



## Educational philosophy of Swami Dayanand Saraswati

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### Abstract

In fast moving world, the ethical and cultural values have their own status and goodwill. No doubt, humans have become materialistic and selfish in attaining personal gains and benefits ousting the social and national. This too much personalization leads to secluded and alienated world where the death, decay and destruction are in abundance. On the other hand, If one loves humanity as fraternity, will surely connect to his roots, family, region and nation. This will develop him a better understanding of the world wide happenings and connecting with natural aspects of life also. All these aspects will generate a strong character with strengthened mind set to handle any situation or circumstances. Ethical values, political motivation, social strength, cultural heritage and educational advancements will develop into a coherent whole, a strong identity.

**Keywords:** cultural values, materialism, alienation, fraternity, nature, humanism, character, education, identity

### Introduction

Thomas Carlyle once said that great men are the fire pillars in this dark pilgrimage of mankind. The nineteenth century was a period of darkness in the cultural social and religious history of India. There was a high degree of decay, degradation and disintegration in cultural social and religious field. Ignorance, corruption, exploitation, discrimination, inequality of opportunity, unequal and social and economic status and adulteration and distortion of knowledge and religion were so much rampant that the Indian society-particularly the Hindu society lived in a state of intense darkness. Great men like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Keshav Chandra Sen, Dayanand Saraswati, Ram Krishan Paranhans, Swami Vivekanand and Annie Beasant came up on the social, cultural, religious scenes to light the path of darkness. Amongst these luminaries Swami Dayanand was perhaps the brightest. Sitaram says that „he has done more for the social, moral and intellectual uplift of the country than all other reformers put together.

Romain Rolland has evaluated Swami Dayanand 's role in the cultural regeneration, social uplift and religious reconstruction very highly. He described him as“ a ruthless critic of all who, according to him, had falsified or profaned the true Vedic religion. He was a Luther Fighting against his own misled and body of India his own Formidable energy, his certainty, his lion’s blood. He set the example of a complete clearance of all the hatched blows.

Shri Aurobindo Ghose called Dayanand a formidable Artisian in God’s workshop, a very good soldier of light, a warrior in God’s world, a sculptor a men and institutions, a bold and rugged Victor of the difficulties which matter presents of spirit.

Swami Dayanand and the Arya Samaj founded by him went further than the Brahma Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, the Theosophical society and the later of ventures like the Rama Krishan Mission in their efforts to bring about the social renaissance, Reflecting India aspirations, and strove hard to restore high values and land a perspective to the Gurukul system, Brahmacharya, Morality, spirituality, simple living

and high thinking, nationalism and National consciousness, equality of educational opportunity, social service and emotional and national integration.

Of all the socio-religious revival movements of the nineteenth century in India perhaps of Arya Samaj contributed the most to Indian education. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Arya Samaj was perhaps the most powerful national movement.

It was a very potent weapon for developing nationalism. But for the Arya Samaj, India’s awaking in social, religious and cultural fields would not have occurred.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati founder of Arya Samaj as a great scholar of sanskrit and he propounded his educational philosophy on third seventh and eighth chapter of his book “Satyarth Prakash”. Some piece meals of his educational philosophy are found in “Bivhar Banu” and many other books written by him. No doubt much of the work has been done on the Arya Samaj, the educational role of Arya Samaj and the other socio-religious activities of the Arya Samaj. Some important books on Arya Samaj and Swami Dayanand are written by Jones, W. Kenneth, The Arya Samaj in Punjab. A study of social and religious Revivalism, 1877-1902, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, (University of California, Berkeley, 1996). Bhadurmal, Swami Dayanand and his teachings (Sholapur Dayanand college 1956), Safaya Raghunath and D. Bhan, Educational Philosophy of Swami Dayanand (Ambala, 1977). Bawa Chhaju Singh, life and teaching of Swami Dayanand (New Delhi, 1971) etc.

But there is a dearth of the research work on the Gurukula system of education which was a revolt against the existing governmental educational system and the syllabus adopted in the D.A.V institutions. Mahatama Munshi Ram later on known as Swami Sharaddhan and revolted against the existing system of education in 1893. He thought of establishing the Gurukula based on the ancient system of education as propagated by Swami Dayanand Saraswati. In 1902 he succeeded in establishing Gurukula at Kangari

village near Haridwar. Now these days this is the premier institution of the area. In this dissertation efforts have been made to trace its inception and development along with its system of education.

### **Educational Philosophy of Swami Dayanand**

Swami Dayanand was a multi-dimensional personality. He was a born leader—a giant among men. He not only initiated a socio-religious movement that strengthened the vitals of decadent India society but had also propounded an educational philosophy which was unique in its content, structure and organization. He was a scholar of Sanskrit per excellence. To quote Madame Blavatsky, "India never saw a more learned Sanskrit scholar a deeper metaphysician a more wonderful denunciator of any evil than Dayanand since the time of Sankaracharya."<sup>[1]</sup>

Swami Dayanand a distinguished scholar was himself the product of India Ancient Gurushishya or teacher disciple tradition of Gurukul education, this system of education was based on the principle of Brahmacharya. His first concern therefore was to revive the glorious heritage of learning and Scholarship."<sup>[2]</sup>

In the educational philosophy of Swami Dayanand Vedas hold the top most place. His mind had received more nourishment from the Vedas than his body had from mother's milk. He was so much impressed by the wisdom and knowledge embodied in Vedas that he declared go back to the wisdom and knowledge embodied in Vedas that he declared go back to the eternal springs of Vedas they shall stake thy thirst for knowledge.

Swami Dayanand was of the view that the prevailing system of education had led the Indians to forget their origin and their civilization from which other civilizations of the world had derived and enriched their lot.

### **Satyarath Parkash and early education of children**

The third chapter of Satayarath Parkash (light of Truth) written by Swami Dayanand deals exclusively with his educational philosophy.<sup>[4]</sup> He was of the view that the best gift of love and affection to children were not expensive clothes or ornaments of gold but education which would equip them for a moral and a practical life. The educational philosophy embodied in the third chapter of Satyarath Parkash is based on the emphasis on the study of Vedas. It is also because of this that he laid emphasis on the study were the lucky ones. In the own word, "Blessed the man and woman whose mind are centered on the acquisition of knowledge who possess sweet and amiable temper, who cultivate truthfulness and similar virtues who are free from vanity and uncleanness, who enlighten the mind of those who are in ignorance whose chief delight consist in promoting the happiness of others by the preaching of truth by generous distribution of knowledge without fee or reward and who are engage in altruistic work as prescribed by Vedas,"<sup>[5]</sup>

Dayanand Saraswati also enjoyed upon the state to ensure that parents send their children to school. In Satayarath Parkash he has stated that it was the duty of the king to arrange that girls and boys should practice Brahmacharya, and receive education. The recalcitrant parents should be penalized. Nobody should be allowed under the state rule to keep his daughter or son at home after the age of eight years. Swami Dayanand was not in favor of co-education. No specific reason has been given about it. It seems that he

most probably did not want co-educational institutions as these must have been a great threat to Brahmacharya, which is very important during studentship. Other reasons could be the orthodoxy of times.

As per the scheme of education laid down by Swami Dayanand for children in the third chapter of Satayarath Parkash during the first five years the child has to live completely under the training of his mother. The mother should develop his character and refine the manners of the child has to be laid on the training of speech.<sup>[7]</sup> The mother should develop his character and refine the manners of the child stress has to laid on the training of speech when the child begins to speak his mother should see that he uses his tongue properly, the letters, syllabus, words, conjoined words and stops should be taught mother tongue. At the age of five the child should also be taught the Sanskrit alphabets as well as alphabets of foreign languages. Thus at an early age it would be possible for the child to get acquainted with three languages mother languages Sanskrit and a foreign language.<sup>[8]</sup>

### **Schooling age of boys and girls**

Boys and girls when they attain to the age 8 of years should be sent to their respective school. It should be the compulsory duty of the parent to be sent their children to school.<sup>[9]</sup> Swami Dayanand advocated that boys and girls should be sent to the different school. The boy should be at least at a three miles distant from that of the girls school. The tutors and other employees such as servant in the boy school should be all the male sex and in the girls school of the female sex. Not even a child of five years of the opposite sex should be allowed to enter the school.<sup>[10]</sup> The boys till the age of 24 and girls till the age of 16 should continue to spend a Brahmacharya life.

### **Relation Between teacher and taught**

The relationship between the teacher and taught should be personal. All the students should be treated on equal footing. All the scholars should be treated alike in matter of food, drink, dress, seats, etc. Be they princes and princess, or the children of baggers all should practice asceticism.<sup>[11]</sup> By adopting this scheme he wanted to remove the cast system. In this scheme of education Swami Dayanand assigned heavy responsibilities to the teachers. He held teachers responsible for the physical moral spiritual and intellectual Development of the Student. According to swami Dayanand the teachers should instruct their pupils in this way. "My children Always speak the truth lead a virtuous life abstain from sexual indulgence never be negligent in learning and teaching devote yourselves to sciences (Physical and spiritual) till your Knowledge is perfect then procure for your preceptor anything that he needs. Then for go and get married. Never be in different to the truth and religion. Never neglect your health of the cultivation of any skill or talent you may possess. Never be indifferent to the acquisition of wealth power etc. Never neglect your studies."<sup>[12]</sup> He further suggested teachers to instruct their pupils to never neglect to serve your father mother and all preachers of true religions.

About the qualities of a teacher he wrote that a good teacher is he who is never idle nor lazy nor affected by pleasure or pain profit or loss honour or dishonour public applause or censure, and has always firm faith in dharma, and cannot be tempted by sensual objects.<sup>[13]</sup>

### Aims of education

After discussing the relations between teacher and taught and qualities of a good teacher Swami Dayanand discussed about the different aims of education. According to him education is a purposeful activity. It is undertaken by the educator and the educand. It is necessary for Society. The primary aim of education is to develop the ordinary human being into an ideal man. The various aims of education laid down by Swami Dayanand are as follows:-

The first aim of education as discussed by him is the spiritual development. At home the education to the child should be imparted from spiritual point of view. In his own words the first Upnayam ceremony should be performed at home and the second in the school. Parents as well as the tutors should teach Gayatri Mantra to the children with its meanings. After they have learnt the above Mantra with its meanings the should be taught the method of Divine worship with its preliminaries and accessories as Bathing, Achamaha and Pranayama.

The second aim of education described by Swami Dayanand is the character formation. He laid special emphasis on the character of the students. This depends upon the teachers to advise the students to avoid bad habits. Swami Dayanand expressed that the character of the students could be formed first the lap of the mother and second by teacher in the school. The Vedas could help teachers in this work. In his own words," Character or righteous living as taught by Vedas as well as smirities in conformity with the Vedas is the highest virtue.... Let a man therefore always walk in the path of righteousness He alone enjoy, true happiness who acquires knowledge and leads a righteous life." [14]

Lastly Swami Dayanand advocated knowledge as an aim of education. According to him the parents and teachers should teach children that the aim of education was not only to get higher jobs in offices, but also was to have all round knowledge for the success of life. Swami Dayanand define in brief the meaning the knowledge. According to him," The correct knowledge or the knowledge of a thing as it exists is called Vidya of knowledge." [15] In other words, the knowledge the consist of knowing a thing exactly as it is nescience consist in knowing a thing differently from what is it.

In nut shall Swami Dayanand considere education necessary for mental and spiritual development of pupils. It is also necessary for the preparation of life so it is the duty of the state and the parents to send the children to school. According to Swami Dayanand it is the duty first the mother and then the father to always guide their children so as make them cultured and civilized individuals of high moral character. [16]

Whereas swami Dayanand made to realize the parent their duty to send children to school and duty of teachers to teach pupils he also laid down some duties of students toward their parent and their teachers. The student should never neglect to serve their parents and teacher they should always act upon their advise.

### Education of woman and shudars

Swami Dayanand was of the view that education should be imparted not only to the Brahmanas, but the princess kshatriyas, vaishyas and shudars also.

In other words sudars have also the right of education because if right of education remained limited up to the

Brahmans then there would be no advance of knowledge about religion about government by imparting knowledge to all classes, the brahmanas could never than falsely teach and lead selfish hypocritical lives. There should be on caste distinction in imparting education it should be imparted equally to rich and poor. [17]

Swami Dayanand was not only in favour of equal right to education of Brahmanas kshatriyas, vaishyas and shudars but also was a staunch advocate of women education. He was of the view that woman should also be given higher education in the schools which should be exclusively imparted by female teachers. [18] He inspired woman to get education by giving the examples of the woman of ancient India. In his own words," the kshatriyas woman in Ancient India used to be well acquainted even with the military

Science or how could they have gone with their male relations and fought side by side with them in battle fields, as kekai did with her royal husband dasharatha". He further advised it behaves Brahman and kshatriya women to acquire all kinds of knowledge and vaishya woman to learn trade and the mechanical art of cooking etc [20]. The woman like men should learn grammar medical science mathematics and mechanical arts which are at least necessary for their married life. He was of the opinion that if the husband be well educated and woman ignorant then there would be a constant state of warfare. So the study of all above mentioned subjects was necessary for women.

### Scheme of studies

In Satyarth Prakash a detailed scheme of studies has been drawn which is very useful to know as to how Dayanand wanted the students to proceed from one step to another.

1. First of all comes phonetics by Panini. Parents and teachers should teach their children and pupils how to pronounce different letters in their right places with the right amount of effort and the right agent.
2. Then comes grammar it include Ashtadhyayi Dhatupath (book of roots )Ganapati (book of groups) Unamahabashya (exposition of the above four book ).
3. Then let them read Nighantu and Nirukta (books on vedic Vecabulary and philology) for only six to eight month. 9,
4. For next four months let them study Chhandoghantha (prosody).
5. Then they should study Manu smriti Valmiki Ramayana and Vidurniti from Mahabharat.
6. Then shastras should be taught to them.
7. After his they should study the four Vedas with their four Brahmanas with proper accent meanings
8. theoretically as well as practically.

After having full knowledge of Vedas they should study Upavedas which are four in number.

1. Ayurveda (medical science )
2. Dhanurveda (science of government )
3. Gandarva Veda (science of music).

For all this scheme of studies swami Dayanand had also recommended some books written by rishis of Ancient India.

### Medium of instructions

After the scheme of studies swami Dayanand discussed about the medium of instructions at the school level. He laid

emphasis not only on the teaching of hindi language at the primary stage, but wanted Hindi to be adopted as a medium of instruction. He advised the teachers that all the subjects to male and female pupils should be taught in Hindi language. Swami Dayanand was a forerunner of that entire educationalist who believed that foreign language as the medium of instructions was a handicap in the learning process. He wanted the children to learn mother tongue, Hindi and a foreign language. He was opposed to those who believed that Indians should not cross seas instead he wanted Indian students to go abroad for higher education, He felt that sound system of education was one which made a student feel proud of his own language proud of his nations past glory. This according to him could never be achieved if Hindi and Sanskrit were relegated to the back ground.<sup>[21]</sup>

Swami Dayanand Saraswati not only preached these ideas and ideals of education but also made efforts during his life time to put them into practice. He not only waged constant war against falsehood, ignorance and superstitions but also opened schools to dispel darkness and disseminate knowledge, no doubt the schools opened by Swami Dayanand could not flourish due to the lack of good teachers but the ideas and ideals or philosophy of education given by him proved to be of lasting value of the nation. His philosophy of education was latter on put to practice by his devoted followers and a number of educational institutions categorized as D.A.V. and GuruKulas emerged on the Indian educational scene.

### Conclusion

Swami Dayanand was a great educationalist and he revolutionized almost the entire field of education. His educational views were immensely influenced by the eternal truths of Veds. He believed in simple living and high thinking. He has given great importance to control of senses education. He strongly advocated national education on national lines and based on national cultural tradition. His great contributions in the field of education include self-knowledge, self-reliance, concentration, universal mass education, women's education, physical education, man-making education, character-building education, education through the medium of mother-tongue, religious and moral education, value education, selfless dedicated teachers etc. The teachings of Swamiji are great importance in the reorganization of our present system of education.

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