

E-Content
Department of Education, Patna University.
M.Ed Semester II
Paper-C.C.5

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Unit V: Indian Philosophies of Education.

Topic: Swami Vivekananda

Objectives:-

After going through this content, the students will be able to—

- Understand biographical sketch of Swami Vivekananda.
- Explain philosophical thought of Swami Vivekananda.
- Discuss Educational thought of Swami Vivekananda.

Life Sketch of Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda (12/01/1863 - 04/07/1902) was a social reformer with an India-centric global vision. His views of education are rooted in traditional Indian philosophy that nurtures the ideals of harmony, compassion, tolerance and peace; and where man making and character-building are the basic objectives.

Philosophical Thought of Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda was the student of Shri Ramkrishna Paramhansa. Shri Paramhansa realized the truth that the divine is in the soul and the soul is in the divine and he made this realization to his student Vivekananda also. Along with that Shri Vivekananda deeply studied the Vedas and Upanishada and he realized the truths in life predicated by it. Swamiji's opinions were not only logical but also proved by the experiences.

Vaidika religion and philosophy is the combination of differentiation. Swami Vivekananda accepted Vedanta philosophy. Vaidanta has also three forms—Dwaita, Vishishtadwaita and Adwaita. Swamiji was the supporter of Adwaita. According to him, there is no difference in Dwaita, Vishishtadwaita and Adwaita; all these three are three steps of Vedanta, whose ultimate objective is to experience of Adwaita. Not even this, but also Swamiji was telling every religions and philosophies of this world are converged to Adwaita at last.

Swamiji's view towards religion and philosophy was so scientific. He cleared that art; science and religion are three different modes to express one and only ultimate truth. He told at one place—'when science told that everything is representative of one power only, so don't you remember the God, for which you have studied in Upanishada.' And the same thing Vedanta says. He called Universal Science Religion to Advaita Vedanta. He laud tried to see, understand and scientific interpretation of Vedanta in modern perspective. That is the newness of his Vedanta and because of this basis his philosophic thinking is called Navya Vedanta. Here metaphysics, epistemology and logic and axiology and ethics of Navya Vedanta of Swamiji are presented.

Metaphysics of Navya Vedanta of Swamiji

According to Advaita philosophy 'Brahma' is the fundamental element of this nature and it is the only creator and due factor of this universe. Logic of followers of Vedanta is, the way like spider build its own web and the material for making web secretes from inside, in the same way Brahma creates this universe and is only due factor of it. Swami Vivekananda accepted this truth. According to this theory, all gross materials and small souls of this world are fraction of Brahma i.e. Divine. In other words, this whole world is full of Brahma. Question rise is what the pattern of Brahma is. According to Advaita followers, Brahma is that power which does not have any pattern; it is shapeless, omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. With the combination of Maya, this Brahma wears form of shaped Brahma (God). This gross sense-accepted world and its all materials are also its shaped form.

In relation with soul, Swamiji was agreed with the opinion of followers of Advaita. According to him all souls are fraction of Divine and just like Divine, these are also eternal and infinite, so there is not any question of its birth or death. According to Advaita, all other materials of this world are also fraction of Brahma i.e. Divine there is only difference in soul and other materials that soul is omnipresent and omniscient and it has the property of understanding and obtaining its true form of Divine, while other material does not have these property. According to this principle until soul recognize its true form of Divine and does not achieve it, till then it enters one body to another and when it recognize its true form and achieve it then it is free from life. Swamiji called it only salvation.

Vivekananda considered human as combination of body, mind and soul and considered that human life has two aspects—one is Physical and second is Spiritual. He emphasized to develop both physical and spiritual aspects of human. His statement was until human is not free from physical weakness, ignorance and

political slavery, he cannot step forward towards spiritual freedom. In relation with human development Swami Vivekananda view was so broad. He considered Indian knowledge and actions are needed for spiritual development of human and considered western knowledge, science and technology are needed for its physical and economic growth. Today knowledge is not limited to any country's boundary, today there is globalization in the field of knowledge.

Epistemology and Logic of Navya Vedanta of Vivekananda

Swamiji divided knowledge into two divisions – physical knowledge and spiritual knowledge. Under the physical knowledge, he keeps the knowledge of materialistic world (all materials and actions of it) and under the spiritual knowledge, he keeps the knowledge of astral world (Divine, soul and spirits) and kept the knowledge to achieve resource rout of knowledge of astral world (Gyan Yoga, Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Raj Yoga). According to Shankar, exponent of Vedanta, knowledge of materialistic world is the unreal knowledge and knowledge of astral world is real knowledge, but Vivekananda considered materialistic world and astral world both of knowledge as real knowledge. His logic is that this materialistic world is made by Brahma from Brahma and Brahma is real then this world must be real. How unreal can be originated from the real. So its knowledge is also comes under real knowledge. As far as the means of obtaining the mode of achieving knowledge, in this regards Swamiji's opinions are clear. According to him, there is direct method and practical method for obtaining knowledge of materialistic world and knowledge of astral world obtained through Satsanga, self-study and Yoga. He considered Yoga is the best method for obtaining any kind of knowledge (knowledge of materialistic world or astral world).

Axiology and Ethics of Navya Vedanta of Vivekananda

Swamiji considered human is the wearer of the soul and was agreed with this statement of Shankar that the ultimate objective of human life is to get salvation, to get rid of visit in this world, to dissolve the soul in to Divine; but he considered this materialistic world and human life in it as real so he forced to be free it from physical weakness, mental slavery, lack of economy and feeling of inferiority in materialistic world. He preaches to mankind for this both kind of freedom, to be studious, intelligent and hardworking and preached for Satsanga, devotion and Yoga (Gyan Yoga, Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Raj Yoga).

In relation with the ethics of human, clear opinion of Swamiji is that human should always follow the truth and serve to the poor's. He considered truth and service as fundamental values of life. In his own terms, the real is that by which both physical and spiritual kinds of benefits occurs and unreal is that by which physical or spiritual any kind of harm occurs. Swamiji considered human as a temple of God and considered service to human is supreme religion. In his terms, human should be pure from mind, speech and work, he should earn his livelihood with honesty, serve to poor's and thus make our self able to do Yoga practice through pure and undefiled and then should do self-realization through any of the Yoga rout (Gyan, Karma, Bhakti or Raj). He supported seven steps for Yoga practice—Shama-Dama, Titiksha, Uparati, Shraddha, Samadhaan, Mumukshatva and Nityanitya Viveka rout.

Educational Thought of Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda was scholar of Indian philosophy and patron of Advaita Vedanta. He is famous for giving practical form to Vedanta. His philosophic views can be read theoretically in the books written by him and practically it can be seen in the public welfare of Ramkrishna Mission. Swamiji was much concern about two things, darkness and poverty of country people and he forced to need of education to remove it. He himself and his companions were not involved in promotion of Vedanta only; he contributed a lot in promotion and spreading the public education. He will be remembered always for giving Indian pattern to Indian education. Sequential description of his education thoughts are presented here—

Concept and Meaning of Education

Swamiji wanted human to make ready for terrestrial and extraterrestrial both of lives through education. He had faith that until we are not rich and happy in physical terms, till then knowledge, deeds, devotion and Yoga; these are imaginary things. He gave slogan in terrestrial terms—**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.** He called it Man Making Education. But he considered ultimate objective of the life is to feel the inside hidden soul. In terms of extraterrestrial he declared that—**Education is manifestation of perfection already present in man.** In his terms, the education can do both of works, is the true education. He called it **Complete Education.**

Objectives of Education

Swami Vivekananda considered human's physical and spiritual, both of forms as real, as truth, so he forced to develop both of the aspects of human. In his terms, there should be physical and spiritual, both kind of human development take place. The education which does both of works, he called it Complete Education. For this, Swamiji forced on that objectives of education, we can sequent those in the following way—

1. Physical Growth—

Swamiji believed healthy body is necessary for both, physical body protection and fulfilments of its need and self-realization. In physical terms he told that this time we need those strong persons who have iron like muscles and steel like tendons. For self-realization he told Gyan Yoga, Karm yoga, Bhakti Yoga or Raj Yoga is necessary and cleared the necessity of healthy body for any kind of Yoga practice. In his view, physical growth of human should be done first of all.

2. Mental and Intellectual Growth—

Swamiji said the reason of backwardness of India is its intellectual backwardness and forced on that we should go for mental and Intellectual growth of our children and for this they should be introduced to the national and international knowledge and science, where and what good knowledge is available, it should be achieved and should be given ability of standing with the confidence in the world.

3. Developing the feeling of Social Service—

Swamiji told in clear words that meaning of literacy is not to bless our self only, after literacy; human should work for human welfare. He saw the poverty of Indian public through his own eyes. He wish that literate and rich people serve the poor's and try to raise them. His meaning from social service was not with the kindness or donation, his meaning from social service was with the helping to raise the poor's, they will rise themselves only. He wanted to gather a team of social workers through education. In spiritual terms also he was giving big importance to the social service. He considered human as temple of God and considered service to it as service to God.

4. Moral and Ethical Growth—

Swamiji felt this thing that human should be character-full along with the healthy from the body, developed from intelligence and strong from the economy. Character only makes human honest and dutiful. So he forced on moral and ethical development of human

also through education. His meaning from morality was with both the social morality and religious morality and meaning from ethical development was with that will power which help human to follow the right rout, to stop him from following wrong rout. His faith was that any of these moral and character-full human can lead further the society or the nation, can rise up.

5. Occupational Growth—

Swamiji closely saw the poor public of India; saw their peeping bones demanding for bread, cloth and house. Also he saw the luxurious life of western countries and he reached on this result that those countries get this physical luxury through knowledge and science and development and use of technologies. So he declared that life cannot be run through blank spiritual principles, we should come forward in every field of work. For this he forced to train human in production, industrial work and other occupation through education.

6. Development of national unity and cosmopolitanism—

Our country was under British at the time of Swamiji, we were dependent. Swamiji felt that dependency give birth to inferiority and inferiority is the biggest cause of our all sorrows. So when he returned from America, he called youngsters after step in on Indian land – ‘Your very first work should be made country free and whatever has to sacrifice for it should be ready for that.’ He forced on necessity of that education system at that time which rise national consciousness in natives, making them unite to fighting for the freedom of country. But he was not promoter of narrow nationality, he meet divine only in all human and believed cosmopolitanism in this view.

7. Religious Education and Spiritual Development—

Swamiji forced similarly for development of physical and spiritual both the aspects of human through education. His clear opinion was that physical growth of human should be on the background of Spirituality and spiritual growth should be on the basis of physical growth, it is possible only when human follow the religion. Swamiji took the religion in the broad way. In his term, religion is that which teaches us to love and save us from malice, insist us in the service of manhood and protect us from the exploitation of human and helpful in our physical and spiritual both kind of development. Swamiji forced to provide this kind of religious education from the beginning. In his term, all these properties are present in our Adwaita Vedanta Religion; it makes feeling of unity in the world and teaches love to all. It is the universal religion. In his terms, other religions of this world are also giving somewhat same kind of education but among these religion, our Indian Vedanta Religion is the best. So we should give its education from the beginning.

Also for achieving the ultimate objective of life, from the beginning we should orient the children towards Gyan Yoga, Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga or Raj Yoga. In his terms, real education is that only which make ready human to live physical life and to achieve spiritual salvation.

Other Aspects of Education

1. **Public Education**—As far as the concern is of public education, female education, occupational education, religious education and national education; Swamiji guided us in all these areas. His view was so broad in context of public education; he wanted to see all children, youth, elders and veterans of India as literate, wanted to make them able to live normal life and wanted to make them expert to earn their food. These views of him gave us inspiration for making arrangements of general, compulsory and free education and adult education both.

2. **Women Education**—There is not two opinions that Swamiji saved Indian culture and respect by giving respect woman in the form of Mother-Power and emphasis on women's education is our big favour but his views in context of women education that they should be made perfect housewife, perfect mothers and perfect teachers only, will be said narrow only. Today also his rejection for co-education is the subject of criticism.

3. **Occupational Education**—Making arrangements for occupational education and emphasize on giving space to education of western science and technology, for removing the poverty of our country, is indicative of his broad mind and comprehensive approach. Today through this education, we are on a path of growth.

4. **Religious Education**—Swamiji considered Vedanta as universal religion and emphasize on its compulsory education. In this age today, people are not in favour of any specific religious philosophy education but surely in the favour of education of religious morals widely.

5. **National Education**—As far as the thing is of national education, Swamiji could not create its outline, but he emphasized that it should be like that, by which nation grow and raise up in physical and spiritual both views.

- Next content will be on further points related to **Swami Vivekananda**.

Check your progress:

- Write your own view point on Educational Thought of Swami Vivekananda.

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