



## Relevance of Swami Vivekananda's Educational Philosophy for Today's Youth

**Prashant Ranjan Dutt**

Assistant Professor, Teachers' Training College, Affiliated To Tilka Manjhi Bhagalpur University,  
Bhagalpur, Bihar, India, Email ID: prashantranjandutt31@gmail.com

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### ARTICLE DETAILS

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### ABSTRACT

Spiritual advancement and development based on noble qualities will have to be made an important component of life. Along with this, the common people will also have to be made aware of the mysteries of modern science. In this context, a review of the educational thoughts of Swami Vivekananda is inevitable. Swami Vivekananda defined education in these words "to develop man's inherent perfection and to express it is education." Swami Vivekananda's philosophy was based on Vedanta philosophy, Vedanta means attainment of the ultimate truth and knowledge about life and the world, by which one gets freedom from worldly bondage and attains salvation. Swami Vivekananda's philosophy of education is broad and practical. He did not believe in acquiring knowledge from outside, it is hidden within a person. We discover that knowledge and experience it. To experience knowledge, it is necessary to concentrate. Therefore, Vivekananda suggested some important moral values which should be included in our school curriculum: Unconditional Love and Kindness, honesty, respect for others, hard work, compassion, cooperation, etc. Swami Vivekananda believed that India can never progress without the progress of women. Swami Vivekananda's birthday was initially observed as National Youth Day on January 12, 1984, by the Indian government. The day is celebrated on January 12 to motivate the youth to promote the country and implement the teachings of Swami Vivekananda. And perhaps the



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most important of all is mass education and for this we must depend on ourselves. Swami Vivekananda had also inspired the sanyasis to spread literacy along with preaching and moral education. He firmly believed that as education and knowledge spread among the masses, the country will progress. The interpretation of Indian religion and culture that he presented abroad was unique in its own way.

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## **Introduction**

In the twenty-first century, the world has turned into a huge market where competition determines the life of a nation. Due to this competition, today we are standing on the verge of a cultural destruction. Our eyes are dazzled by the material prosperity of the advanced countries of the world. And, we have strayed from our cultural foundation. The civilization of developed countries is based on the principles of wealth and power. Therefore, at present, the people of India will have to pay attention to their cultural roots while observing the revolutionary experiment of the West. It is the duty of the educationist to provide cultural consciousness to the common people by disseminating spiritual thoughts and ideals. Spiritual advancement and development based on noble qualities will have to be made an important component of life. Along with this, the common people will also have to be made aware of the mysteries of modern science. In this context, a review of the educational thoughts of Swami Vivekananda is inevitable. Swami Vivekananda defined education in these words "to develop man's inherent perfection and to express is education."

## **Philosophical Thoughts of Swami Vivekananda**

Swami Vivekananda's philosophy was based on Vedanta philosophy, Vedanta means attainment of the ultimate truth and knowledge about life and the world, by which one gets freedom from worldly bondage and attains salvation. Swamiji believed in one God. According to him, the goal of all religions is the same. Therefore, every person should have faith in his religion. He advised Indians not to blindly imitate Western civilization and called upon them to create their own destiny by standing on their own feet.

## **Purpose of Educational Thoughts**

Swami Vivekananda considered the best education to be that which develops character qualities in a person and instills a sense of national pride. A child should be given such education that builds his



character, develops his intellect, increases his mental strength and enables him to stand on his own feet. Hence, the sole purpose of education is to build a human being.

Swami Vivekananda's philosophy of education is broad and practical. He did not believe in acquiring knowledge from outside, it is hidden within a person. We discover that knowledge and experience it. To experience knowledge, it is necessary to concentrate. The power to concentrate the mind can be increased through celibacy. Brahmacharya is the purity and restraint in thoughts, words and deeds. Education should be according to the needs and nature of the child. Every child is an expression of God. Therefore, to serve God, it should be our duty to serve children.

Vivekananda said, "By memorizing the thoughts of others in a foreign language, by stuffing them in your mind and by obtaining some degrees from universities, you consider yourself educated. is this education? What is the purpose of your education? Either to get a job a clerk or to become a lawyer or at the most to become a deputy magistrate which is another form of clerkship that's it isn't it? What benefit will it bring to you or your country? That education which does not make the masses fit for the struggle of life, which does not develop their strength of character, which does not instill in them a sense of compassion and the courage of a lion, can we call that also education?" Swami Vivekananda clearly said that we need mechanical and all such education which would enable a man to earn enough to meet his needs and also save money for an emergency, instead of running from pillar to post in search of a job.

### **Character Formation**

There is only one way to acquire knowledge and that is concentration. Vivekananda believed that concentration of mind' is the whole essence of education. The more the power of concentration, the more will be the attainment of knowledge. If the cobbler is more concentrated, he will clean shoes better. If the cook is more concentrated, he will prepare better food. The more concentration there is in earning money or worshipping God or doing any other work, the better will be that work.

### **Personality Development**

The whole education and all studies have one objective - the formation of personality and development of man. This is a great center of power. When this powerful inner man is ready, it can do whatever it wants. This personality makes the thing on which it influences, active.



## **Value Education**

According to Swami Vivekananda, if we want to make our students as a moral human being, school curriculum is one of the best ways to serve this purpose. Because he thinks that moral values can be inculcated among our students through a value-based school curriculum. Therefore, Vivekananda suggested some important moral values which should be included in our school curriculum: Unconditional Love and Kindness, honesty, respect for others, hard work, compassion, cooperation, etc.

## **Teacher**

Swamiji gave great importance to the character and personal life of the teacher. He believed that only great men who are selfless and altruistic can become ideal teachers. The most essential qualities of a teacher are refined personality, spirit of sacrifice, selfless service, philanthropic nature, spirituality, religiosity, forgiveness, modesty, patience, and love for humanity, feeling of welfare and spirit of service. Swami Vivekananda has said, "Our relationship with the Guru is exactly like that of a descendant with his ancestor. Without the Guru, religious feelings cannot develop in us. In countries where this type of Guru-disciple relationship has been neglected, the religious teacher has become just a speaker."

## **Student**

Swamiji had said that both the disciple there should be some essential rules for the Guru. The disciple needs purity, true thirst for knowledge and hard work with dedication, Purity of thought, speech and work is absolutely necessary.

## **Women's Education**

Swami Vivekananda believed that India can never progress without the progress of women. He stressed on Indian women becoming fearless, virtuous, pure, sacrificing, charitable and religious. He was in favour of educating daughters as much as sons. Vivekananda paid special attention to secular education for women. Swamiji thought that efforts should be made to spread women's education by opening centres in villages and cities. Women's education will be spread in the country through such virtuous, devoted female teachers. History and mythology, household management and art and craft, duties of domestic life and principles of character building will have to be taught. Other subjects like sewing, threading, household rules, child rearing etc. will also be taught. In the words of Swamiji, keeping in mind the needs of India, we need such great fearless women who can act in accordance with the traditions propounded by great women like Sanghamitra, Ahilyabai, Sita, Savitri Anusuya, Damyanti, Mirabai, Rani of Jhansi.



## Public Education

Seeing the increasing number of illiterates in India, Swamiji was deeply saddened and started dreaming of making every Indian literate and educated. Poverty is the biggest obstacle in the path of mass education. Even if a school is opened in every village, the poor will not go there because he has to help his father in the field to earn his living. In this context, this statement of Swami Vivekananda is still relevant today- "If a poor child cannot come to get education, then education itself should be brought to him." The following revolutionary thoughts of Swamiji are noteworthy "As long as crores of people remain hungry and ignorant, I consider those educated people, who have studied at their expense, but do not try to educate them, as traitors." Therefore, Swamiji's message was that educated people of the upper class should engage themselves in the work of spreading education among the masses of the lower class and tell them that they are their brothers and are parts of the same body. The medium of mass education should be mother tongue. Every educated person should contribute to the work of mass education. Swami Vivekananda had also inspired the sanyasis to spread literacy along with preaching and moral education. He firmly believed that as education and knowledge spread among the masses, the country will progress. Vivekananda was in favour of educating the masses and giving them vocational and technical education so that they can stand on their own feet. This will make a person self-reliant and will help in solving the problems of daily life.

## CONCLUSION

Swami Vivekananda's birthday was initially observed as National Youth Day on January 12, 1984, by the Indian government. This year marks National Youth Day, observed around the country. The government's main goal in making this decision was to raise the standard of living for the nation's citizens by encouraging youth to take inspiration from Swami Vivekananda's life and achievements. The day is celebrated on January 12 to motivate the youth to promote the country and implement the teachings of Swami Vivekananda.

As J.S.Rajput says, "Who were the icons of the youth? They were men and women of character who sacrificed their self-interests and suffered for others', for the nation, for the welfare of their fellow men and women. They also included people who strived hard for interfaith amity, global brotherhood and welfare of humanity... The young of India must internalize a sense of pride in their ancestors for their tapasya to explore the mysteries of nature and to create a symphony between man and nature. It must also motivate them to set higher goods in their life ahead." Swami Vivekananda is the best youth icon.



Swami Vivekananda was a great thinker, worshipper of Indian knowledge and culture and an ideal teacher. He was a true vigilant guard and spiritual ambassador of Mother India. Sister Nivedita, a disciple of Vivekananda, said: "We all know that the future of India depends on education. We also know that to make it effective this education must be spread at every level from its lowest application to the highest and most indifferent categories. We need technical education and higher research. We need education for women and for men too. We need physical education as well as religious education. And perhaps the most important of all is mass education and for this we must depend on ourselves. The interpretation of Indian religion and culture that he presented abroad was unique in its own way. That is why Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore had said to the famous French writer Romain Rolland, "If you want to know about India, and then study Vivekananda."

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