

Noble Ideas of Swami Vivekananda on Education and in globe Intentions of Lord Macaulay: a Critical Review on School Education in India

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Abstract: Education without character, politics without principles, commerce without morality, Science without humanity, religion without love, culture without unity, administration without justice, knowledge without applications, patriotism without sacrifice are not only useless but positively dangerous so says Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Today's education in our country has produced more educated person without having in-depth idea of education & mechanised humans without having traits of humanity. It appears that our country is passing through a phase of serious apolitical crisis called value crisis. Everywhere there is a shadow of missing spirit of life as if the true aim of human being is to make wealth effortlessly, swiftly without any hurdle and enjoy a comfortable living standard without adhering to the very basic philosophy of life. Bharat so called India is loosing its cultural supremacy and spiritual diversity in global arena. The paper explores the philosophy of education that was given by Swami Vivekananda. Also it highlights growth and development of school education system of India since Independence and visible loop holes in education system like excessive reliance on recall & memorization process in school education prescribed by British Education system. Further the author advocates vociferously for *Revitalizing Teacher Education System*, *Infusion of Spiritual Element in Curriculum & greater Emphasis on Value Education*, *Promotion of Indian Culture*, *Strong Community Participation in education & integration of Element of Service in Curriculum etc.* Deep earnestness, sincerity by stakeholders of education for one of our vital national problem in a new light is the need of the day.

Keywords: Value education, education for life, Cultural life, teacher education

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the words of *Willmott* “Education is the apprenticeship of life”. The aim of education is the knowledge not of facts but of values (**William Ralph Inge**). Since ages of human evolution human being constantly strived to attain highest state of attainment of peace, prosperity, happiness and the feeling of fullness. India has a strong legacy of simple living and high thinking philosophy inherited from spiritual seekers from time to time. As long as communities have existed, people have found ways to pass on to the next generation knowledge, skills and attitudes that have been learned over time. Nations and cultures continue and develop in this way. Whilst, within families, the older generation has always wanted to pass on their knowledge, skills and values to their children. The formal education through schooling has developed at different rates in different phases in our country. One of the phase was second half of nineteenth century education philosophy of Swami Vivekananda. He presented the true India to the whole world. The concept of **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**-the world is one family-is the only beacon light for survival, growth, and real progress for human society, particularly in the strife-torn world of today. It was perceived in India in ancient times by our learned sages and saints and has an eternal validity. Swami Vivekananda explained and elaborated it in the global context. What a superman articulation and presentation he bestowed on all of us! The whole world was mesmerized and began to look towards India, to explore and learn about its past glory. The basic tenets of the Indian tradition of creation, generation and dissemination of knowledge were expanded in tune with the requirements and needs of the times.

Since the world is becoming a global village because of technology, it is important that students are able to relate well to people from different countries, races and religions. There is a greater need to acquire a subtle understanding of the thoughts of Swami Vivekananda on learning to live together and in universal brotherhood. Widespread awareness of his thoughts and ideas amongst teachers and would-be teachers is particularly important as they have the responsibility of educating the young. All teachers and educationalists should be reflecting on their own teaching and asking themselves, “Am I teaching my students how to learn? What skills am I giving my students that will help them adapt new situations? What opportunities am I giving my students to relate to others successfully? What guidance am I giving my students to enable them to make wise choices after due reflection? At this juncture the concept of education given by Swami Vivekananda seems more vital than ever before.

2. NOBLE IDEALS OF SWAMIVIVEKANANDA

Though 19th century, 20th century has witnessed enchanting and exciting discovery of philosophy on education world over, yet the one devised by Swami Vivekananda seems more acceptable and relevant even today i.e Swami Vivekananda's ideas on various aspects of education are more relevant and are needed more today than probably during his own life time. Only he had the vision and the courage to articulate: "The true education, however is not yet conceived of amongst us". It exhorts everyone to strive hard, explore, discover, interpret and utilize all their talents for the benefit of young learners. His ideas elevate everyone who reads and understands the meaning and the imperatives.

According to him

- "The education which does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle for life, which does not bring out strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy, and the courage of a lion-is it worth the name? Real education is that which enables one to stand on one's own legs".
- Education must provide 'life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas.' The ideal of this type of education would be to produce an integrated person- one who has learned how to improve his intellect, purify his emotions, and stand firm on moral virtues and unselfishness.
- Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs rot there, undigested, all your life.
- The very essence of education is concentration of mind.
- To me the very essence of education is concentration of mind, not the collecting of facts.
- It is culture that withstands shocks, not a simple mass of knowledge.... Knowledge is only skin-deep, as civilization is, and a little scratch brings out the old savage.
- The physical, the intellectual, emotional and ethical integration of the individual into a complete man is a broad definition of the fundamental aim of education.
- The only true teacher is he who can convert himself, as it were, into a thousand persons at a moment's notice. 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. All these negative, breaking-down, destructive teachers that are in the world can never do any good.

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- Be brave. Be a heart-wholeman. Strictly moral, brave unto desperation. Don't bother your head with religious theories. Cowards only sin, brave men never, no, not even in mind. Try to love anybody and everybody...No religion for you, my children, but morality and bravery. No cowardice, no sin, no crime, no weakness—the rest will come of itself.

Further Swami Vivekananda says: When you have men who are ready to sacrifice their everything for their country, sincere to the backbone – when such men arise, India will become great in every respect. Then only will India awake, when hundreds of large hearted men and women giving up all desires of enjoying the luxuries of life, will long and exert themselves to their utmost, for the well – being of the millions of their country men who are gradually sinking lower and lower in the vortex destitution and ignorance. We must have life building, man making, character making, assimilation of ideas(see Fig.1). If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library.

Vivekananda reiterates that “ignorance has made us next door neighbour to brutes. It is not a man – making education, it is merely and entirely a negative education. What we want now is an immense awakening of rajasika energy, for the whole country is rapt in the shroud of tamas. The people of this land must be awakened – must be made fully active”.

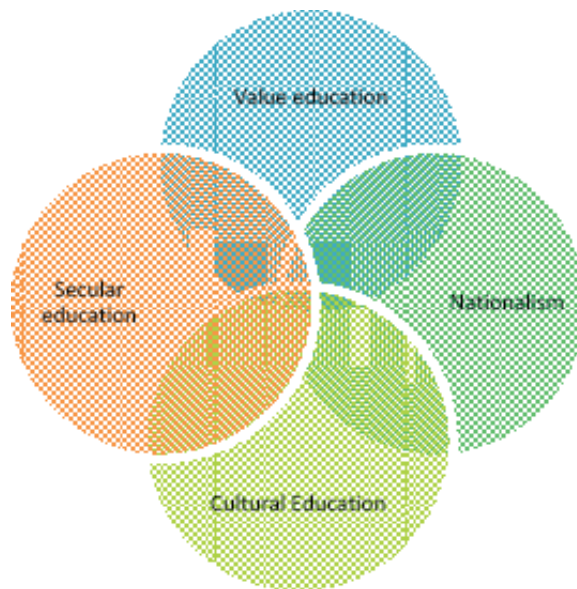


Figure 1: Swamiji's ideas of education

3. MACAULAYS SCHOOL EDUCATION IN INDIA

Since independence, the education system of India has grown in many fold in Macaulian way .Today Indian Higher Education is one of the largest systems of education in the world. There are 611 universities, 26,000 colleges with 5,21,843 teachers catering to 26,76,718 students i.e. just 10% of the age group i.e. 18-24. There are 10,30,996 recognized primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary schools in the country having work force of 45 lakh teachers catering to the age group of 6-16year. It is often felt that quality and excellence got traded off while universities became more politically inclusive.

The 21st century society has seen changes as never before and we, in school education, need to prepare our children for such rapid changes. What these changes will be we do not know, so the important skills that people will need to have are adaptability and the ability to learn new skills quickly. The present generation already realizes the importance of being able to relate to others across the world, as this is daily occurrence for many young people today through the Internet. In addition to these skills and attributes people will need to be able to reflect on their actions and surroundings and make decisions which are for good of all. The above skill based education is merely for living but not for happy life. We are so engrossed with the material education that the spiritual education seems far apart from us there by making us slaves of our desires.

4. FALLOUT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION

The story of India's educational achievements is one of mixed success. On the down side, India has 22 per cent of the world's population but 46 per cent of the world's illiterates, and is home to a high proportion of the world's out of school children and youth. No doubt the access to schooling has increased enormously but the quality of education has suffered a lot. Today, most of our parents, especially the middle and upper middle class, have been brought up to believe that education is only for scoring high marks in examinations, in order to gain admission into good colleges that lead to a narrow range of careers and which are not necessarily in tune with the child's interests or passions. Throughout the school life of a child, parents believe they need to see high percentages in test to reassure them that their child is doing well(**Warner, 2011**). The big issue is that the present examination system is based on recall of memorized facts. The present scenario of school education and its teaching learning process is very discouraging. In terms of development in various aspects of technology and education the much suffered part of education is the value based teaching which was one of the prime focuses in ancient period and mostly found till the medieval period. With the concept of modernization and westernization

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and with all the revolutions in and around the society the social, moral, according, national and all other values have been deteriorated and forgotten largely. According to **MISHRA (1987)** the technological breakthrough due to industrialization, westernization, and urbanization has neglected the ascribed statuses by weakening the unity and integrity of the joint family and caste group that leads to the negligence of the role and status of the elderly persons. Moreover, the emergences of achieved properties like wealth, education etc. in distorted forms, has colonized the state of mind of the youth by adopting the individualistic value of the west. Time has come for us to reconcile our effort to calibrate the system of education as per the need of our country in line with nineteenth century spiritual and Vedic education system.

5. RE-ENVISAGING SWAMI'S DREAM

In ancient India character – training was an essential feature of education. The practice of concentration and self control being the fundamental requisites of such training in the ancient gurukulas. In the age of ICT revolution no doubt secular , skill based education is required , simultaneously we cannot ignore education for life aspect i.e man making part of education. Here comes the ideals of Swami Vivekananda. Money does not pay, nor name; fame does not pay, nor learning. It is love that pays; it is character that cleaves its way through adamant walls of difficulties. In this context Swamiji's idea of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" need to be reinvented that needs a renaissance in present system of education.

6. PLAUSIBLE PATH WAYS FOR FUTURE

6.1 Revitalizing Teacher Education System

India has been facing the challenge of paramount expansion of education system including teacher education. As on 1st Jan.2007, 7461 teacher training institutions offering 9045 courses have been recognized by NCTE with an approved intake of 7.72 lakh teacher trainees. Today, the number has gone high. The number of institutions is increasing at a very fast rate because of privatization and liberalization of teacher education (**NCFTE, 2010**). However, with rapid expansion both in number and size of the teacher education institutions, quality suffered greatly. Our teacher training institutes should prepare teachers by looking into the changing needs. Teachers need to make a paradigm shift and learn how to manage this change. Instead of thinking of themselves as the ones with all the information, with all control and authority, they should ask themselves, why do children need me in class?"

Principals, too need to be innovative and question the relevance of bricks and mortar schools, asking, “Will schooling be totally on-line in future, or will my school have something unique to offer to the children, so that they enjoy coming to school?” It is only possible when we realize the blunder we have made in the past and do the course correction in line with swami Vivekananda’s dream teacher i.e The true teacher is one who can throw his whole force into the tendency of the taught. Without real sympathy we can never teach well.

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6.2 Spiritual Element in Curriculum

Inculcation of a spirit of patriotism and national integration, Developing a democratic way of thinking and living, Developing tolerance and understanding towards different religious faiths, Developing a sense of human brotherhood at social, national and international levels, Helping children to have faith in some supernatural power and order that is supposed to control this universe and human life must be an integral part of our curriculum. We have to accept the fact that without the divine blessing the life in this planet earth is impossible. The main aim of human birth is to attain salvation. Thus spiritual objective of life annihilates a man to good human and our education must foster such ideas through vibrant curriculum.

6.3 Emphasizing Value Education

The major aim of value education is full development of child’s personality in its physical, mental, and spiritual aspects, Inculcation of good manners and responsible and co – operative citizenship, Enabling children to make moral decisions on the basis of sound moral principles, developing respect for the dignity of the individual and the society (Rao, 1996).

Teaching of values can be done through many ways through direct clarifications on values, through teaching values as a separate subjects, through value based role plays, through project work on specific values to the students, through social interaction, discovery of values by students, discussion on values and through integrated approach with different subjects. Our present value education pattern in schools is limited to book, not through integrative daily practices. Day by day we are going heartless, becoming more and more self centric, egoistic, parochial, jealousy is the order of the day. In this context swami Vivekananda’s idea of education suffers with serious social implication which is reflected in our society today. Thus value education must be stressed upon from the childhood stage so that it can create a balanced , integrated person as per the need of the society.

6.4 Promotion of Indian Culture

Jawaharlal Nehru says Swami Vivekananda “Rooted in the past and full of pride in India’s prestige, Vivekananda was yet modern in his approach to life’s problems and was a kind of bridge between the past of India and her present. ... He was a fine figure of a man, imposing, full of poise and dignity, sure of himself and his mission, and at the same time full of a dynamic and fiery energy and a passion to push India forward”. Our curriculum must infuse the spirit of reverence towards ones own culture because it is the legacy that need to be passed to the next generation for the successful sustenance of their life. Swamiji says : “Your country requires heroes; be heroes” . Our schools must propagate and protect the idea’s of swamiji for a better, diversified, culturally enriched country-India.

6.5 Community Participation

It is recognised as one of the important strategy to optimize the limited resources in school education sector. In addition to effective utilization of resources, community participation is likely to have potential advantage on educational access and quality. For instance school can invite a father of a church or priest of a temple or maulana from nearby mosque for delivering lectures about religious tolerance or communal harmony or essence of all religion. Even parents can be considered as an important stake holder in improving the overall image of the school there by promotes the core Indian Values like : Unity, Universal brotherhood , tolerance etc which swamiji believed in throughout his life time.

6.6 Element of Service in Curriculum

Service to mankind is service to God can only be translated into action when curriculum provides ample opportunity for the teachers and learners. Therefore the element of social service dimension in line with NSS(National Service Scheme) must be incorporated in school curricula so that the learner get firsthand experience of challenges of life, develop critical analysis faculty to respond to crisis and challenges faced by the society from time to time which was envisioned by our beloved Swamiji.

7. THE LAST WORD

Vivekananda’s ideals of education carries promising future for our country in 21st century. For instance his idea of continual or lifelong education, however, has been adopted in many countries already and India adopted RTE

in 2010AD is an extension of his idea. This has raised new hope for the weak, underprivileged section of the society—the very people who for various reasons cannot complete their education when they are young. Unless radical changes are made in our school education system we cannot serve our society, the poor, helpless women. To make it happen we need paradigm shift in our teacher education system as per the doctrine of swami Vivekananda. One pertinent question comes to mid “ Imagine the shape of education once every teacher starts adoring the inherent divinity of each child in the temples of learning ! Education is not a vocation rather innate passion for nation construction. The indomitable spirit of Swmiji is the only ray of inspiration for all of us to reinvent our school education whose time has come.

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