Swami Vivekananda’s Views on Political philosophy on Education

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ABSTRACT In this paper, I would like to focus on Swami Vivekananda’s views on political Philosophy on Education. Swami Vivekananda, a great philosopher, educationist and a reformer dedicates his whole life for the elevation of humanity. Swami Vivekananda wants all-round development of education to heart and mind, to strengthen character and national consciousness, to help in the cultivation of strength and energy, nurture the brain and intellect and stir feelings of kindness and sympathy.

Keywords: Political Philosophy, Education, Character-building, Man-making, Spirituality

Introduction:
Swami Vivekananda is a great philosopher, thinker and reformer of India. His unconditional love for humanity extended to all people without any distinctions of cast, class, creed, race or religion. His philosophy of education is based on perennial truths of Upanishads, Bhagvad Gita and Advaita Vedanta. To Swami Vivekananda, “Education is the manifestation of perfection already in man.” Here perfection implies a total personality enriched with physical, mental, moral and spiritual upliftment. In Swami Vivekananda’s view education is not only collection of information but something more meaningful. He feels education should be man making, life giving and character building. It should make the people aware of their own worth, dignity and responsibility. He realizes that mankind is passing through a crisis as in this age of science and technology human values are being undermined. Swami Vivekananda seeks the solution through education. In the view of Swami Vivekananda, education is not inert ideas but the process and pattern of life through which the intrinsic values of life can be built. For Swami Vivekananda knowledge by itself is not education unless accompanied by the basic human values that are moral and spiritual values. In Swami Vivekananda’s view true education consists in blending of Vedanta with modern science. Being a true patriot Swami Vivekananda even has no hesitation to borrow science and technology from the west.

Meaning and definition of Education:
Education is not the mass information which is inserted into the mind of a child by force. In Swami Vivekananda’s own words- “If education means information only, then the libraries could be the greatest saints of the world and encyclopediawould become seers and rishis.” The good quality education must have the “life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas.” This would help to the common people to prepare themselves for the struggle of life. According to Swami Vivekananda, “Education is the manifestation of perfection already in man.” That means something already exists and is waiting to be uncovered. Swami Vivekananda says that knowledge is inherent in man. Education of the right type should uncover this and make a man perfect.
To quote Swami Vivekananda, “Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there undigested all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character making assimilation of ideals. We want education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded, by which one can stand on one’s feet.”

Aims of Education:
In the words of Swami Vivekananda, “The ultimate aim of all the education and all training is man-making.” Thus education aims at bringing about an all round development in an individual. Swami Vivekananda emphatically says, “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. What we need is to study, independent of foreign control, different branches of the knowledge that is our own and with it the English language and Western science; we need technical education and all else that will develop industries. So that men, instead of seeking for service, may earn enough to provide for them and save against a rainy day. The end of all education, all training, should be man-making. The end and aim of all training is to make the man grow. The training, by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful, is called education. What our country now wants are muscles of iron and a nerve of steel, gigantic wills which nothing can resists, which can penetrate into the mysteries and secrets of the universe and will accomplish.
their purpose in any fashion, even if it means going down to the bottom of the ocean, meeting death face to face. It is a man-making religion that we want. It is man-making theories that we want. It is man-making education all round that we want." The aims of education are:

- Making a man perfect
- Physical & Mental development
- Moral & Spiritual Development
- Character Development
- Development of faiths in one’s Own self
- Promotion of Universal brotherhood
- Searching Unity in Diversity
- Development of nationalism and internationalism
- Scientific and technological progress

Curriculum:
Out of three important domains our present education system gives emphasis mainly on the Cognitive domain and to some extent on the Psychomotor domain. Therefore, the Affective domain, the important domain for the development of humanity remains neglected. As a result, our generation is coming out of the schools, colleges, universities with filled-up knowledge in their brain but devoid of humanity. Dr. Ambedkar rightly said, “An educated person without value, morality is more dangerous than a beast”.

Here are some remedies from Swami Vivekananda’s view on education. According to him, “Education is not the amount of information that we put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested, all your life. We must have life building, manmaking, and character making assimilation of ideas. 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.” Swamiji’s educational philosophy is a balance of all the three domains of education which he expressed in the sentence, “We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increasing, the intellect is expanded & by which one can stand on one’s feet.” Here, character formation emphasizes cultivation of the Affective domain; ‘increasing the intellect’ focuses on the Cognitive domain and the last words of his statement pays importance to the development of psychomotor domain.

Swami Vivekananda emphasizes the study of Vedanta, Upanishad and philosophy in the curriculum in order to bring about spiritual development in the child. He is in favor of common language for the unity and integrity of the country. To preserve and transmit our cultural heritage he suggests the study of Sanskrit. For material advancement and prosperity Swami Vivekananda recommended geography, science, political science, economics, psychology, art, agriculture, industrial and technical subject together with games, sports and other physical exercises.

Methods of Teaching:
Swami Vivekananda prescribes the same ancient spiritual methods of teaching wherein the Guru and his disciples lived in close association for better discipline of mind and body. He suggests the following methods of teaching:

- Practice of yoga: to control the fleeting mental faculties and emotions
- Observing meditation and concentration: to develop the mind
- Brahmacharya: to develop the power of concentration.
- Guidance and counselling: to lead the child in the right path.
- Lecture and discussion: to teach science, social science, vedanta and philosophy.

Man-making Education:
To quote Swami Vivekananda, “The end of all education, all training should be man making.” The chief elements of Swami Vivekananda’s man-making education are based on the vedantic philosophy of his life. Man making Education underscores the great importance of the famous words - help, assimilation, harmony and peace. Education should develop these qualities in man in order to bring about character development and vocational development. The educational philosophy of Swami Vivekananda is a harmonious synthesis between the ancient Indian ideals and modern Western beliefs. Swami Vivekananda not only stresses on the physical, mental, moral, spiritual and vocational development of the child but also advocates women education as well as education of the masses.

Women Education:
Swami Vivekananda rightly points out that unless Indian women secure a respectable place in this country, nation can never march forward. Swami Vivekananda says that the progress of a nation depends on its
treatment of women and it is impossible to get back India's lost pride and honor unless they try to better the condition of women. So, according to Swami Vivekananda, "There is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of woman is improved." Therefore, Swami Vivekananda suggests, "Educate your women first and leave them to themselves; then they will tell you what reforms are necessary for them. Women must be put in a position to solve their own problems in their own way. No one can or ought to do this for them. And our Indian women are capable of doing it as any in the world." The important features of his scheme of women education are to make them strong, fear-less, and conscious of their chastity and dignity. It is due to the fact that at the present time, the educated women play a very significant role in overall development and progress of the country. India is now optimistic in the field of women education.

Mass Education:
No nation can prosper without educated person. Uneducated persons are the burden of a nation. To quote Rabindranath Tagore, "They are pulling you back, whom you have pushed back." So education for mass is essential. But in this 21st century our position in terms of mass education is poor. Swami Vivekananda insists that education must reach every home. He says, "if the poor boy cannot come to education, education must go to him." Swami Vivekananda says, "I consider that the great national sin is the neglect of the masses, and that is one of the causes of our downfall. No amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses of India are once more well-educated, well-fed and well-cared for. If we want to regenerate India, we must work for them through free and compulsory mass education."

Conclusion:
In conclusion it can be said that Swami Vivekananda wants such education where all misconceptions, confusions, ill-intent between and among the communities will find no place and total focus would be put on extracting the good potentialities from the human beings in order to provide the society the proper human resources for its all-round advancement. His views on education bring a light of its constructive, practical and comprehensive character in the life of human beings which are still relevant in the 21st century. Swami Vivekananda calls for education which is man-making. The right to education for everyone, guaranteed by the Constitution of India, is Swami Vivekananda's dream. His idea of continual, or lifelong, education, however, has been adopted in many countries. He stresses on free and compulsory mass education and women education. In this context we can find similarities between Swami Vivekananda's thoughts and actions taking place one century ago and the present concerns of UNESCO. The thoughts and ideas of Swami Vivekananda regarding moral values and character building is highly relevant in the field of our present education system. We are now talking about child-centric education which is surprisingly reflected long ago in the thoughts of Swami Vivekananda. In the words of Jawaharlal Nehru, "Rooted in the past and full of pride in India's prestige, Swami 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. His mission was the service of mankind through social service, mass education, religious revival and social awakening through education."

Bibliography: