

**CHAPTER-VII****DR. RADHAKRISHNAN ON WOMEN'S EDUCATION**

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### VII.1 INTRODUCTION :

The present chapter deals with Dr. S. Radhakrishnan's thoughts regarding women's education. His views regarding women's education are based on his view regarding their place in the family and society and the role they are expected to perform. His thoughts regarding women's education are found in his books and in his many speeches and in the report of the University Education Commission (1948-49). His views and thoughts on women's education are described and discussed in the following paragraphs.

### VII.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN'S EDUCATION :

Out of the total population of the society nearly half number is of women. Considering this large number, it is necessary that they should be educated. To educate a woman is to educate a whole family because she can educate her children too. To explain, to quote - "If you educate a man, you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a family."<sup>1</sup> He further adds that if all families are educated the whole society will get educated.

He describes the importance of women's education as "The hand that rocks the cradle, is the power that rules the world."<sup>2</sup>

The importance of women's education depends upon her own importance which is described in the following words : "Woman is the mother, maker and silent leader of man."<sup>3</sup>

According to Dr. Radhakrishnan the educated, conscientious mother who lives and works with her children is the best teacher in the world. Children learn naturally by living in the company of educated and cultured mother.

Dr. Radhakrishnan opines that women by nature, are the missionaries of civilization. They are the leaders in ahimsa. They are the peace-makers, they will stop the world from making wars. To explain, to quote -

"By the very quality of their being, women are the missionaries of civilization. With their immense capacity for self-sacrifice, they are the unquestioned leaders in ahimsa. They will yet teach the art of peace to the warring world."<sup>4</sup>

Dr. Radhakrishnan holds women as idols of values, like, self-sacrifice, compassion, self-effacement and warmth of heart. In India, they are the glories, right from the ancient times. Hence they are very useful in developing the friendship in our country as well as among nations. To explain, to quote some lines from Dr. Radhakrishnan's speech -

"In the maintenance of cultural traditions the place of women has been very significant. Their warmth of heart, their self-effacement, their unassuming loyalty, their strength in suffering even when subjected to severe trials have been among the glories of this ancient land....I have no doubt they will have an increasing share in the development of a new style of life in the country and friendship among nations."<sup>5</sup>

In the same way the University Education Commission (1948-49) states the importance of women's education in the following words :

"If general education had to be limited to men or women, that opportunity should be given to women; from them, it would most surely be passed on to the next generation."<sup>6</sup>

### VII.3 NATURE OF WOMEN EDUCATION :

The general education which is given to men, the same should be given to women, for intelligent and interesting living and for citizenship. As men, women also should share the life and thought and interest of the times. They are fitted to carry the same academic work as men; with no less thoroughness and quality. The

distribution of general ability among women is approximately the same as men.

According to Dr. Radhakrishnan, Indian universities for the most part are the places of preparation for a man's world. He, therefore, categorically states that our universities should think of them as women. Education of women as women should be given because women's many interests or fields of work diverge from those of men.<sup>7</sup>

✕ According to Dr. Radhakrishnan women are unhappy because their minds are empty. They are not given any work. So they should not be free for most of the times, they should be given some work befitting to them of.

स्त्रियांच्या सर्व दुःखाचे एक म्हणजे त्यांना पुरेसे काम नाही. रित्या जीवनाचे हे वैज्य त्यांना अस्वामाकिक मार्गाकडे ओढून नेत आहे. त्यांना जमतील असे उद्योग त्यांच्यामागे लावून देणे हाच यावर योग्य उपाय आहे.<sup>७</sup>

Considering her most valuable and significant role in home life, Dr. Radhakrishnan recommends -

"Home life is entirely the sphere of woman and therefore, in domestic affairs, in the upbringing and education of children, woman ought to have more knowledge."<sup>9</sup>

It is a high art to keep the home good, clean and beautiful. For a woman, it is a high art to give the home design, beauty, order and character, without being herself a slave to home-keeping and without imposing burdensome prohibitions and restrictions on the freedom of children.

All this can be acquired only through the proper education given to them. Wise education for a woman is the preparation for home and family. Her education, as a woman should include practical laboratory experience in the care of a home and family.

For giving the scope to women, there is a need of equality of opportunity. The curriculum should be framed as specially suited to their sphere and their nature.

#### VII.4 SPECIAL COURSES OF STUDY FOR WOMEN :

Alongwith the general education, they should be given some special courses. The University Education Commission (1948-49) suggested the special courses like, Home Economics, Nursing, Teaching and Fine Arts. These courses are described in the following paragraphs one by one.

Course in Home Economics deals with the effective feeding and clothing of the family and others. The curriculum

should include the care and guidance of children, the family relationships, the growth of artistic sense and taste which brings beauty into the home, the organisation and running of the home on a sound economic, social and hygienic basis, and the care and use of equipment. A well-ordered home helps to make well-ordered men.

The children can learn even from home planning and its management. Economy and convenience in the running of the home will make children to learn. All the home management can stimulate originality and resourcefulness in the children of the home. "Thus" as per report of the University Education Commission (1948-49) "good home management is more than a convenience for the house wife and her family; it is the foundation of the orderly state, and the teaching of good home management is the first lesson in good government; as confucious said"

The University Education Commission (1948-49) asserts that there is a room, for a large extension of teaching of Home Economics in Indian higher education.

ii) Nursing - According to the University Education Commission (1948-49) India is in need of nursing service in city and rural hospitals. It, therefore, recommends that nursing education should be developed as quickly as possible.

It recommends the two years' course for diploma grade nurses. It also recommends that the degree of B.Sc. in Nursing should be equivalent to B.Sc. in other subjects. After high school education students should begin their training to become professional nurses. As women by nature are kind and compassionate, nursing is suitable to them.

iii) Teaching - Dr. Radhakrishnan opines that women are natural teachers. For elementary and secondary schooling women teachers are very useful. To expand women education, women teachers are essential, hence, women teachers should be encouraged.

iv) Fine Arts - Before completing the general education every student (he or she) is expected to acquire some measure of appreciation of Fine Arts. Dr. Radhakrishnan was of the opinion that women would find vocational opportunities in the arts. The teaching of vocal and instrumental music in schools and colleges would provide them vocational opportunities. Alongwith men, women could learn and excel in dramatics, painting, illustration, ceramics and in textile design and craftsmanship.

**VII.5 SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT  
OF WOMEN'S EDUCATION :**

According to the University Education Commission (1948-49), "there has been no planning of women's education, it has just happened."<sup>10</sup> Hence, it insisted on planning of women's education. The Commission (1948-49) had, therefore, made some suggestions in this regard. Some of the important recommendations made by the University Education Commission (1948-49) are, as follows :

i) The ordinary amenities and decencies of life should be provided for women in colleges planned for men. If women are admitted in them these decencies should be increased.

ii) There should be no curtailment in educational opportunities for women, but rather they should be increased largely.

iii) There should be an intelligent educational guidance by qualified men and women to help women to get a clearer view of their real educational interests to the end that they shall not try to imitate men, but shall desire as good education as women, as men get as men. Women's and men's education should have many elements in common,

but should not in general be identical in all respects, as it usually happens.

iv) Women students in general should be helped to seek their normal places in a normal society, both as citizens and as women, and to prepare for it, the college programmes should be so designed that it will be possible for them to do so.

v) Through educational counsel the prejudice against the study of Home Economics and Home Management should be overcome.

vi) The standards of courtesy and social responsibility should be emphasized on the part of men in mixed colleges.

vii) Where new colleges are established to serve both, men and women students, they should be truly co-educational institutions, with as much thought and consideration given to the life-needs of women as to those of men.

viii) Women teachers should be paid the same salaries as men teachers for equal work.

#### VII.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS :

One can summarize the whole discussion on women's education, as follows :

The place of a woman in society is valuable and important as one woman can teach the whole family and thus, the whole society can be educated by this process. Women are the makers of civilization and they are the idols of virtues, like kindness, compassion, forgiveness, service and self-sacrifice.

They should be given general education alongwith men and additional education of women as women. Universities should give special attention towards their education. Opportunities should be given to them as equal with men. Aesthetic and appreciative values should be created in them alongwith material values. Home keeping and child care should be taught to them wisely. Special courses like Home Economics, Nursing, Teaching and Fine Arts should be prepared according to the various stages to prepare them for these professions. Intelligent educational, vocational and aptitudinal guidance should be given to them. They should be prepared for both, as normal citizen and as woman. For co-education, men should be taught the standards of courtesy,

so that they should behave properly in mixed colleges and women may be encouraged to have the education. The new co-educational life-needs of women should be considered with prime importance in the co-educational colleges. For equal work equal pay should be given to women. All the due steps should be taken necessarily for women's development and education.

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