanta. He tried to unite Indian spirituality and Western materialism. He was revolutionary in the field of education and touched every aspect of it. In respect of modern context Swami Vivekanand's philosophy is required to study impact of Philosophy of Swami Vivekanand on education and it's importance as well. He was in favour of man-making education. His ideas on various aspects of education are more relevant and are needed today than probably during his lifetime. In modern time Education system is suffering and as we know education is base for civilians of any civilized society i.e why there is once again a need to revive the educational Philosophy of Swami Vivekanand.

Statement of the Problem

Impact of the Philosophy of Swami Vivekanand on Education and it's relevance to Modern System of Education.

Objectives

1. To highlight the importance of education given by Swami Vivekanand.
2. To study the General Philosophy of Swami Vivekanand.
3. To study the Educational Philosophy of Swami Vivekanand.
4. To study the impact of Philosophy of Swami Vivekanand on different aspects of Education.
5. To study the importance of Educational Philosophy of Swami Vivekanand in Modern System of Education.

Method and Procedure

This study was Historical and Philosophical in nature. The investigators used the primary as well as secondary resources concerning educational ideas of Swami Vivekanand. This study was completely based upon library work.

Introduction

Education consists of all those experiences which affect individual from birth till death. Education is a process in which an individual freely develops his self according to his nature in a free and uncontrolled environment. It is an all-round development of the personality of child i.e. physical, mental, moral, social, vocational and spiritual aspect. If there is anything on this earth which purifies human mind i.e. knowledge. Education enables a person to solve his problem. Education makes a man self-reliant and selfless. Modern education is provided through formal, informal and non-formal mode. Education is a tripolar process in which educator, educand and social environment are involved. Education develops ability in a person to realize his inner capacity to discriminate between good/bad and right/wrong. According to Swami Vivekanand, education is the discovery of the inner self i.e. self-revelation. It is not imposition on the individual of certain borrowed ideas from the external forces, but a natural process of enfoldment of all the inherent powers which lie in dormant condition of an individual. Education is development from within. According to Swami Vivekanand “Education relates to development of the total man, and not just the outer man of flesh and blood. He also stated that education should be conducive to the harmonious unfoldment of a person’s life and that the evolution of nature reveals itself in the evolution of human mind”. Swami ji says, “We want to become harmonious beings with the psychical, spiritual, intellectual and working (active) sides of nature equally developed. Nation’s individuals typify one of these ideas of types and cannot understand more than that one _____.”

The idea is really that we should become many sided. Swami Vivekanand was born on January 12, 1863 in Calcutta in a respected middle-class family. His name was Narendranath Dutta. His father Viswanath Dutta, was an attorney and was a lover of Arts and Literature. Although liberal-minded, Viswanath was skeptical about religious practices. On the other hand Narendra’s mother Bhuvaneshwari Devi, was a pious, kind-hearted lady, devoted to the Hindu traditions. The influence, yet together they provided a congenial atmosphere for precious boy to grow into an energetic young man with high ideals. In 1871, at the age of eight, Narendranath enrolled at Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar’s Metropolitan Institution where he went to his school until his family moved to Raipur in 1877. In 1879, he was the only student to receive first-division marks in the Presidency College entrance examination.

Narendra Nath was an earnest student of philosophy and poetry. He studied all the systems of Western Philosophy. Once the Principal of his college Mr. Hastie remarked,

“Narendra Nath is really a genius. I have travelled far and wide, but I have never yet come across a lad of his talents and possibilities, even in German Universities amongst philosophical students. He is bound to make his mark in life. He was influenced by his Guru Ramkrishna. He was also interested in Hindu scriptures, The Bhagvad Gita, The Ramayana, The Mahabharata and The Puranas. He was trained in Indian Classical music and regularly participated in physical exercise, sports and organized activities. In 1881, he passed the Fine Arts examination and completed Bachelor of Arts degree in 1884. Narendra was known for his prodigious memory and the ability at speed reading.

His Guru Swami Ramkrishan Paramhans passed away in 1886. In his memory Swami Vivekanand established Ramkrishan mission. He showed both by precept and example that if the ancient Vedanta was reinterpreted in the light of Ramkrishna’s spiritual experience as applied to modern life, India would be able to solve many of her problems and would rise once again to deliver a message to humanity. Although he was a powerful orator and writer in English and Bengali, he was not a thorough scholar and most of his published works were compiled from lectures given around the world which were impromptu and with little preparation. His main work ‘Raja Yoga’ consists of talks he delivered in New York. He composed many songs and poems including his favourite “Kali the Mother”. His main literacy work cover Raja Yoga, Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Janana Yoga, My Lectures from Colombo to Almora. He conducted hundred of public and private lectures and classes, disseminating tenets of Hindu Philosophy in the United States, England and Europe. In India, Vivekanand is regarded as patriot saint and his birthday is celebrated as National Youth Day. He passed away on July 4, 1902 while doing meditation.

General Philosophy of Swami Vivekanand

Swami Vivekanand as Vedantist.

He was a true Vedantist. He regarded the Vedanta as perfectly impersonal. The Vedanta is eternal. It is not originated by any person or prophet. The Dvaita, The Visista-Dvaita and the Advaita are the different expressions of Vedanta according to him. These are merely the stages for helping the individual to proceed towards the realization of higher and higher ideals.

Concept of God

As a staunch Vedantist, Swami Vivekanand gives three attributes to God (i) Infinite existence (ii) Infinite knowledge (iii) Infinite bliss. He is manifested in all the creatures on earth. Worship of man is the true worship of God. To quote the complete works of Swami Vivekanand Vol. II “Existence without knowledge and love can’t be; knowledge without love

and love without knowledge can't be. What we want is the Harmony of Existence, knowledge and Bliss infinite. For that is our goal, we want harmony, not one sided development. And it is possible to have intellect of Sankara with the heart of a Buddha. I hope we shall all struggle to attain that blessed combination.”

Concept of Religion

According to Vivekanand, no religion is inferior to any other. All religions lead to the same goal. He had a very liberal concept of religion. He advocated a religion of universal oneness and cosmopolitanism. He urged people to believe in universal religion. To him, “Religions are different forces in the economy of God, working for the good of mankind”. He observes that every religion is progressive. Realization of divinity or the knowledge of Brahman is the ultimate goal for man.

Faith in Universalism and Spiritual Brotherhood

Swami Vivekanand emphasized universalism and spiritual brotherhood. Therefore he devoted himself to the service of all beings. He asserted that each soul is potentially divine. The main purpose of our life is to realize that attainment of ultimate bliss which is the path of selfless service to humanity.

Perfection as One's heritage

According to Swami Vivekanand, “Perfection is not to be attained, it is already with in us. Immortality and bliss are not to be acquired, we possess them already, they have been ours all the time.” Thus perfection is one's heritage.

Faith in man

He had intense faith in man and realize the dignity and diversity of human beings. In fact, he finds the manifestation of God in man. To him, the ideal of Vedanta is to know man as he really is. He asks, If you cannot worship your brother man, the manifestation of God, how can you worship a God who is un manifested? If you cannot see God in the human face, how can you see in the clouds, or in images made of dull, dead matter or in mere fictitious stories of our brain? I shall call you religious from the day you began to see God in men and women”. Thus Vivekanand teaches eternal communion of man with the God.

Educational Philosophy of Swami Vivekanand

Education

Education is enlightenment. Education is illumination and awakening. In “Gayatri mantra” we pray “Dhiyo Yo Nah Prachodyat”-Endow us with (the lights of) understanding”. Swami Vivekanand epitomized this Vedanta philosophy in modern times. ‘Vedanta’ which is derived from the Sanskrit words ‘Veda’ (wisdom) and ‘anta’ (supreme), signifies ‘supreme

wisdom'. Traditional Vedanta philosophy defines education as "The manifestation of perfection already in man". Every soul is the source of indefinite knowledge. Every human being is a reservoir of immense potential. He is born with an endless range of abilities and talents, known and unknown to him. These potentials, which are dormant, need the awakening touch of the education for their actualization. Vivekanand said "Education must provide life building man-making, character-building and assimilation of ideas. In modern system of education, modern education, which is more or less, career oriented, cares little for cultivation of virtue, the disciplining of the mind, strengthening of moral will and does not teach self-control. It does not instill the values of truth, honesty, love, compassion which are essential for man-making education.

Aims of Education

Character Formation

Swami Vivekanand said, "The character of any man is the aggregate of his tendencies, the sum total of the bent of his mind. As pleasure and pain pass before his/her soul, they leave upon it different picture and the results of these combined impressions is what is called man's character." The best way to develop a character is the personal example of high character set by teacher. Besides these character formation requires traits such as thirst for knowledge, faith, submission and veneration etc.

The aim of Reaching Perfection

The main aim of education is to achieve extensive perfection already in man. Swami ji opined that all material and spiritual knowledge is already present in man covered by curtain of ignorance. Education should tear off the veil so that the knowledge shines forth as an illuminating torch to enliven all the corners by and by.

Fulfillment of Swadharma

He accepted the idea of Swadharma in education. Everyone has to grow like himself/herself. No one has to copy others. It is hence that he condemned the imposition of foreign education. True improvement is self-inspired. There should not be any external pressure on students. Eduacand should be encouraged to stand on his own, to be himself/herself. Vivekanand suggested, "If you do not allow one to become a lion, he will become a fox.

Unity in Diversity

The true aim of education is to develop insight into the individuals, so that they become able to search out and realize unity in diversity. Vivekanand said that physical and spiritual words are one; their distinctness is an illusion. Education must be capable of

developing this sense which find unity in diversity.

Freedom of Growth

According to Swami ji freedom is the first requirement for self-development. The child should be given freedom to grow, according to his/her own nature. The child should be helped in solving problems himself. Education is a means to the establishment of a fraternity of mankind. On the contrary, modern system of education emphasizes upon only making them self-centered, making them dependent upon others. Modern education focuses upon individualism, and not fraternity. Modern system of education pays very less heed to values, morality, honesty and empathy.

Curriculum

Swami Vivekanand lays emphasis upon teaching subjects in mother tongue because only with help of mother tongue students will be able to grasp maximum out of subject matter. He also favoured fine arts, Music, Literature, Poetry, Science and Mathematics. He emphasized upon that curriculum which covers all the domains i.e. cognitive, affective and psycho-motor domain. Curriculum must be based upon practical aspect of education. While at present our education system emphasizes primarily only on the aspect of learning to 'Know' and to some extent on learning to 'Do'. Hence out of three domains only cognitive and to some extent the psychomotor domain are being cultivated. Practically there is no room for the learning to 'Live-together' and 'Learning to Be' pillars in our modern' education curriculum.

School

In respect of school Swami Vivekanand favoured Gurukul system. Where Guru Shishya Prampra needs to be followed. Where teacher has to be like father/mother figure and student has to be like his/her child. School was given status of temple. On the contrary our present education system suffers from highly professionalism and corporate culture. This took life away from the life making education system. Mushrooming of educational institutions without fulfilling essential requirements is a threat to modern system of education.

Methods of Teaching

Methods of teaching should be child centered, life centered, activity oriented. Vivekanand's method of education resembles the heuristic method of the modern educationists. According to 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. He was in favor of very less interference by teacher while student is learning. At present too

much child centered education is followed which allows immature children in the position of guide and teacher as follower. This will be equivalent to placing the cart before the horse. These methods of teaching took children away from life-making education system.

Teacher

Swami Vivekanand said that teacher must be role model for students. A person with an attitude of renunciation, influence children through his ideal example, love his students, sympathize at their difficulties, teaching according to the needs, abilities and interests of the them, contribute to their spiritual development can be a good teacher. The teacher should come down to the level of the students and transfer his soul to the student's soul. He must be dedicated to teaching profession with a view to rendering service like an ancient Guru. Teacher must be sympathetic to his students, must have missionary zeal and angelic motive behind the act of teaching. Teacher should be a Friend, Philosopher, Guide and Tyagi for creating a real man. He must organize various programmes to develop the mind by concentration and deep meditation. He should motivate the students to acquire knowledge and develop in them scientific temper, scientific outlook and civic responsibility. In the modern times some teachers have forgotten their duties and become money minded only. Teacher has become tutor, home tutor and even in some cases lack moral character, values and involved in sexual abuse. This kind of teacher can never be an example for students. Teacher working in schools and universities continue to be merely examining bodies turning out mechanically every year in huge numbers men and women destitute in faith and poor in culture.

Student

According to Swami Vivekanand to become a 'good receiver' of education, the student must be 'teachable'. The essential virtues of the taught are: purity, real thirst of knowledge and preservice. He must have confidence, conviction, trust, reverence, humanity and submission towards the teachers. The teacher-pupil relationship, based on mutual respect and trust is the foundation of education system proposed by Vivekanand. In modern times most of the students have lost moral values and they lack respect towards teachers, parents and elders. They are becoming only rote learners. Some students have forgotten their aim of education and got themselves involved in drugs and other malpractices. They do not follow love, compassion, sympathy etc rather their belief is only give and take.

Discipline

Swami Vivekanand proposed that students must be given freedom of growth and allowed to solve the problems of life with courage and self-discipline. For self-discipline

there must be provision of extra co-curricular activities covering participation in meditation also. Modern student is lacking discipline and most of the students have become in disciplined in modern education system. Because they are not taught spiritual, moral and religious values properly. They do not respect 'Teacher' as 'Guru'. The reasons responsible for these are overcrowded classes, political intervention and materialistic attitude of teachers, students and community as well.

Conclusion

To conclude it can be stated that Swami Vivekanand has foreseen that mankind is passing through a crisis. Conflicts of ideals, manners and habits are prevalent in the atmosphere. Disrespect for everything old is the fashion of the days. The uplift of masses is possible only through education. For the upliftment of humanity, irrespective of humanity, irrespective of poverty, religious, caste and creed, education must be given first. According to Swami Vivekanand for the development of character, inculcation of sense of humanity and self-confidence tendencies prevalent in modern educational institution like intolerance, fear, hatred, inadequate information between teachers and parents must be resolved. Teacher plays the key role for educating common mass. The only service to be given to our lower classes is to help them to develop their lost individuality. Give them ideas the only help they require is. If the poor boy cannot come to education, education must go to him. It is not only the responsibility of teacher but student also. Students must have confidence, trust, reverence, humanity, towards teachers. Students should also follow the role of 'Shishya' as prescribed in Guru Shishya Prampra. For problems like indiscipline students must follow the techniques of meditation. They must consider teacher as Guru and learn religious and spiritual values as taught by their teacher. In modern times aim of education should also be developing all aspects of personality of child i.e. physical, mental, moral, social, vocational by helping them to know themselves and provide an atmosphere free of any kind of unnecessary interference. Students must be taught subjects according to their talent, interest etc. He recommended the teaching of subjects like Arts and Science. For this poetry, Fine Arts, Science and other social science subjects must be taught. Now the time has come once again to revive the educational philosophy of Swami Vivekanand to overcome the problems of modern education system.

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