

## The Role of Educational Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda in Modern Teaching and Learning

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### ABSTRACT

Swami Vivekananda's educational philosophy remains relevant to modern teaching and learning because it connects intellectual growth with character formation, self-confidence, concentration, ethical development, social responsibility, and practical competence. In his educational writings, Vivekananda defines education as "the manifestation of the perfection already in man" and repeatedly argues that real education must build character, strengthen the mind, expand the intellect, and enable learners to stand on their own feet. Official institutional interpretations of his vision, especially within the Ramakrishna Mission educational tradition, continue to present his thought as a holistic model that blends moral and spiritual depth with scientific knowledge, practical action, and social service.

This paper examines the role of Vivekananda's educational philosophy in modern teaching and learning through a model research-based framework. It argues that his thought is especially relevant to current concerns about value-based education, learner-centred pedagogy, concentration, holistic development, teacher mentoring, and the integration of knowledge with life. Since no original field dataset was supplied, the study is written as a model empirical article with an illustrative descriptive design and numeric tables. A hypothetical sample of 420 students and 60 teachers is used to show how such a study may be structured. The model findings suggest that teachers and students perceive Vivekananda's philosophy as especially relevant in the areas of character-building, self-reliance, concentration, moral education, and the teacher's role as facilitator and guide. The article concludes that Vivekananda's educational philosophy is not merely a historical ideal; it offers a practical framework for contemporary education that can strengthen both teaching quality and learner development when adapted to present institutional contexts.

**Keywords:** *Swami Vivekananda; Educational Philosophy; Modern Teaching and Learning; Man-Making Education; Character-Building; Holistic Education; Teacher Role; Value Education; Self-Reliance; Concentration.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education in the modern world is increasingly expected to do more than transmit information. Schools and universities are now asked to cultivate critical thinking, employability, ethical judgement, emotional maturity, social responsibility, and self-directed learning. In this context, the educational philosophy of Swami Vivekananda has regained attention because it addresses education not as mere information transfer but as a process of inner development and practical empowerment. In the official compilation *Education*, Vivekananda defines education as “the manifestation of the perfection already in man,” and explains that knowledge is already inherent in the human being and must be uncovered rather than mechanically inserted from outside. This is a powerful starting point for modern pedagogy because it locates the learner at the centre of the educational process.

Vivekananda’s philosophy of education is also distinctive because it is at once spiritual, practical, and social. He does not treat education only as book-learning or as examination success. In the same body of writings, he insists that education should form character, increase strength of mind, expand the intellect, and enable the learner to stand on their own feet. He also links education to the uplift of women and the education of the masses, making it clear that true education must reach beyond privileged groups. Belur Math’s official biographical account similarly notes that the spread of education, especially for the poor masses and for women, was one of his central life concerns.

This broader view of education has strong relevance for modern teaching and learning. Contemporary classrooms often struggle with fragmentation: academic instruction is separated from moral growth, information from wisdom, and achievement from social responsibility. Official materials from the Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Educational and Research Institute interpret Vivekananda’s vision as a wholesome system of education aimed at “life-building, man-making, character-making” and as a synthesis of Indian spiritual-cultural heritage with Western scientific knowledge, technological skill, pragmatic outlook, and teamwork. Their 2020 note on education further describes this model as a harmonious blend of head, heart, and hand, which is highly resonant with current ideas of holistic, competency-based, and experiential learning.

Modern educational research has also begun to revisit Vivekananda’s ideas in more explicit ways. Articles and reviews from 2012 onward consistently interpret his philosophy as relevant to value education, student-centred teaching, character-building, concentration, women’s education, practical and vocational learning, teacher guidance, and the integration of East and West in curriculum and pedagogy. Scholars such as Mondal and Mete, Bhat, Khan and Ambani, Behera, Sharma, Bharadwaj and Pradeep, and others argue that Vivekananda anticipates several ideas now associated with modern educational reform, including activity-based learning, moral and civic education, learner autonomy, and education for self-reliance.

The present paper explores this relevance in a structured way. It asks how Vivekananda’s educational philosophy can be interpreted in relation to modern teaching and learning, and what dimensions of his thought appear most meaningful in contemporary educational settings. Because no actual survey data were supplied, the paper is presented as a model research article. It combines primary educational ideas from Vivekananda’s writings, modern interpretations by scholars, and an

illustrative descriptive study using numeric tables. The central argument is that Vivekananda's educational philosophy remains deeply relevant because it addresses a problem that modern education still faces: how to educate the whole human being rather than merely train the memory.

## **2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To examine the core principles of Swami Vivekananda's educational philosophy.
2. To analyze the relevance of Vivekananda's educational ideas in modern teaching and learning.
3. To review scholarly interpretations of Vivekananda's contribution to education.
4. To assess the perceived role of Vivekananda's philosophy in character-building, concentration, teacher guidance, self-reliance, and value-based learning.
5. To identify the major challenges in applying Vivekananda's educational philosophy in present-day educational institutions.
6. To suggest ways in which modern education can meaningfully adapt Vivekananda's ideas.

## **3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Scholarly work on Vivekananda's educational philosophy generally agrees that his educational thought is broader than formal instruction and closer to what is now called holistic education. Mondal and Mete (2012) interpret Vivekananda as an educator who attempted to unite Indian spirituality and Western material progress, and they stress the continuing relevance of his ideas for modern educational aims. Deshmukh and Mishra (2014) emphasize awakening, values, and transformation, reading Vivekananda's educational thought as a means of moral and spiritual renewal. These early studies are important because they frame Vivekananda not only as a religious thinker but as a philosopher of education.

A major line of interpretation focuses on curricular and pedagogical scope. Bhat (2016) argues that Vivekananda's philosophy gives a significant place to teachers and students alike, stresses women's education, peace education, and moral and value education, and anticipates activity-based learning. Bhat also notes that Vivekananda's method includes discussion, self-experience, creative activities, concentration, and individual guidance. Khan and Ambani (2016) similarly describe Vivekananda's educational philosophy as life-building, man-making, and character-building, and emphasize self-reliance, concentration, student teachability, and the teacher's power to reach the learner's level. These studies are particularly useful because they connect Vivekananda directly to teaching-learning processes rather than discussing him only at the level of abstract philosophy.

Another line of scholarship centers on teacher role and man-making education. Behera (2018) argues that teachers in Vivekananda's system are central to the formation of "man-making" education and must shape the whole learner, not merely communicate academic content. Santhi (2019) emphasizes that Vivekananda's educational perspective includes fine arts, aesthetics, and inner development, showing that his thought resists narrow utilitarianism. Sharma (2021) also foregrounds the teacher's role and summarizes man-making education as an approach that connects humanity, guidance, and teacher responsibility. Taken together, these scholars show that Vivekananda's idea of teaching is relational and formative rather than mechanical.

Recent studies increasingly emphasize present-day relevance. Bhat (2021), as summarized in later analytical literature, interprets Vivekananda's philosophy as a synthesis of East and West, science and spirituality, and past and present. Gohain and Borgohain (2022) find his educational philosophy highly relevant to the present educational scenario for the development of both individuals and the nation. Bharadwaj and Pradeep (2023) explicitly connect Vivekananda's educational thought with future-oriented educational reform, arguing that modern education suffers from a gap in holistic development and that his philosophy offers a corrective through values, character, and inner manifestation. Singh and Saxena (2024) further underline the continuing relevance of his thought in curriculum, national development, social service, women's education, skill development, and self-reliance.

A recurring theme across this literature is that Vivekananda's educational philosophy remains relevant because it addresses problems that modern education still has not solved fully. These include excessive informationalism, weak character formation, separation of learning from life, neglect of teacher example, and insufficient integration of moral and social purpose into curriculum. Even institutional interpretations of his legacy make the same point. RKMVERI presents his educational vision as one that integrates scientific temper, technological skill, teamwork, and pragmatic outlook with moral and spiritual depth. This convergence between scholarship and institutional practice suggests that his educational philosophy continues to function as both a conceptual and practical resource.

#### **4. METHODOLOGY**

This study is presented as a model descriptive research design. Since no actual field dataset was supplied, the methodology and numeric tables below are illustrative and intended to show how a full academic article on Vivekananda's educational philosophy may be structured. The model study is designed to explore the perceived relevance of Vivekananda's educational philosophy in modern teaching and learning.

For illustrative purposes, the study assumes a sample of 480 respondents, including 420 students and 60 teachers, drawn from 12 educational institutions. These are imagined as a combination of higher secondary schools, teacher education colleges, and undergraduate institutions. This mixed-institution model is used because the topic of teaching and learning relevance is broader than school education alone and can be meaningfully examined across different learning contexts.

Four tools are assumed:

1. A student questionnaire on awareness and perceived relevance of Vivekananda's educational philosophy,
2. A teacher questionnaire on classroom implementation of related principles,
3. An institutional checklist on value-based and holistic educational practices, and
4. A focused discussion framework for interpreting perceived strengths and barriers.

The major dimensions examined are:

- Awareness of Vivekananda’s educational principles,
- Teacher role and mentoring,
- Character-building and value education,
- Concentration and self-discipline,
- Self-reliance and practical learning,
- Service orientation and social responsibility,
- Holistic development in teaching-learning process.

All numeric data below are model descriptive values presented through percentages and mean scores. No inferential statistics are reported because the data are illustrative rather than field-generated. The purpose of the study is not to claim an actual measured effect, but to provide a realistic academic structure for understanding how Vivekananda’s educational philosophy may be evaluated in present educational settings.

## 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Note: Tables 2–7 contain illustrative numeric data prepared as a model academic draft. These should be replaced with real survey data before submission as an empirical paper.

### 5.1 Profile of Respondents

**Table 1. Distribution of Sample Respondents (N = 480)**

Category	N	%
Students	420	87.5
Teachers	60	12.5
School-level respondents	260	54.2
College-level respondents	220	45.8
Female respondents	252	52.5
Male respondents	226	47.1
Prefer not to say	2	0.4

The model sample is deliberately broad so that the role of Vivekananda’s philosophy can be viewed in relation to both classroom teaching and learner development. The inclusion of both teachers and students is important because educational philosophy is not meaningful only when articulated by teachers; it is meaningful when it is also experienced by learners in actual teaching-learning processes.

### 5.2 Awareness of Vivekananda’s Educational Principles

The first objective of the model study was to assess awareness of the main principles associated with Vivekananda’s educational philosophy. These include man-making education, character-building, concentration, self-reliance, teacher guidance, women’s education, service to humanity, and the synthesis of spiritual and practical learning. These themes are strongly grounded in Vivekananda’s own educational writings and are echoed in modern scholarly interpretations.

**Table 2. Awareness of Key Educational Principles (% of Respondents Aware)**

Principle	Students (%)	Teachers (%)
Education as manifestation of inner potential	62	90
Character-building as aim of education	71	93
Concentration as essence of education	54	82
Teacher as guide/facilitator	68	88
Self-reliance and standing on one's own feet	66	91
Education of women and masses	49	79
Education as service to society	58	86
Blending spiritual and scientific learning	52	84

The results suggest a relatively high level of awareness among teachers and a moderate level among students. Teachers are most aware of character-building, self-reliance, and the manifestation-based view of education. Students are most aware of character-building and teacher guidance, but less aware of concentration, women's education, and the blending of spiritual and scientific learning. This pattern is understandable. Some ideas, such as character-building, are more likely to circulate in school discourse, while others, such as education of the masses or the East-West synthesis, may remain more explicitly philosophical or institutional.

The relatively lower student awareness of concentration is especially noteworthy because Vivekananda repeatedly identified concentration as central to education. RKMVERI's institutional presentation of his ideas also foregrounds will training, self-control, and integrated development. The gap between the philosophical importance of concentration and students' lower awareness may reflect a broader issue in modern education: focus and self-discipline are often demanded, but not always taught as educational values in their own right.

### 5.3 Classroom Integration of Vivekananda's Ideas

The second major concern of the study was the extent to which modern teachers perceive Vivekananda's ideas as usable in everyday teaching-learning settings. Because much of the literature stresses activity, guidance, love, sympathy, moral example, self-reliance, and social responsibility, the model questionnaire assesses these areas directly.

**Table 3. Teacher-Reported Integration of Vivekananda-Related Principles in Teaching**

Practice dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Encouraging character and value discussions	4.18	0.64	High
Teacher as mentor and guide	4.05	0.71	High
Encouraging self-reliant learning	3.92	0.75	Moderate to high
Use of activity-based learning	3.74	0.82	Moderate to high
Encouraging concentration/reflection	3.61	0.88	Moderate
Linking education with service/social responsibility	3.58	0.84	Moderate
Integrating spiritual-moral ideas with secular curriculum	3.22	0.93	Moderate
Providing individualized guidance	3.87	0.78	Moderate to high

The table shows that teachers most strongly identify with the mentoring and value-building aspects of Vivekananda's philosophy. This aligns with both Bhat's and Khan and Ambani's readings, which place strong emphasis on teacher role, moral education, and the learner's inner development. Teachers seem somewhat less confident about concentration practices, service-learning integration, and the blending of spiritual-moral content with secular curriculum. This suggests that the philosophy is often accepted at the level of broad ideals but may be harder to translate into specific pedagogic routines.

The moderate score for integrating spiritual-moral ideas with formal curriculum is especially important. Modern education systems are often cautious about any language perceived as religious or philosophical in classrooms. Yet Vivekananda's educational philosophy is not limited to sectarian instruction; it emphasizes self-discipline, ethical growth, fearlessness, sympathy, and self-discovery. The result suggests that teachers may need more pedagogic support in translating such values into non-sectarian educational practice. This is consistent with recent analytical literature that argues for contextual adaptation of Vivekananda's ideas rather than literal transplantation.

#### 5.4 Perceived Impact on Student Development

The next step in the model study was to assess whether respondents perceive Vivekananda-inspired educational practices as beneficial to modern learning outcomes. The emphasis here is not only on examination performance but also on character, self-confidence, discipline, participation, and social awareness. This is faithful to Vivekananda's own position that education should produce strength, character, and self-supporting individuals, not merely information-holders.

**Table 4. Perceived Outcomes of Vivekananda-Inspired Teaching Practices**

Outcome Dimension	Students Agreeing (%)	Teachers Agreeing (%)
Improves self-confidence	74	88
Strengthens discipline and self-control	69	86
Improves moral awareness	71	90
Encourages active participation	63	79
Increases respect for teachers and peers	68	84
Improves concentration in learning	57	77
Strengthens social responsibility	64	83
Supports independent learning	66	81

The pattern is strongly positive. Both teachers and students perceive the philosophy as especially useful for self-confidence, moral awareness, discipline, and respectful relationships. Teachers are consistently more positive than students across all dimensions, which is common in educational perception studies because teachers usually interpret classroom goals in more explicit conceptual terms. Still, student agreement levels are high enough to suggest that the ideas are not merely abstract to them.

The relatively lower score for concentration is consistent with the earlier finding that concentration is valued but not strongly internalized in everyday practice. This may indicate a mismatch between the ideal of focused learning and the realities of modern educational life, including fragmented attention, examination stress, and digital distraction. In that sense, Vivekananda's focus on concentration may be especially relevant today precisely because it addresses a weakness of contemporary learning culture.

### 5.5 Comparative Effect of High and Low Philosophical Integration

To make the discussion more concrete, the model study compares institutions with higher reported integration of Vivekananda-related practices and those with lower reported integration.

**Table 5. Learning and Development Indicators by Level of Implementation**

Indicator	Low Implementation Institutions	Moderate Implementation Institutions	High Implementation Institutions
Mean student motivation score (5-point scale)	2.96	3.48	4.12
Mean classroom participation score	3.05	3.54	4.06
Mean self-discipline score	2.88	3.42	4.08
Mean ethical-awareness score	3.01	3.67	4.21
Mean teacher-student trust score	3.09	3.63	4.19
Mean independent-learning score	2.94	3.52	4.03

This table offers the clearest result in the study. Institutions with higher implementation of Vivekananda-related educational principles show stronger perceived outcomes across all measured domains. Motivation, participation, self-discipline, ethical awareness, teacher-student trust, and independent learning are all notably higher in the high-implementation group than in the low-implementation group. Although these are illustrative results, they align closely with the philosophical expectations of Vivekananda's educational thought and with the claims made in the contemporary literature.

The sharpest contrasts appear in ethical awareness and teacher-student trust. This is especially meaningful because modern education often struggles with depersonalized teaching, weak value orientation, and low relational depth between teachers and students. Vivekananda's emphasis on the teacher's purity, sympathy, love, and ability to come down to the level of the student appears especially relevant here. If modern teaching is to become more humanized, relational, and developmental, these dimensions cannot be treated as optional extras.

### 5.6 Student Perception of Most Relevant Vivekananda Principles Today

To understand relevance more directly, students were asked which aspects of Vivekananda's educational philosophy seem most useful for today's educational system.

**Table 6. Student Perception of Most Relevant Principles in Present Education (N = 420)**

Principle Perceived as Highly Relevant	N	%
Character-building	322	76.7
Self-confidence and strength	309	73.6
Learning to stand on one's own feet	301	71.7
Teacher guidance and mentorship	289	68.8
Concentration and self-control	257	61.2
Service to society	244	58.1
Women's education and equality	236	56.2
Integration of values with learning	294	70.0

Character-building emerges as the most widely valued principle, followed closely by self-confidence, self-reliance, and value integration. This is striking because it suggests that students themselves do not view education only as a path to marks or employment; they also recognize the importance of strength, values, and guided development. Such a pattern supports the continuing educational relevance of Vivekananda's philosophy in a time when many learners experience disconnection between academic learning and life formation.

The relatively lower, though still substantial, support for service to society and women's education may reflect the fact that these principles are often discussed more at the moral or civic level than in everyday classroom terms. Yet Vivekananda treated both as integral to educational renewal. The modest gap suggests that modern institutions may need to make these principles more visible through structured community engagement, inclusive pedagogy, and social-learning opportunities.

### 5.7 Barriers to Applying Vivekananda's Philosophy in Modern Institutions

The final analytical question concerns implementation barriers. If Vivekananda's philosophy is widely respected, why is it not more fully visible in modern teaching-learning practice?

**Table 7. Major Barriers to Implementation Reported by Teachers (N = 60)**

Barrier	n	%
Exam-centred education system	46	76.7
Time pressure and overloaded syllabus	43	71.7
Lack of teacher training in value-based pedagogy	37	61.7
Difficulty translating philosophy into classroom practice	35	58.3
Student distraction and weak concentration habits	34	56.7
Institutional focus on marks over character	41	68.3
Fear of being seen as non-secular or moralizing	22	36.7
Limited parent/community reinforcement	29	48.3

The most serious barriers are structural: examination pressure, overloaded syllabus, marks-oriented institutional culture, and lack of teacher preparation. These findings are highly plausible in the context of contemporary education. Teachers may admire Vivekananda's philosophy, yet still feel

trapped inside systems that reward performance metrics more than character-building or reflective learning. This is one reason why philosophical agreement often exceeds pedagogical implementation.

The concern about translating philosophy into practice is also significant. Vivekananda's ideas are rich and inspiring, but they are not self-executing. For them to influence modern teaching and learning, they must be translated into concrete educational practices such as mentoring, reflective routines, service-learning, concentration training, value discussions, activity-based learning, and self-directed study tasks. Recent interpretive scholarship has already moved in this direction by linking his thought to curriculum reform, skill development, and holistic pedagogy.

### **5.8 Overall Discussion**

The overall pattern of the model study strongly supports the claim that Vivekananda's educational philosophy retains significant relevance for modern teaching and learning. Its strongest contemporary contributions appear in five areas: character-building, teacher mentoring, self-reliance, concentration, and the integration of values with education. These are precisely the areas where many modern systems experience strain. Education today often suffers from informational overload, fragmented attention, excessive examination pressure, and insufficient moral or emotional grounding. Vivekananda's philosophy directly addresses these weaknesses by redefining education as inner awakening, disciplined growth, and life-building assimilation rather than accumulation alone.

A second important insight is that Vivekananda's philosophy should not be misunderstood as anti-modern. Official and scholarly interpretations repeatedly emphasize his call for the blending of spiritual depth with Western science, technological skill, practical training, and social engagement. His educational vision is therefore not a rejection of modern knowledge but a demand that knowledge be integrated with character, sympathy, and self-mastery. This makes his philosophy especially useful in present discussions of holistic education, competency-based learning, and values in education.

A third insight concerns the teacher. Vivekananda's philosophy places unusual emphasis on the personal and moral role of the teacher. In his writings, the teacher is not simply a content-deliverer but a guide, example, sympathetic helper, and force of transformation. The model results show that both teachers and students still value this role highly. In an age of digital content abundance, this insight may be even more relevant than before: what students increasingly need from teachers is not only information, but direction, trust, example, and formative support.

Finally, the study suggests that the relevance of Vivekananda's philosophy is not the same as its implementation. Institutions may verbally affirm character, self-reliance, and holistic development while continuing to operate through narrow exam and performance logics. Therefore, the future relevance of Vivekananda's educational thought depends on pedagogic translation. Without curricular and institutional adaptation, it will remain inspirational but underused. With careful adaptation, however, it can serve as a significant framework for improving modern teaching and learning in a more human, balanced, and socially responsible direction.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This paper has examined the role of Swami Vivekananda's educational philosophy in modern teaching and learning through a full research-style model article. The central conclusion is that his philosophy remains highly relevant because it addresses enduring educational concerns that modern systems still struggle to resolve. His emphasis on character-building, concentration, self-reliance, teacher guidance, women's education, and service to the masses continues to speak directly to present debates on holistic learning, value education, learner autonomy, and educational equity.

The review of literature shows that scholars across the last decade have repeatedly interpreted Vivekananda as a thinker of holistic and man-making education rather than merely as a spiritual leader. Recent institutional and analytical sources also show that his ideas are still being used to frame educational practice in relation to modern priorities such as integrated personality development, East-West synthesis, teacher mentoring, practical learning, and social responsibility. The model findings developed in this paper support the same broad conclusion: both teachers and students perceive Vivekananda's philosophy as especially relevant to character formation, self-confidence, discipline, and the humanization of teaching-learning relationships.

At the same time, the study also shows that implementation remains difficult in exam-centred and time-pressured systems. Therefore, the practical significance of Vivekananda's educational philosophy today lies not in ritual admiration but in thoughtful adaptation. It needs to be translated into classroom practice through mentorship, reflective learning, service-learning, value discussions, concentration-building routines, and stronger links between curriculum and life. In this sense, Vivekananda's educational philosophy is not a relic of the past. It is a living educational resource for any system that wishes to educate human beings fully rather than instruct them partially.

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