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# Vivekananda's Educational Thought: Today And Tomorrow

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## Abstract

Vivekananda is not merely a name, but an institution. After 110 years of his physical existence, he lives in the core of our heart. Along with his words, our every morning begins and ends with his creations. He is our breath. He is the breath of every living civilization- it may be 21st century, 22nd century, 23rd century and so on. We entered into a new century, but essentially, as we turned a page toward a new millennium that, in many respects, imposed on us radical changes in our ways of living and more so: a revolution, in an unconscious manner of perceiving the world, of feeling life and of how to envision our futures. Vivekananda's ideals are the only weapon to remove all darkness. That is why his new understanding of religion, new view of man, new principle of morality and ethics, concept of East-West, contribution to India, contribution to Hinduism, teaching are still relevant in enlightening us.

**Key words** - Thought, Swami Vivekananda's, Educational Thought, Aims Of Education, Today's Education, Swami Vivekana's Views In Present Situation, Conclusion. etc.

## INTRODUCTION

It is a matter of pride that we belong to a nation which is one of the oldest civilizations of the world. It has spanned a period of more than 4000 years and witnessed the fusion of several customs and traditions. These traditions are reflective of the rich culture and heritage of the country. It is the long history behind its remarkable progress. This progress was the contribution of great men who came with special mission on this holy land known as India all over the world. Henry Becher writes about these great men, "The great men of the earth are shadow men who having lived and died. Now live again and forever through their undying thoughts. Thus living, though their footfalls are heard no more, their voices are louder than the thunder and unceasing as the flow of tides and air." It gives us immense pleasure that a great human soul Swami Vivekananda with great mission took birth on this holy land

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who revolutionalised the world through his own way. He had come to this earth on 12 January 1863 to take away the sorrows of mankind. When everything seems hopeless and the people lost all confidence in themselves, the spirit like Swami Vivekananda could come at this crucial time. It has also been indicated in Geeta that whenever righteousness is on the decline and unrighteousness is in the ascendant God creates himself as an avatar or incarnation, as a leader to guide men to the right path of salvation. Swami Vivekananda was appointed as a leader for the welfare of whole humanity.

It was time of 19th century, when there was dire need of a leader like him. The world was passing through a difficult phase at that time and people were losing confidence among themselves. It was a crucial time when he was born in aristocratic Bengali Datta family of Calcutta. Proud parents were Sh. Vishawnath Datta and Bhuvneshvari Devi. He was influenced by the religious and spiritual nature of his mother. He learned value of self-control from his mother.

His father's rational and practical way of thinking had also contributed a lot in his life. Brought up and educated in 19th century in Calcutta, Vivekananda was introduced at an early age to the principles of western thinking. It taught that one should not accept anything without evidence.

He was a brilliant student and was well versed in history, philosophy, literature and contemporary western thought. Prof. Hastie (Principal of college) said about him, "Naren is a real genius. I have travelled far and wide but, yet have not come across a lead of his talents and possibilities even among the philosophical students in German universities. He is bound to make his mark in life." Swami Vivekananda is one of the most admired spiritual leaders of India.

The world knows him as an inspiring Hindu monk, his motherland regards him as the patriot saint of modern India and Hindus consider him as a source of spiritual powers, mental energy, strength giving and open mindedness. God sent him on this Earth for the protection of the downtrodden. He never swerved an inch from his purpose.

He revolutionalised the whole nation with his teachings and messages. He was the great ambassador of God to this blue planet especially for his motherland. It is indeed a purifying exercise and emerging experiences to go through the unbiased and unprejudiced teachings of Swami Vivekananda. There was tsunami of ideas in his mind. He won the heart of millions with his honest, assiduous and determined manners.

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**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

1. To identify the Swami Vivekananda's educational thought and their meanings.
2. To find out the necessity of Vivekananda's educational thought for human beings especially for student community.
3. To find the factors of Vivekananda's educational thought that helps in creation of value-education.

**METHODOLOGY:**

In this paper, the research was based on secondary data, taken from different Books, research reports, journals and research papers.

**VIVEKANANDA'S EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT:**

Vivekananda was more than the Hindu delegate at World Parliament of Religion. He stood for the ancient Indian doctrine of the Universality of the Spiritual Truth. During afternoon when he rose to his feet and began in his deep voice 'Sisters and Brothers of America', the entire audience cheered wildly for the two whole minutes. A large gathering has its own strange kind of subconscious telepathy and this one must had been somehow aware that it was in the presence of that most unusual of all beings, a man whose words express what exactly he is. Swami Vivekananda burst upon the American society with his message of Vedanta like a bombshell.

He had labored hard to give to the West his message of Vedanta as the universal principle basic to all religions. His mission in the west was to give to the Christians a higher interpretation of their own scriptures; to give to unbelievers a sound foundation for serious investigation; to guide the scientific mind into channels of higher research; to point out to western nations the danger of a materialistic civilization and to show all men and women the way how to realize their own divinity. And this he did by placing before us and explaining to us the treasures of the Vedas. After four years of preaching work he returned to his mother land which gave him a hero's welcome. He roused his sleeping nations to the glories of its ancient heritage. His great

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heart bled at the sufferings of the poor and the ignorant. His effort by now resulted in the establishment of the Vedanta work on a permanent basis in the United States. (Vivekananda: His Call to the Nation p.15). He left such a great mark that even after 155 years of his birth his thoughts are receiving attention of the powerful leaders of the world. In his visit to India, American President Barrack Obama repeated Vivekananda's words in his speech, "Holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possession of any church in the world and that every

system has produced men and women of the most exalted character". American president also paid homage to this great revolutionary while addressing the Indian Parliament. He started his speech, "Sisters and Brothers of India" President remembered those days when Vivekananda visited Chicago, "A visitor to my hometown of Chicago more than a century ago-the Renowned Swami Vivekananda." Swami Vivekananda realized three things are necessary to make every man great, every nation great:

1. Conviction of the powers of goodness;
2. Absence of jealousy and suspicion;
3. Helping all who are trying to be and do well.

According to Him education is a continuous process; it should cover all aspects of life physical, material, intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual. His attitude towards modernization is that the masses should be educated before anything else is done. Swami Vivekananda's educational philosophy is based on his general life. He was a Vedantist educationalist. He had propounded faith in Advaita Vedanta or non-dualism. God is Supreme, Infinite, One, and Formless. He is Infinite Existence, Infinite Knowledge and Infinite Bliss. Every living being including man is a part of the Higher or Eternal self. In 'Raja Yoga' he says "Each soul is potentially divine." All men are children of God. According to him Faith has to be cultivated in man.

This faith is triple in nature-faith in Today, the world is suffering from immense crisis from many sides. Crimes, conflict, hatred and distrust between one community and another, hunger, unemployment, poverty and literacy, paucity of resources and pollution of environment, deforestation and desertification, swelling number of migrants and refugees, ethnic and sub-national violence, terrorism, drug trafficking, AIDS etc., all these altogether make a grave danger to peace. The present day crisis is greater than the crisis that occurred during the time of Vivekananda. The world is now full of violence.

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**TODAY'S EDUCATION**

Today's education in a way leads us astray in the direction of materialism, which makes the division of people as high and low, whereas the ancient India education established unity and concord of humanity. In the present modern materialistic society, there is no proper place of values. Our modern political system is party and percentage of vote based not moral based. Our economic policy is production centered and profit based, not human centered. There is no relationship between our modern economics and ethics. Our social system is full of communal and ethnic conflicts. Now-a-days social injustice has become an accepting phenomenon. In our judicial system, "all are equal but some one more equal". Like other system our educational system is also deviated from ethics and values.

Our goal of education is changed from character building to mark scoring. Our education is nonfunctional and uninspiring. In general, our education is far from being a preposition for complete living. We have little scope for freedom and initiative. Education only aims at making the students enter professional colleges. They are tutored only their subjects and not real values. One's own self, faith in the nation, and faith in God. God can be realized through service to living creatures SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S VIEWS IN PRESENT SITUATION. In spite of his innumerable linguistic, ethnic, historical and regional diversities, India has had from time immemorial a strong sense of cultural unity. It was, however, Swami Vivekananda who revealed the true foundations of this culture and thus clearly defined and strengthened the sense of unity as a nation.

Swamiji gave Indians proper understanding of their country's great spiritual heritage and thus gave them pride in their past i.e. pointed out to Indians the drawbacks of Western culture and the need for India's contribution to overcome these drawbacks. In this way Swamiji made India a nation with a global mission. Sense of unity, pride in the past, sense of mission – these were the factors which gave real strength and purpose to India's nationalist movement. Several eminent leaders of India's freedom movement have acknowledged their indebtedness to Swamiji.

Free India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru wrote: "Rooted in the past, 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 the present. He came as a tonic to the depressed and demoralized Hindu mind and gave it self-reliance and some roots in the past." Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose wrote: "Swamiji harmonized the East and the West, religion and science, past and present. And that is why he

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is great. Our countrymen have gained unprecedented self-respect, self-reliance and self-assertion from his teachings.” Swamiji’s most unique contribution to the creation of new India was to open the minds of Indians to their duty to the downtrodden masses. Long before the ideas of Karl Marx were known in India, Swamiji spoke about the role of the laboring classes in the production of the country’s wealth. Swamiji was the first religious leader in India to speak for the masses, formulate a definite philosophy of service, and organize large-scale social service.

**CONCLUSION**

Our history and mythology taught us of excellent value education. But the importance of providing value education is felt necessary today because the present system of education cannot contribute much to the individual and social development. To conclude it can be stated that Vivekananda has foreseen that mankind is passing through a crisis. Conflicts of ideals, manners and habits are pervading the atmosphere. Disrespect for everything old is the fashion of the day. Many years will pass, many generations will come and go, Vivekananda and his time will become the distant past, but never will there fade the memory of the man who all his life dreamed of a better future for the people, who did so much to awaken his compatriots and move India forward, to defend his much suffering people from injustice and brutality. From the analysis of Vivekananda’s thought of education, it is clear that the uplift of masses is possible only through proper education. Vivekananda was a great educationist and he revolutionised almost the entire field of education. His educational views were immensely influenced by the eternal truths of Vedanta.

He inspired millions of Indian Youths by his revolutionary ideas of education. He infused a new spirit in the national blood. He strongly advocated national education on national lines and based on national cultural tradition. Vivekananda’s practical-oriented approach to education is highly suitable for the modern age of Science and Computer Science, Technology and Information Technology.

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