

Gender Equality in India: Ideas of Vivekananda

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Abstract :

Vivekananda is the prominent thinker of India, not only a thinker but also known by a monk, teacher, leader, mystic, philosopher also. Education for youth is the main thought of him, but with this, he always stressed upon the dignity, identity, equality of the entire individual. In all dynamics of society individual participation is the main subject and that could be possible only when equality will prevail and character formation would develop. Development is the ultimate goal of any nation and that could be achieved through the gender equality. Gender is the cultural construction of society and sex is the biological concept but both the meaning of 'sex' and 'gender' interchanged by people which would lead to misunderstood and for this equality cannot properly be explained. According to Vivekananda "There is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on only one wing" which denoted the one side of development but full development cannot be met by this. India's patriarchy use to dominate women pertain to their education, health, employment, these three basic parameters will be analyzed in this paper and also give a proper example with reference to India. In addition to this, thoughts of Vivekananda would mitigate the proper channel to gender equality which will strengthen the society like India. Vivekananda always supported girls to educate themselves on Japa, yoga, meditation, moral development, worship and also religion and science; with this support, they will enjoy their equal rights with the men. He fought for women and gave them a proper platform to enhance their personality and character. He focused on the full development of the individual.

Key Words: Education, Health, Moral Development.

Introduction:

Swami Vivekananda is the real hero of India. He is emancipated with new ideas and thoughts which makes him different from other social thinkers. He is the developer and maker of the personality of an individual. His real name is Narendranath Dutta and he was a sanyasi from a very young age, who wanted to gain knowledge which could make the world towards a betterment. He is the one, who stressed upon the overall development of the individual whether it is male or female, also he is considered as the national leader to motivate youth in terms of education, health and the opportunity to build themselves for the reconstruction of society.

Objective: This paper is going to analyse the basic ideas of Vivekananda towards the stable gender equality through the basic necessities of individual. The basic needs are the essential for any human being to live a normal life so Vivekananda stressed upon this necessity.

Methodology: The methods of this study fully depend upon the secondary sources of research and completely reviewed by the plethora of literature. In the descriptive and explanatory method, the paper will be helpful to know about the gender parity in India.

Review of Literature:

Singh (2014) Education is the key factor in which all the individual can reach to their goals. Although the expansion of the education is so broad but some lacking points their which down the impact of education. According to Vivekananda, India is not regulating the workers properly for the growth of state. On this way women education is also that much important as men's education. Vivekananda always try to stress on the proper education and right education for women and men. There are many schemes such as Mahila Samakhya Programme, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme has been organized to promote the right education for the underprivileged girls, but current Scenario not upheld to the mark which Swamiji explain about education.

Nandy and Kumar (2014) As per the view Vivekannada "The best thermometer to the progress of a nation is its treatment of its women". Enterprenurship is the the booster for the successful economy for the state. And women enterprenures are the not only develop women but also create their identity. If family can be run by women then why not state. The Govenmrnt of India said about the women enterprenuership financial interest which was 15% of the capital. Not only this Centre for Women's Business Research 2009 it was mentioned that women in the sector of enterprenurship twice fast as compare to other business. There are many obstacles and hurdels for women empowerment and the main reason behind is the gender bius and men centric business always stressed upon the men capability and their recognisation.

Banerjee and Meeta (2015) Swamiji was a social reformer and UNESCO declared him as prominent educationist of the World. He points out the education's proper definition as VEDANTA the words 'Veda' (wisdom) and 'anta' (supreme) denoted the "Supreme Wisdom". The knowledge should be pure, spiritual, he stressed upon the education for both men and women because both are the contributors of welfare for the state. Two type of Knowledge should be there: 1. Secular Knowledge is for economic development and 2. Spiritual Knowledge is for the faith within the person.

Concept of Gender Equality:

Vivekananda is the prominent leader who supports gender equality and explained it in a new and contrasting way, such concept of gender equality is explained through the soul, soul has no sex and it cannot recognizes between male and female (Manna, 2016) the cultural definition will promote the meaning of gender and sex is the biological concept so the meaning of 'gender' and 'sex' are very much dissimilar, but people always interchange the meaning that becomes muddled. Withthe addition to this, the concept of gender and gender equality always in the controversial cause of this is lack of awareness and lack of knowledge, which Vivekananda always talks about.

Vivekananda's view on women in West and India:

As per the views of Vivekananda, the women in India are very loving, caring and have the selfless love and respect towards their family. He declared women in the west are the form of womanhood rather than the motherhood of Indian women, Indian women know the chastity and the meaning of heritage while western thoughts are different from this (ibid, 2016) In western countries, women were very much self-dependent, decisive and developed but the respect and love which Indian women use to give that cannot be comparable.

History of Women:

The women are the base of any nation and that should be respected, by pertaining this Swamiji always said the only cause for the deteriorating place of women is the lack of awareness about the magic of education, they are considered as the child producing machines, for instance, his own sister Yogendrabala who committed suicide only because inadequacy of awareness (Khatun and Ahmed, 2018) at that time the situation has planned by male domination, there is no such kind of rights, they are treated as an object of house. At the

same time, they were suffering from many restrictions, the most important thing is that they had no right to get an education for themselves and that is strictly prohibited for them. Gender discrimination started from the ancient time, some of the reasons which are based upon the discrimination those are like early marriage, dowry, rape, harassment, molestation etc. these are some of the social evils which cannot be denied in terms of women subordination. Indian women are just like clay and they can be mold in any form and that men always tried to do and they mold them according to their wishes and do not give space to make themselves empower. Because of the patriarchal society, women are considered as the top priority for men but in reality, they are just a burden for them. Besides men's social reformers, also women reformers are given their best to transform the society of India, and among them, Savitribai Phule is the one who always stressed upon the education of girls and expressed to enhance their capability towards themselves. The followers of Brmahavadinis Gargi, Maitri and Sanghmitra were also with Swamiji to elaborate on the world on the concept of love, education, and self-dependence (ibid,2018)

Vivekananda's view on Overall development:

A proper identity for an individual is based upon some basic necessities which are education, sound health, and employment, and it is the myth for people that only men need this but women are equally entailed these three things. As we all know the position of women in the age of Vivekananda, for this he always told about the concept for these three things which are morally and physically stabilize.

(a) Education and Vivekananda:

“Educate your women first and leave them to themselves, then they will tell you what reformers are necessary for them.” Swamiji is very much against the way decisions are taking by their male partners, because as per his concern women are strong enough like men and they can make their own decisions. Education is the keystone for every human being, from the medieval period it is seen that women have used to given the household education and that is enough for them (Pandey and Singh, 2015) The cultures of any nation is the main source for education and India has many cultures such as Mahabharata, Ramayana, Gita, Vedas, and Upanishads and these have spiritual effect towards education which is the heritage of our Country. With Swamiji, Rabindranath Tagore, Gandhiji the top leaders also stressed upon the features of education which should be regulated all over the country, some of them are, overall development of an individual, practicing brahmacharya, mental-physical power and imparted only positive education which will give the scope to know the real face of society. At the same time, religious education also contributes to the major part of education which should be flexible for anyone, the religion does not bound anybody but to give love and respect to all. (Mondal, 2015) He established a girls school with the help of first western women sannyasin Bagini Nivedita, that school named as “Ramakrishna Sarada Mission Sister Nivedita Girls’ school” which is located in Bagabazar in North Kolkata(ibid, 2015) his main purpose is to derive gender equality among people through this education, to increase the capability, skill and enhancement among all the spheres. Boost up the mental, spiritual character is only through the right and positive education. Education is the process where all the young minds spark and both men and women are a companion to each other so both should grab the education in terms of every single sphere, whether it is the agricultural field, playground, home, workplace, etc.(Barman, 2016)

(b) Health and Vivekananda:

Swamiji is very much worried about the health of individuals, anxious more about the health of women because they are regularly taken it for granted with respect to women's health. Since ancient times it has been seen that the mortality rate of women is very high due to lack of care, lack of food, early marriage and many more. It is explained by Swamiji that women are suffered from many evils, early marriage gives the burden of child which leads to the gynecological problems which face women badly, with addition to this,

they are not taking food regularly, before husband or male member of family, girl children were not using to take proper meal that resulted to bad health and malnutrition. (Mitra, 2017) According to him, education of science is the mainstream to understand the concept of health. He focused upon the individual both men and women are the future of the nation and this can be possible with sound health, science, yoga and spiritual concept which are some of the phenomena recommended by him. Meditation for mental peace and love towards each other is the best thing that makes the human mind healthy. Yoga and meditation is the main theme which calms the mind and will make the right decisions. Indian spiritual power is the cornerstone that focuses on the health of people.

(c) Employment and Vivekananda:

As per the above discussion, health, education these two base of the individual when completed then employment is self-activating to both of them. Self-empowerment is only can achieve when both health and education will be given equally. In the respect women, it realized that during the period of Vivekananda, there is no education, no awareness has provided to women about their self-improvement, hence Swamiji always concerned and motivate them, one of example is that widow marriage is not preferred by him he used to say that women should be that much educated then they can take their decisions by their own in case of their personal matter, economical ground and other spheres also. Financial support will strengthen the position of the individual.

Conclusion: Execution of ideas in favourable and Unfavourable way:

As an above discussion, it is clear that the three parameters are the main platforms of the individual which will give the fullest upliftment to both the gender, Swami Vivekananda always supports and recommends gender equality which is necessary for the growth of every nation. He is the observer of the human mind and their fundamental needs, the beauty of their idea is that freedom for women only can accomplish through the self facilitate and make yourself with more power with education, self-motivation to do better in the economic sphere and solve your problems by yourself with full confidence. The thoughts of caste, kinship, marriage, family etc. are the obstacles to women's growth. (Sharma, 2010) But if we consider recent period, time has been changed and Vivekananda's thoughts were somehow implemented, many reformations happened, earlier girl child had to do work in the home due to the burden of the family and gender discrimination has taken a greater role but today both the individual is working for themselves, for their family and for the society as well. Gender inequality at a certain point decreased with respect to love, care, devotion. Now the women lead the house and working outside as well as helping her husband and share the burden of their particular environment financially along with emotionally (Tomar, 2011) it is the biggest tribute to Swamiji. Beyond this positive changes also there are many loopholes which society needs to understand, people need to know the real meaning of India, the cultural concept and the spiritual aspect which is ignored and focused on the western pattern of life which means both adopt westernization in terms of education, very much career-oriented but forget the moral values, disrespect towards their families, adopted nuclear family, don't believe in god, harm the health by having certain kinds of foods which are influenced by western countries, women made themselves as a commodity in digital media sector to enhance their ability and highly ambitious, hence it resulted in a position which imbalanced their life it is not about the only one gender but it is about men also, both of them influenced by this way which shapes them a human which is shaken by their mind and body. By this imbalance of life makes the society challenging which have been increasing and giving bad effects to both, such as rape cases increased, use of technology in an inappropriate way, science has brought every option which makes individual much inactive, both have no spirituality and faith of God, no one wants to learn household work, brotherhood is absent today, and supreme thing is that youth are misguided by such kind of education. Swami always followed think globally and implement locally as per the concern which suits the society. In every society, it is seen that if any evil

or the challenge is carrying out it affects both the gender so equality and the right education would make the human being a better person.

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