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# **Unparalleled Thoughts of Swami Vivekananda on Education**

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### **Abstract**

*Education is an important tool that is applied in the contemporary world to succeed; as it mitigates the challenges which are faced in life. Every country has some definite aims of education for the overall progress of the nation. Because an aimless education is like a boat without a rudder and it can do nothing for the development of the nation. Beside this, there should have some means of education. In any country, the total system of education is inquired, analyzed, scrutinized and evaluated by its philosophers. India is a “punya bhumi” (i.e, sacred land). In nineteenth century India produced various great educational philosophers who contributed much to resurge the education system. The sanjivni of their educational philosophy has placed new life in the dry bones of education system. Swami Vivekananda was one of the thinkers whose educational thoughts are unique, ameliorating imitable and feasible. In the present paper, the researcher takes a look at the Vivekananda’s view towards concepts, aims and means of education.*

**Keywords:** *Education, Contemporary world, challenges, progress of nation, System of education, Educational philosophers, Resurge the education system.*

**Introduction:** Swami Vivekananda was a scholar, a poet, a mystic, a devotee, a worker and a yogi. He was a national-builder and world maker, a patriot-saint of India, an internationalist and so on. But he was an educationist who propounded original ideas on education, for ensuring and educational renovation from the highest of his un-questioned love for country and humanity.

Vivekananda believed that same omnipresent and omniscient soul resides in every man and in every animal – however weak, small or great. “The difference is not the soul, but in manifestation”. He had deep faith in man and he realized the dignity and diversity of human beings. In the opinion of swamiji, each soul is potentially divine. He criticized the existing system of education. He was revolutionary in the field of education and touched every of it. Vivekananda advocated ‘man-making education’ as man is the highest temple.

Vivekananda was greatly influenced by the classical Indian philosophy. His thoughts were shaped by the Vedanta and those are generally called Neo-vedanta. His Vedanta is practical and not abstract. He applied vedanta to practical life. He believed in the universal brotherhood of man and upliftment of mankind. Service and renunciation were the two key words which he believed most and tried to apply for the development of our society.

### **Objectives of the study:**

The objectives of this paper are as follows:

- ❖ To study the goal or aims of education according to Swami Vivekananda.
- ❖ To study the means of education according to Swami Vivekananda.
- ❖ To study the relevance of Vivekananda’s educational ideas an education at Present.

**Methodology:** The study was based on historical work. There were so many books, reviews, articles and monographs which were consulted during the study period. Only quantitative method was used to analyze the data.

**Delimitation of the study:** Swami Vivekananda's philosophy of education has a very large area. But in the very short time, the present study is confined to Vivekananda's concept or ideas, goals or aims and means of education only.

**Research question:**

The researcher has conducted the study on the Basis of the following research questions:-

- i. What is education, according to Vivekananda?
- ii. What are the concepts or ideas of Vivekananda on education?
- iii. What are the views of Vivekananda on Present education system?
- iv. What are the aims or goals of education according to Vivekananda?
- v. What are the actual means or paths to achieve true education according to Vivekananda?
- vi. What are the suggestions of Vivekananda for the development of individual as well as society?

**Analysis and Findings of the Study:**

**Educational Ideas/concepts of Vivekananda:** Swami Vivekananda was a vedantist educationist. To him, education is the discovery of the inner self. It is spontaneous and positive. He laid emphasis on the development of integrated personality through education.

Vivekananda believed that "education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man". "Perfection is already inherent in man, and education is manifestation of the same". All knowledge – secular or spiritual – is in the human mind. Knowledge is inherent in man, no knowledge comes from outside, it is all inside.

According to Vivekananda, education is the discovery of inner self. It is not information-giving in an artificial manner. It is developed from within. The real education, according to Vivekananda, is that which prepares the individual for the struggle for existence. For getting a degree is not an education. The proper education must be viewed on the basis of character, mental power, intelligence and inculcates self-confidence and self-reliance in the individuals.

Vivekananda considers education as a part of human life. Accordingly, he gives a very practical concept of education in this lines . "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". The upliftment of masses is also an emergent dimension of education. Democracy is the best form of government implying freedom which is inseparable from responsibility, philosophy, law and other social factors.

**The Goals or Aims of Education:** Vivekananda points out that the defect of present- day education is that it has no definite goal or aim to achieve/ pursue. A teacher, he says, has no clear idea about the goal of his teaching. Swamiji attempts to establish, through his words and ideas, that the end of all education is man-making. He prepares the scheme of this man-making education in the light of his over-all philosophy of Vedanta. Vivekananda advocates so many aims of education, of which the main aims are discussed below -

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

inculcate all these qualities in the individual. In Swamiji's own words, "faith in us and faith in God, this is the secret of greatness.

- **Formation of character:** Character is the solid foundation for self-development. According to Vivekananda-"The character of any man is the aggregate of his tendencies, the sum total of the bent of his mind". Education must build-up character and manifest our real nature. The best way to develop a character is the personal example of high character set by the teacher. Following things are required for character formation –
  - ✓ Hard work,
  - ✓ Moral & spiritual values,
  - ✓ Gurukula system,
  - ✓ Formation of good habits,
  - ✓ Learning through mistakes.
- **Fulfillment of swadharma:** Vivekananda supports the idea of swadharma in education. Everyone has to grow like himself. No one has to copy others. There should be no external pressure of any type on child. The educator should not constantly tell him to do this or that. Such negative directions tend to blunt his intelligence and mental development. Therefore, each child should be given opportunities to develop according to his own inner nature.
- **Freedom of Growth:** Freedom is the first requirement for self-development. The child should be given freedom to grow, according to his own nature. He should be helped in solving his problems himself.
- **Development of personality:** Personality is the influence, the impression one creates on the others. It is the personality of a man that counts. According to Vivekananda, "personality is two-third and his intellect and words are only one-third in making the real man".
- **Aim of Reaching perfection:** The prime aim of education is to achieve fullness of perfection already present in a child. According to swamiji all material and spiritual knowledge is already present in man covered by a Curtin 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 meant by achieving fullness of the talent perfection.
- **Physical and mental development:** The aim of education is that the child should 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 feet economically rather than becoming a parasite on others.
- **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".
- **Faith in one's own self:** All through his life swamiji exhorted the individuals to full confidence upon their powers. He thought that education must be to develop faith in one's own self. Education should teach every student the great mantram of Katho Upanishad, "arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached"
- **Development of shraddha and spirit of renunciation:** Students should inculcate a spirit of self surrender, sacrifice and renunciation of material pleasures for the good of others. Swamiji believes that without shraddha, spirit of renunciation and faith in God, an individual can not proceed further. So the aim of education must be develop shraddha and spirit of renunciation among the students.

- **Religious development:** To swamiji religious development is an essential aim of education. To him, each individual should be able to search out and develop religious seed embedded in him and thus find the absolute truth or reality. Swamiji advocates the training of feelings and emotions, so that the whole life is purified and sublimated.
- **Vocational aim:** Education should develop the capacity within the child to earn his own bread & salt and lead a comfortable life. So the children must have vocational training for their development in future.
- **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. 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.
- **To promote universal brotherhood:** Swamiji always tried to promote universal brotherhood. He believed that an ideal system of education is one which imparts universal brotherhood.
- **Service of mind:** Another important aim of education is serving the God in man. It is the God in the sick, the poor, the miserable, the ignorant and the down trodden, what we should worship.

**Means of education:** Analyzing Vivekananda, a real way to education, can be found out. These are as follow–

- **Love:** The best means of education, according to Vivekananda is love. Education should be based upon love. Love is best inspiration in character building. The child should be thought through love. The only motive in importing education should be love for educand, for the man in him. That is why Vivekananda's philosophy of education is known as education for man making. The teacher's aim should be neither money making nor attainment of fame but only bestowing human love. Love is this which makes the educator to take the educand from untruth to truth, darkness to light, and death to immortality.
- **Concentration:** Concentration, according to ancient Indian thought, is the key to true knowledge. Therefore, Vivekananda has placed much emphasis upon focusing of attention. The educands should be distinguished according to their abilities; every one of them has to develop concentration. Hence the education must organize his teaching in such a way that it must be helpful to each educand separately. He should attend to every one's difficulties and try to solve them as much as possible. Thus, Vivekananda supported the ancient Indian means of achieving concentration.
- **Brahmacharya:** Brahmacharya or abstinence is the first means of achieving concentration. It gives mental and spiritual powers of the highest kind. It transforms sex drive in to spiritual force. Brahmacharya implies purity of thought, deed and action. It helps to improve and sharpen various psychological processes such as learning, remembering, thinking etc. It helps in achieving power of memory and improves the powers of the mind. Vivekananda strongly emphasized the need for the students to observe Brahmacharya. This leads to both-mental and physical-advantages. Firstly, it takes effective care of all distractions. Secondly, it improves the body the mind so that they may become effective means of knowledge.
- **Help:** The task of the educator is to help the educand in manifesting and expressing his abilities and capacities. Educator should help the individual to recognize his cultural heritage and to use it in his struggle of life. Vivekananda has not only presented high ideals of education but also developed a sound system by which these ideals may be achieved.
- **Guidance:** Every educand has to face problems peculiarly his own. He solves them by his own efforts and with the guidance of the teacher. The skilled teachers guide the pupil through these difficulties and takes him forward.

- **Discussion and contemplation:** In addition to concentration, the other means of education is discussion and contemplation. It is only through these that the student may remove his difficulties.

Discussion should be carried out in an informal atmosphere. Contemplation should be practiced in a calm and quiet atmosphere with the mind fully alive.

**Conclusion:** The exposition and analysis of Vivekananda's innumerable thoughts of education brings to light its constructive, practical and comprehensive character. He was a real prophet of humanity who stood for the reconciliation of human contrasts and conflicts and the establishment of universal brotherhood. He states emphatically that if society is to be reformed, education has to reach to everyone high and low, because individuals are the very constituents of society.

Founding education on the firm ground of our own philosophy and culture, he shows the best of remedies for today's social and spiritual welfare and upliftment of humanity, irrespective of caste, creed, nationality or time. He realizes the dignity of and diversity of human being.

However, Vivekananda's practical-oriented approach to education is highly suitable for the modern age of science and computer science, technology and information technology. Now, if we are to live in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and look forward to the future, we have to seriously think about and accept cordially Vivekananda's ideas and ideals of education.

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