

Relevance of Educational Thoughts of J. Krishnamurti in the Context of Education for Peace

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Abstract

In this paper, educational thoughts of J. Krishnamurti were studied in the context of education for peace. It has been found that his thoughts are quite relevant in the reconstruction of our educational system. The philosophy and programme for peace education may be developed on this basis.

In this rapidly progressing society, we need an educational philosophy which may withstand the problems and crisis of education. The crisis has produced a series of generations of unintegrated individuals. Such individuals may be intellectual giants but due to lack of co-ordinated actions and sensitiveness, they may prove to be undesirable elements in the society. The loss of society due to development of such individuals may not be filled but it may surely be checked by bringing up a radical change in the society. This was strongly felt by

J. Krishnamurti. He gave the revolutionary idea of psychological freedom to the society and chose education for its propagation.

The prevalent crisis in the realm of human valued demands the reconstruction of our educational system. Education has not fully succeeded in achieving its desired goals. Although, man is having more knowledge and information than ever before but today he is still the most disturbed one. There has been a continuous growth in mental diseases, social unrest and

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increase in normless behaviour. Man has almost surrendered to technological progress which he himself has invented. The technological revolution with its supporting philosophies and the longed desire of establishing idealistic society resulted into a contradiction which has increased discomfort in human life. In modern world, the standards, of the right and the wrong and the urge to disregard these standards are causing conflicts within individuals. The present society is in need of appropriated attitudes, right conceptions of the end of things and a reverence of life. If education fails to develop qualities among children so as to fulfill above needs, the world would not be safe. J. Krishnamurti has successfully drawn attention of the world towards this catastrophic situation. His views indicated that education is more formative than informative. It is not synonymous to the factual knowledge; rather it has much broad sphere of influence which is concentrated on the development of vigilance.

It is said; "War are created in the minds of man" and the reason behind each and every war is the fear. Consumed by all sorts of fear, we crave for security which leads to the creation of insitutions, ideologies and orgarnised religions. These ideologies and organised religions gurantee a pseudo-security. The desire of security fosters division and antagonism among human beings. The violence prevalent in the modern society is the result of the desire of security. The root of fear, which creates a desire of society, which creates a desire of security, is the consciousness of self. The image of self keeps varying to different levels

resulting in the desire of security in different forms viz, the personal security, the religious security, the social security in the form of caste or nation, financial security in form of job or property. Thus, the man is always in conflict with himself because of a constant desire of securtiy. Krishnamurti's approach to remove fear is through awarness of self and freedom from the fear. By observing and understanding the nature of self, one can become free of the fear thus ending the requisite of security. This would lead to a better mode of personal behaviour with each other and thus eliminate any chance of struggle within ourself. Krshnamurti's thoughts are therefore, quite relevant for establishing peace.

Another endeavour towards establishment of peace is through propagating equality. Indian constitution enshrined this value in its preamble too. The present civilisation though is enjoying the fruits of scientific developments but the minds of pepole failed to keep pace with scientific advancements. The traditional fundamentalism and regimentation observed in all walks of life in the form of institutions, cults and organised religious are the reflections of the same. This has also created a scope for exploitation of those who surrendered to one or other kind of authority under the influence of fear. Krishnamurti's views are unparallel regarding the explanations of nature of fear and the ways of getting freedom from this fear and thus be preserved of being exploited.

The social upliftment of the deprived ones and the women, who were otherwise exploited because of their inherited fear of insecurity created out of caste, class, race

or sex, may be brought about by implementing thoughts of J. Krishnamurti.

Different processes of psychological adjustments observed in the day to day life can be explained in the light of self-consciousness and fear. Relevance of Krishnamurti's thoughts becomes obvious in dissecting out such behaviour and hence curing the unintegrated developments of individuals.

The basic conceptual thinking behind the educational goals is undoubtedly, affected by the advancement of science and technology the more the progress is made in science, the more the individuals has to become a rational being. The development of science and rationality proceeds side by side. The emphasis on science alone will lead to only one aspect i.e. techniques, which will result in an unbalanced thinking. The world today has reached to the verge of destruction only because of the polarised thinking. The humanists in the modern world have begun to incline science towards comforts. Efforts are made to eradicate the innate tendency to quarrel and fight. But because the individual lacks an integrated thinking, this curbing has resulted into repression. Man, being engaged into discoveries and inventions has gradually made a shift from brutal fights of colonial competitions to the competitions in the field of scientific advancements and developments. Now that the world started identifying development with the development of human resources, which means an integrated development of knowledge, skills, potentialities and capacities of all individuals in the existing society, the

pedagogical views of Krishnamurti proves to be significant which insists on the development of scientific mind blended with religious mind. The need of hour is to develop individuals with objectivity and rationality in thinking, intellectual honesty maintained in suspended judgement, open mindedness and aversal of science based or religion based superstition in thoughts. Such an individual is likely to have an ever alert mind, guarded by all kinds of conditioning. Such a person would contribute actively in the restructuring of society.

Education is facing a challenge in its philosophy and programme. The challenge is that of change, stress of worthiness and its responsibility to achieve the goals. The revolution of information has certainly affected the frontiers of knowledge. It is increasing in geometric progression. This increase in knowledge and the need of individuals both physical and psychological in accordance with industrial and social changes have laid enormous responsibility on education.

Krishnamurti created a new horizon in education by redefining its aims and objectives. Today, education aims at seeking personal gain and security, to fight for self. It is geared to industrialisation and war. Our minds are trained for the realisation of secondary values such as technical efficiency, and misery to self. Such an education must be given up. The education must be helpful in understanding the whole significance of life and living it with realisation of relationship of self with the whole of universe. Realisation of this

relationship helps in the integration of action and thoughts and promotes peace in the world. The state of realisation may be achieved when one is free from any kind of memories of 'you' and 'me' which means the mind is not occupied with biased thought of selfishness or envy. This realisation is the art of living. Thus, the aim of education should be a master the skill of art of living with the help of science of creating unoccupied mind or mind in 'leisure'.

Education, being a life process should not be confined only to academic, bookish and technical knowledge. Education must be life centered. Krishnamurti made appreciable details of such an education which is not separated from the day to day life. The education which one gets in the light of problems of life itself is more significant. The experience that education is supposed to impart must be set up by considering the life as a whole and the realisation of self must be done in the sphere of life itself. Thus, the views of Krishnamurti are significant for the right conception of education.

Development of integrated individuals through education as visualised by Krishnamurti is in accordance with the need of present society. Educands with an integrated and coordinated mode of thinking and action may bring out the desired change in the society as a whole. Synchronisation of minds enhances the brotherhood among individuals. This unity is the strength of society and helps in the formation of peace loving society. Integrated approach helps in developing interpersonal relationship with full utilisation of individual's potentialities in the progress of an educated and

enlightened society which would otherwise undergo chaos.

While enhancing the integrated development of the individuals through education, certain values are required to be developed in them. The present changing society has to be very careful in selecting the values. The values which were the pillars of social ethics in yester years are being mocked upon by the society members today. This reflects that the values were cherished with great faith earlier, have failed to win the trust of the changing society. The modern society is looking for new values to replace the older ones. The modern societies tend to incorporate values to enhance universal brotherhood, mutual cooperation irrespective of nationalities and community on humanistic grounds. Krishnamurti's suggestion to create a new values that are everlasting has been proposed timely. Right kind of education includes the search of new and relevant values in life. These values are to be identified and established in the acceptable form in the modern society.

Freedom and discipline in education were redefined by J. Krishnamurti. The concept of freedom, as given by him is of psychological freedom which is freedom from conventions, traditional thoughts, beliefs, presumption and prejudices. The crisis in modern times is due to fundamentalism, regimentation, dogmatism, conformity, standardisation and rigidity in all walks of social life. These organised and traditional forces enslave man and society. J. Krishnamurti philosophies concept of freedom to liberated man from psychological conditioning. His views about freedom are

potent enough to provide individual freedom to modern man which is his utmost necessity.

The concepts of discipline as developed by Krishnamurti are essential to erase out the memories of bad experiences on the name of order and control. His concept of discipline finds relevance with the child centered education. His strong opposition towards reward and punishment to promote the positive behaviour and to suppress the negative behaviour is a just step in the field of discipline. Indirectly, he supports the self discipline to maintain order. Krishnamurti emphasised on observation and then to reach on conclusions so as to check the misbehaviour of the individual, that too not by adopting harsh means but by talking over it with the children and other concerned people. Such a method of maintaining discipline is more relevant in school system.

The approach of Krishnamurti towards student-teacher relationship finds considerable relevance in present educational system. The distorting student-teacher relationships needs a serious thought over it and it was seriously considered by Krishnamurti. He found that the deterioration of student and teacher relationship is due to failure in realisation of their respective responsibilities not only towards each other but also towards the society. In this regard Krishnamurti emphasised a mutual co-operative relationship. Such a relationship is must for developing a healthy environment conducive for teaching and learning. Krishnamurti's idea of involving parents in formal education is a novel idea in itself. He, on

one hand has tried to make them realise of their duties and on the other hand has suggested to educate them. However, this approach of Krishnamurti finds close relationship to the objectives of adult education. The parent-teachers associations or meeting held at some public schools are steps towards the mutuals communication in the interests of child.

The fear of conformity withheld Krishnamurti to propose any new method of teaching . It is essential that an educator must not retain a strict adherence to any particular method of teaching. The method of teaching should have flexibility so that it may be employed in accordance with the demand of educational environment. The rigidity in application of teaching method in prior has a risk of making student uninterested in the teaching-learning process. This would result in nothing but an aimless, directionless education. It is required that without showing any specific affinity towards any particular method of teaching, the teacher should conduct all those activities in teaching which results in conducive environment for learning. Thus, an integrated approach towards method of teaching as suggested by Krishnamurti would be more fruitful than the traditional rote memorisation and lecture method of teaching.

It has become tendency of modern educational system to be more mechanical, acquiring knowledge scientifically and hence the tender values that are required to be generated in the children are not seen in the educands. An overemphasis on the specialisation in every field has created a new

classification of society, that of specialists, literates and illiterates. The division among them have on one hand resulted in serious problems of employment and vocations and on the other hand developed an inevitable competition among them. Literates and illiterates find themselves being cheated. Their capabilities are underestimated thus leading to an unjust distribution of work, money and status. These again are the causes of many maladjustments. The criticism of Krishnamurti on the specialisation culture of education is just as its function is to enable the educands to better adjustments not maladjustment.

The curriculum as outlined from the talks of Krishnamurti provides a large scope of vivid activities in educational programme. It provides a library for references and laboratory to get direct experience and verification of knowledge. His suggestion of classes in natural setting brings child closer to the nature and recommendations of Music, Literature and Fine arts are for the development of sensitiveness and goodness. Thus it seems that except for History all subjects find due importance in Krishnamurti's curriculum. History is left so neglected by him because he strongly opposed the presentations of those experiences to the child which do not allow him to live in present. Obviously,

History takes the child to the past. Moreover, the content of subject History is nothing other than the stories of wars and counter wars of a community, nation or civilisation. Such as subject would be a hindrance in developing universal peace and love. Such view of Krishnamurti indicates towards the ripe time of making modifications in the content of subject History if it is not to be given up totally. This would be a step towards establishment of a peaceful society.

Krishnamurti's recommendation to blend the religious and scientific mind is undoubtedly a fresh attempt towards establishment of an intelligent society with intelligent individuals. Krishnamurti's suggestion of a student council with the teachers as representative too discuss all matters relating to the well being of the whole group is noteworthy. To discuss the problem of discipline, cleanliness, food and other matters face to face in an environment of affection and love seems to be a step towards the freedom of students. He also suggested for self-government of students. This is supposed to be a preparation for self-government in latter life. The experiments of self-government partially observed in the form of students union in colleges have helped in developing a sense of healthy citizenship in future.

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