



EDUCATIONAL IDEAS OF ANNIE BESANT: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Dr. Priyanka Singh, Associate professor

K.P. Training College

(Constituent College of University of Allahabad, Prayagraj)U.P.

Abstract

Apart from her spiritual and political activities, Mrs. Annie Besant took keen interest in the reforms related to education. His contribution in this direction is indeed immense. As an educationist, Mrs Annie Besant built her ethos on simple living and high thinking. Annie Besant strongly felt that the greatness of Indian culture was being drowned out by the western mode of education. Mrs. Annie Besant considers education as the main means of achieving both immediate and ultimate goals of life. According to his opinion, along with the end, the means should also be morally strong. If the means is right, then the achievement of the end will definitely happen. Describing the means as the cause and the end as the work, he has made it clear that if the education as the reason is appropriate and sufficient, then the achievement of the end is inevitable. Mrs. Besant has also tried to build various theories related to education on the basis of her philosophy of education and has also presented ideas on various parts of education in her own way, which can be presented briefly in the following form: - In the presented research paper, The study needs to be viewed and understood from multiple points of view to reveal the potential difference not only in bringing out excellence among individuals but also between cognitive and non-cognitive aspects of education.

Keywords: Spiritual, Educational, Philosophy, Social, Goals, political

Introduction

Education is not just a matter of training the mind and not just acquiring knowledge, collecting and correlating facts, but it is about looking at the importance of lifestyle as a whole. Mrs Besant also propagated that the function of education is to create human beings who are integrated and hence intelligent. According to Mrs. Annie Besant education should help in discovering lasting values so that people do not just repeat slogans they should help in breaking social and social barriers at the national level. He also stressed that girls needed personal encouragement to pursue



a more in-depth and comprehensive education, believing that they would lead India. Mrs. Annie Besant made a radical change in the education system practiced by Macaulay by correctly assessing the underlying intentions of Macaulay's education system. On the education of Indian religion, culture, morality and the eternal values of life, he created a solution of modern Indian education in accordance with the national interest and presented the concept of required system for all-round education for Indian boys and girls. He believed that through education, the inherent possibilities of the learner should be blossomed and developed in a virtuous environment. According to Mrs. Besant, the aim of education should be to inculcate and develop the discipline, sacrifice, simplicity, virtue, hard work, fearlessness etc. necessary for national life, not just to get a job. In ancient India, the main aim of any person's life was considered to be the attainment of salvation. Therefore, according to that the aim of education was- 'Sa Vidya Vimuktaye'. The meaning of which was that true education is the one which leads to salvation. In the presented research paper, the objectives of Annie Besant's education are presented further.

1. Physical Development

The first aim of education is to provide knowledge about the physical world and the development of the gross body and the natural laws related to them. What is the use of different parts of the body in its operation? It is also a part of education to give knowledge of it and to keep harmony between its various parts and to keep them capable and capable to complete their tasks in a healthy manner and to enable them to perform their functions in a healthy manner. Can perform religious, mental and moral activities. It is generally kept under the personal side of physical development whereas in fact it should be kept under the social side. According to Mrs. Besant, man is developing the various powers of his body for the purpose of the development of the whole creation, and not for the supply of narrow personal objectives.

According to the stage of development of the child, he should be given training for the development of different parts of the body and senses. As Mrs. Besant has clarified that the main aim of the education of the children of one year to seven years should be the development of the senses and to train them to work in the right direction so that they experience the vibrations of Brahma sensation through their senses.



According to Annie Besant, it is necessary to make provision for physical, mental, religious and moral education for children in educational institutions. They consider a healthy body as the basis of all means. According to them, the aim of education should be to achieve the full development of every innate quality of the child, as Rousseau says that 'a healthy mind resides in a healthy body'. Mrs. Besant's attention was natural to go towards this.

2. Mental Elevation

Under this objective, the time comes for every possible development work of the child's mental powers, so that he can make his contribution possible and easy in the advanced development process of mankind through himself and through him. The qualities and powers of his observational power, memory, reasoning ability, decision making ability and clarity of thoughts etc. should be specially developed and trained. With the development of these abilities, the child may become capable of giving a right direction and purpose to his life by intelligently facing the various problems coming in his present life. Due to this, the society also automatically starts getting the right order of its development. Only after the development of intellectual capacity, a man will be able to understand how the society has come to the present state while developing and how it will progress further, he also gets a picture of it in his mind and accordingly he can determine and fulfill his duties properly. May be able to edit.

For the all-round development of the children, there is a great need for the upgradation of their mental powers. The intelligence of man separates him from the category of animals. Education is the most important base and the most capable medium in refining the human mind. The development of children's memory power, clarity of thoughts and self-expression etc. should be the paramount objective of education, which basically depends on the development of mental powers.

In the adolescence of a child's development, the development of emotions takes place at a very rapid pace. This stage is so delicate that if the emotions are not developed in the proper direction through education, then the overall personality development of the person becomes unbalanced. As per the opinion of Mr. Skinner, "In the initial years of adolescence, there is a storm-like situation in the mind and brain of the adolescent." Therefore, Mrs. Besant also believes that under this purpose of education, by giving proper training to the emotions and imagination of the child, a new development can be achieved. Direction can be provided and human character can



be made excellent on the basis of moral education, so that the path of virtues like love, service, sympathy, respect, sacrifice, charity should be presented in the children.

3. Religious purpose

According to Brahavidya, man is a divine creature and in the seven elements of his creation, the 'soul' element is eternal and immortal because it is a part of the Supreme Soul. Therefore, the ultimate and supreme aim of man's education is also to realize the 'soul'. Mrs. Besant had this unwavering belief that the knowledge of the soul can be achieved neither by sense organs, nor by intelligence, nor by any other senses. This supreme element is realized by intuition. To achieve this objective, a person has to love God and serve not only towards human beings but also towards living beings, only then by awakening the sense of unity in diversity, he can establish his unity with the unbroken, infinite and eternal Brahman. I can be successful. For the development of this power, study of religious books, worship of God, meditation and closeness of a spiritual teacher are necessary. Because the one who himself has attained self-realization, only he can impart the knowledge of self-realization to his disciple.

The religious aim of education means to find a way to remove the obstacles coming in the way of inculcating love for God in man. In the absence of religious education, our animal instincts cannot be refined. We can respect every living being in the world only on the basis of religion. That means the idea of world brotherhood will be realized only then. Our growth will be able to put a stop to nuclear weapons that have the potential of destroying the universe only when we adopt religious education as an important basis of education by giving importance to it in our schools and universities. According to Mrs. Annie, educated is the one who has understood religion and understood its secrets and held them in his life have complied with them. Our narrow thoughts are destroyed by the knowledge of religion. We are able to understand the true nature of our duties.

4. Moral Development

Morality means preventing the flow of emotional powers from going in the wrong direction and developing them appropriately for functioning in the right direction. The final result of moral education is to establish such harmony between mind, speech and action, which is helpful in achieving the goal in every way. It is only through moral development that social qualities, dutifulness and sense of responsibility can be created in the students and love for the general



public can be generated. In this way, Annie Besant understood the need of religious and moral aspects as much as the physical and mental aspects in the periphery of her vision related to education.

5. Development of service spirit

Annie Besant was of the opinion that it is very necessary and practical to develop the spirit of service in school and university students. Such goodwill should be created in him, so that he not only becomes aware of his country's interest and social interest, but also tries to achieve it. They can think about the benefit of lakhs of illiterate, poor brothers of their society. They should be encouraged by education and they should be automatically motivated to serve the poor. In his view, students should be taken as volunteers for fairs, festivals, social welfare works, so that they can become alert and aware to serve the public.

Mrs. Annie Besant's Education thoughts

In accordance with her education plan, Mrs. Annie Besant has also tried to prove the scientific basis of the clear thoughts she has presented through her articles and lectures regarding various education principles. For example, according to today's education psychology, education should be provided according to the different stages of the child's development. Training should be given according to the interest and ability of the child. According to the principle of development, the possibilities of child's development should be awakened etc. Similarly, Mrs. Besant has also indicated the four pillars of education, namely natural, scientific, social and spiritual, according to the level of age and development.

After coming to India on November 16, 1893, he first felt the need for radical restructuring and reform (with priority importance) in the education sector of India. How is this? For this, he made a deep study of the ancient ideals and history and religion culture of India for reorganization and reform. The importance of the difference arising due to any other reason has also been accepted and accordingly it has been given exemption of manipulation. After the main breakfast period in the morning (which should be as accessible as possible from the school itself), the time should be fixed for complete rest for the students, in which the student should be allowed to do any kind of intellectual work. Mrs. Besant believes that before and after teaching, a small prayer must be made to the students (while at that time, English national anthem of Longlib the Queen or



glorification of Jesus Christ was sung in some places in English schools related to royalism. English songs associated with were sung.

Teaching method according to Mrs. Besant

According to Mrs. Besant, teaching method is definitely a means of education, however, the teacher should not become its slave. He should respect the originality inherent in the students. In fact, such an inspiration should be given to the child through education, with the help of which the student can make the path of his life more and more prosperous. Can successfully face life's struggles. Can be helpful in the progress of the society and the nation.

According to Mrs. Annie Besant, education is that perfection, through which a person continues to receive the light of knowledge. The system of education by the teacher should not become a slave to the methods of education shown in the educationist, but by his ability and his personality, he should guide the student in such a way that even after the education period, he himself is able to make his life happy.

Conclusion

Mrs. Annie Besant had told the development of the spirit of universal brotherhood and universalism necessary for the all-round development of mankind. Education is the way to develop the inherent abilities in the child. Mere act of providing information or giving information about subjects is not education from their point of view. That's why real education is considered to be the process of uncovering the underlying knowledge. In this context, Mrs. Annie Besant, considering man as a divine being, the work related to the development of the abilities and powers inherent in him is called real education. This concept of education gives confirmation to the specific psychological basis of the education plan formulated by Mrs. Annie Besant. On psychological basis, all the abilities and capabilities of human are divided into physical, mental, intellectual and emotional categories. Accordingly, the integrated development of all these abilities becomes the aim of education, such was the idea of Mrs. Annie Besant, and the same idea has also been propounded by the new National Education Policy of 1986 adopted in India. Apart from this, Mrs. Annie Besant has described the ability to achieve the highest goal of life 'self-realization' as another important aim of education. From this point of view, where Mrs. Annie Besant has considered the spiritual development of man as the ultimate goal of education, it is not considered so at present. Since self-revelation is essential for 'self-realization'



and for self-revelation it becomes necessary for a person to get information about all his/her powers and abilities and to develop and channelize them in the proper direction, therefore physical, mental, intellectual, etc. And emotional development can also be underlined.

References

1. Srivastava, P. S. (2015). Dr Annie Besant's Views on Spiritual Education. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development*, 2(3), 676-679.
2. Nancy, A. F. (1994). Bridging cross-cultural feminisms: Annie besant and women's rights in England and India, 1874-1933. *Women's History Review*, 3(4), 563-580.
3. Singh, C. L. (2018). Making "ideal" Indian women: Annie Besant's engagement with the issue of female education in early twentieth-century India. *PaedagogicaHistorica*, 54(5), 606-625.
4. Pasricha, A., & Bharathi, K. S. (1998). *The political thought of Annie Besant* (Vol. 25). Concept Publishing Company.
5. Leland, K. (2021). "Friendly to all beings": Annie Besant as ethicist. *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 29(2), 308-326.
6. Gautam, A., & Upadhyay, S. K. DR. ANNIE BESANT AND HER CONTRIBUTION TO EDUCATION IN INDIA.
7. Baylen, J. O. (1993). Anne Taylor" Annie Besant: A Biography"(Book Review). *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920*, 36(4), 503-507.
8. Mackay, C. H. (2009). A Journal of Her Own: The Rise and Fall of Annie Besant's Our Corner. *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 42(4), 324-358.
9. Paxton, N. L. (1990, January). Feminism under the Raj: Complicity and resistance in the writings of Flora Annie Steel and Annie Besant. In *Women's Studies International Forum* (Vol. 13, No. 4, pp. 333-346). Pergamon.
10. Besterman, T. (2018). *Mrs Annie Besant: a modern prophet*. Routledge.
11. Amita, V. (2018). Retrospection on Philosophy of Education of Gandhi, Vivekananda and Tagore for Futuristic Indian Education System: A Possibility!. *Future Human Image*, 10, 103-111.
12. Bevir, M. (1999). Annie Besant's quest for truth: Christianity, secularism and New Age thought. *The journal of ecclesiastical history*, 50(1), 62-93.



13. Pécastaing-Boissière, M. (2017). *Annie Besant (1847-1933): Struggles and Quest*. Theosophical Publishing House Limited.
14. Besant, A. (2012). *The Ancient Wisdom (Barnes & Noble Digital Library): An Outline of Theosophical Teachings*. Union Square & Co.
15. Singh, C. L. (2019). Educational Ideas of Annie Besant. *Espacio, Tiempo y Educación*, 6(2), 255-271.