



Rethinking the Indian Education System which is Shown by Swami Dayananda in His Theory of Education

Dr. Dyuti Yajnik
Associate Professor,
Dept. of Philosophy,
Gujarat University,
Ahmedabad, Gujarat (India)

In this paper it is observed that there should be a synthesis of all prevailing as well as ideally thought education systems. For this purpose, the book by Yogendra K. Sharma 'The Doctrines of the Great Indian Educators' is taken as a basic book for the research and further some websites are being used for the evaluation.

Broadly analyzing, our personality is comprises of basic three elements – Thinking, Feeling and Willing and accordingly there are three Yoga in Geeta – Jnanayoga, Bhaktiyoga and Karmayoga. As it is said that "Dharmo hi tesham adhiko vishesho – that is Dharma (duty as well as religion) is for human being only, it becomes necessary to develop our humanhood by developing these three basic traits of personality. Education is supposed to do the job. But in this paper I concluded with the thought that all systems of education had develop the skills and ability to earn but somehow lacks the teaching and learning of the basic metaphysics of religions and moral values and thereby lacks the feeling of peaceful coexistence with universal brotherhood. We are fail to produce a real 'Humans' and rather produced 'Human Resources'! The need for the day is to develop a synthesized form of education which include traditional as well as modern pattern. Therefore, in this paper these forms are discussed with holistic view.

Indian Education System in Vaitic Time

Looking the Indian system of education in this light, first we will elaborate which subjects were supposed to teach to the students in Indian traditional education system. There were 64 Kalas and 14 Vidyas. 64 Kalas are related to the Art and sculpture ect. We are here mentioning only 14 vidyas. They are as under:

64 arts (64 forms of art) and 14 Vidyas (Techniques) 14 Vidyas (Techniques) consists of the following subjects:

- (1) 4 Vedas (Rigveda, Samaveda, Yajurveda and Atharvaveda)
- (2) 4 Upaveda (Abodes of Knowledge) (Arthashastra, Dhanurveda, Gandharvaveda, Ayurveda)
- (3) 6 Vedanga (Shiksha-phonetics..., Kalpa-rituals, Vyakaran, Nirukt-etymology, Chhanda, Jyotish)

Education According to Swami Dayananda (1824-1883) – Re-establishing Vaidic Tradition

According to Swami Dayanand, education imparts true and real knowledge about matter, self-development and welfare of all living beings. In this way, according to Swamijee, education is a supreme and most important moral process for the development of mankind. Swami Dayanand says—"A man without education is only a man in name. It is a bounden duty of a man to get education, become virtuous, be free from malice and preach for the well-being of people advancing the cause of righteousness."

Swami Dayanand began to preach the gospel of Vedic culture and civilization and gave the clarion call to the masses of India to return to Vedic scholarship and Vedic life of peace and happiness. To retrieve the Hindus from the religious, social, educational and cultural stagnation and slow decay, he preached education of the masses, both males and females according to Vedic learning and Vedic knowledge. Swami Dayanand, in a nutshell, was the great teacher, guide, social reformer and a true saviour of Hindus. His mantra was 'Back to Vedas'.

His Stand on Education

Before we begin to study Swami Dayananda's views on education in detail, it will be helpful to mention here in brief the points that he specially emphasised in the education of boys and girls. In their education, amongst other things, he laid stress on parents' role, religious and moral training, chastity and Brahmacharya (celibacy), personal hygiene, the study of Vedas, Upavedas, Vedant, Shastras and Upanishads, fatherly relation between the teacher and the student, abandonment of foreign language in favour of the mother-tongue as the medium of education, State responsibility for education from the primary to the highest stage, location of schools and colleges amidst natural surroundings away from the allurements of city life. There can be no denying that he, as a true emancipator, looked at all the aspects of human life and considered education as a true remedy for many social evils.



Dayananda on Basic Principles of Education

The fundamental principles of education as preached by Swami Dayanand are given below:

1. Mother should be careful about the informal education of the child from the very stage of conception.
2. Before and after conception, parents should not use wine or other intoxicating things.
3. Parents should take pure food items and keep pious thoughts in their minds.
4. The early education of the child should be conducted by parents. 61
5. Parents should teach the child social courtesy and sweet behaviour.
6. The supreme mantra 'Gayatri' should be taught to the child after the age of five and it should be learnt by him by heart.
7. Parents should be careful about right knowledge, good company and control of senses by the child while educating him.
8. Education should be based on Ashram and Dharam.
9. Formal education of the child should be after the sacred thread wearing ceremony (Upanayan Samskar).
10. At the age of eight, boys and girls should be sent to schools.
11. There should be separate schools for boys and girls.
12. Schools should be located about five miles far from the town in a healthy and attractive surroundings enjoying seclusion also.
13. Schools should be based on philosophy of life.
14. All sections and castes of society should receive education. In other words, education should be made compulsory for all.
15. During the period of educational discipleship, absolute Brahmacharya should be practised by the child and all desires of worldly enjoyment should be discouraged.
16. Children should receive a balanced diet suited to their physical requirements.
17. While awarding punishment to a child, parents and teachers should not be swayed by passions of jealousy and envy.
18. Education should be logical and inculcate reasoning and argumentation.
19. Teacher-pupil relationship should be similar to those of ancient times.
20. In the curriculum Vedic literature, Vedant, Upnishads and other religious literature based upon sound reason and Vedic philosophy, should be included.

Aims of Education

According to Swami Dayanand, the following are the aims of education : 62

1. Self-realization.
2. Revival of Vedic Religion and Culture.
3. Physical Development. He believed that—"Brahmacharya, if well observed, conduces to strength of body, mind and soul."
4. Mental Development.
5. Moral Development. In 'Wit and Wisdom' Swami Dayanand writes—"Our only object is that mankind may progress and prosper, man may know what truth is, they may forsake untruth and accept truth."
6. Formation of Ideal Character.

The Scheme of Studies

Swami Dayananda's philosophy of education deplored the existing Indian education which attended to the training of intellect alone and ignored the physical, emotional, moral and 65 spiritual aspects of the students life. He said such education can never build the personality of the child, it makes him self-oriented and careless of the welfare of the nation as a whole. This neglects religion and morality and hamper development of self-respect, character, public spirit and straightforward and upright behaviour, therefore, he pleaded for all sided development of the child through education, through his scheme of studies as given below :

1. Swami Dayananda recommends that first of all the children should be taught Panini's phonetics.
2. After phonetics, the children should be taught grammar which includes Astadhyayi, Dhatupath (Book of roots), Ganapath (Book of groups); Unadikosh (Book of prefixes and suffixes, etc.), Mahabhasya (Exposition of the above four books of Panini and Patanjali). The study of grammar may be learnt in three years.
3. After grammar, the students should read Nighantu and Nirukta (Books of Vedic Vocabulary and Philology) written by Yask. This study should not take more than six to eight months.
4. Thereafter, the students should study Channdograntha (Prosody) by Pingal in order to learn the rules that govern poetry. This study may be finished within four months.
5. Then the students should study Manusmriti, Valmiki Ramayana, Vidurniti, and the like selections from the Mahabharat in order to get rid of evil habits and become cultured. This study should not take more than a year.
6. Then the students should study six Sastras (erroneously known as the six schools of Philosophy) with the expositions of Risis—the great ancient seers. But before studying the Vedanta Sastras, students should learn the ten Upanisads. The study of all these books should be finished within two years.



7. After that, the students should study the four Vedas together with their four Brahmanas. Proper attention must be paid to accents and meanings, both theoretically and practically. This study should be finished within six years.
8. After the study of the Vedas, the students should study the Upavedas (or sub-Vedas) which are four in number, viz., yurveda (medical science), Dhanurveda (the science of Government), Gandharva Veda (the science of music), Artha Veda (the science and practice of mechanical arts).

Thus, Swami Dayananda wants the student to learn the nature and properties of all substances both theoretically and practically.

9. After the study of the Upavedas, Swami Dayananda wants the student to learn Jyotisha Shastra, which should consist of arithmetic, algebra, geometry, geography, geology and astronomy. The students should also have all types of practical training in these sciences. Swami Dayananda urges both the teachers and students to master all the sciences and arts in twenty or twenty-one years in order to become cultured for leading a happy life.

Swami Dayananda advises that both the teachers and the students should try to avoid any hindrance that comes up in the way of acquiring knowledge, viz., company of wicked persons, forming bad habits, child marriage, want of perfect Brahmacharya, indifference of rulers, parents and learned persons for the dissemination of knowledge, overeating, etc.

He remarks that those people of India who are involved in such false and wicked practices are devoid of the advantages of Brahmacharya and education.

He also attacks the sectarian selfish Brahmanas of his day because of their false teachings and attempt to keep the Kshatriyas and other classes illiterate in order to retain their selfish grip over them intact.

He emphasises that it is the duty of both the rulers and the ruled to see that these hindrances are removed in order to enable the male and female students of all classes to acquire the necessary and right knowledge of truth and religion.

Dayananda and Women Education

From the foregoing account it is clear that Swami Dayananda was in favour of women education. He asserts that nowhere in the Vedas it is mentioned that the women are not qualified to study the Vedas. He believes that both men and women have equal right to education. He quotes from the Atharva Veda to prove that girls should also practise Brahmacharya and receive education. He says that for conducting the affairs of the state, the administration of justice, the duties of married life both the men and women should be educated. He recommends the Brahmana and Kshatriya women to acquire all kinds of knowledge; Vaisya women to learn trade and some practical arts; and the Sudra women, the art of cooking etc. As the men should acquire the knowledge of grammar, Dharma and their profession, similarly women should learn grammar, Dharma, medical science, mathematics and the practical arts at least—which are very necessary for them for ascertaining truth, proper behaviour towards their husbands and other persons, reproducing, up-bringing and instruction of their children, and proper managing of domestic affairs. Therefore, Swami Dayananda has all praise for those parents who do their best in making their both sons and daughters practise Brahmacharya, acquire knowledge and perfect their character in all respects.

Dayananda on Co-education

Swami Dayananda is against co-education. He, therefore, lays down that the boys' schools should be at least two 'Kosas' (four miles) away from those of girls. He suggests that only men teachers and men servants should be allowed in a boys' school and women teachers and maid servants in girls' schools. No boy above the age of five years should be allowed in a girls' school and vice-versa.

Thus, Swami Dayananda is not in favour of any contact between the opposite sexes during the period of school-life. Swami Dayananda gives an answer to the question of coeducation. One can easily charge him of unnaturalness when he thus excludes the opposite sex from the life of a student—whether male or female. Its seriousness becomes all the more greater when it is noted that a student is not permitted to go home or go into the outside world for the entire period of his education. It might be mentioned against Swami Dayananda that he has placed so much emphasis on sexual exclusiveness as to show that he was unduly obsessed with sex.

Dayananda on Education for Masses

Dayanandaji was a very strong advocate of mass education. He advocated that knowledge of God and universe distinguishes human beings from beasts and for gaining knowledge he has to be educated. He said that God has endowed human beings with tongues and ears without any consideration of his cast, therefore, every human being has the right of universal education. He said: "... all persons should read and hear the Vedas, increase their knowledge, accept good things, quit bad habits' and be happy." He asks "Does not God want to do good to the Sudras?" He says "Had God designed to prohibit teaching in the case of Sudras, he should not have endowed them with tongues and ears. Just as God has made the earth, water, fire and air, the moon, the sun and other objects for all, similarly he has revealed the Vedas, too, for all.



Conclusion

There may not be any originality in Swami Dayananda's thoughts, ideals and principles of education. The reason of this is that his main emphasis was on Vedic Philosophy. By his teachings and preaching about Vedic ideals and cultural values, he could save the misled Hindus from decay and downfall as Swami Vivekanada said. He advocated the necessity of mass and compulsory education for all irrespective of caste, creed and sex. Ravindra Nath Tagore writes about Swami Dayananda "Swami Dayananda preached and worked for vigorous awakening of our mind that could strive for a harmonious adjustment with the progressive spirit of the modern age and at the same time keep in perfect touch with the glorious past of India."

In short, human personality is comprises of three elements – Thinking, Feeling and Willing, and if we develop such education system which can develop these three in as many as people by synthesizing Indian as well as western and traditional as well as modern education policies, then wisdom will prevail. In other words, if we combine the Plato's Ideal of Education with the Vaidic Ideal of Education, we can have what Shri Aurobindo called "A Gnostic Society" where the major population will be of 'wise' citizens and other will faithfully obey these 'wise citizens'.

REFERENCES

1. Yogendra K. Sharma, *The Doctrines of the Great Indian Educators*, Kanishka Publishers-Distributors, 4697/5-21 A, Ansari Road, Daryaganj New Delhi-110002. ISBN 81-7391-505-9 2002
2. Altekar, A.S.—*Education in India*, Varanasi, Nawal Kishore&Bros., 1957.
3. Mayer Frederick—*A History of Educational Thought* (chapter 4), OHIO Charles E. Merrill Books.
4. Munshi, K.M.—*Foundations of Indian Culture*, Bombay, Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan, 1962.
5. Radha Kumud Mukherji—*Ancient Indian Education*, Delhi, Motilal, Banarsidas, 1951.
6. Saiyidin, K.G.—*The Humanist Tradition in Indian Educational Thought*, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1960.
7. Sharma, R.N.—*Philosophy of Education*, Delhi, Atlantic, 1996. Sharma, R.N.—*Problems of Education*, Delhi, Atlantic, 1996.
8. Sharma, Y.K.—*History and Problems of Education*, Vols. I&II, New Delhi, Kanishka Publishers, Distributors, 2001.
9. Bawa, Chhajju Singh—*The Teaching of the Arya Samaj*, Lahore, 1908.
10. Bawa, Chhajju Singh—*The Life and Teachings of Swami Dayananda Saraswati*, Lahore, 1923.
11. Farquhar—*Modern Religious Moments in India*, pp. 101-129, New York, 1915.
12. Satya Prakash—*A Critical Study of Philosophy of Dayananda*, Vedic Pustakalaya, Ajmer, 1938.
13. Article shared by Senthil Kumar