



SANT KABIR'S THOUGHTS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 4 QUALITY EDUCATION

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Abstract:

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (Sanskrit: वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्) is a Sanskrit phrase found in Hindu texts such as the Maha Upanishad, which means "The World Is One Family". It promotes a global perspective and prioritizes the greater good over individual or family interests. It encourages considering the welfare of others, fostering global solidarity and responsibility on various issues, including climate change, sustainable development, peace, and tolerance of differences. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity. Kabir was a well-known 15th century Indian mystic poet and saint who writings immensely influenced Bhakti movement, and his verses are found in Sikhism's scripture Guru Granth Sahib, the Satguru Granth Sahib of Saint Garib Das, and Kabir Sagar of Dharamdas. Kabir believed in the virtue of truth. He asked everyone to follow the path of righteousness and said serving others serves God. Sant Kabir Das dohe (couplets) influenced the Bhakti Movement. Doha is an age-old form of lyrical verse extensively used by Indian poets since the beginning of the 6th century A.D. Doha is an independent verse, a couplet, and its meaning is complete in itself. Sant Kabir Doha's has a direct and indirect correlation with Sustainable Goal 4 Quality Education. Kabir's Doha's reflects on qualities of a teacher, qualities of a disciple, role of a teacher, role of a student, student teacher relationship, gender equality in education, inclusivity, and equality in education. Kabir had written the Doha's in 15th century but are truly relevant to contemporary scenario.

Keywords: *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Kabir, Doha (Couplet) and Quality Education.*

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Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam:

The Sankrit phrase *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्) consists of several words: *Vasudha* (transl. 'The Earth'); *Eva* (transl. 'Is Thus'); and *Kutumbakam* (transl. 'Family') , which

means "The World Is One Family". The original Verse appears in Chapter 6 of Maha Upanishad VI.71-73.

अयं निजः परो वेति गणना लघुचेतसाम्। (Ayam Nijah Paro Vet
Ganana Laghucetasam)

उदारचरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्।। (Udaracaritanam Tu Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam)

The idea of the phrase remains relevant even today as it emphasizes a global perspective, prioritizing the collective well-being over individual or family interests. It encourages mankind to think about the welfare of others, fostering global solidarity and responsibility, especially in addressing crucial issues like climate change, sustainable development, peace, and tolerance of differences.

Sustainable Development Goals:

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end

poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

The 17 SDGs are integrated—they recognize that action in one area will obviously affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability.

Countries around the world have committed to prioritize progress for those who're furthest behind. The SDGs are designed to end poverty, hunger, AIDS, and discrimination against women and girls in general.

It is felt that the creativity, knowhow, technology, and financial resources from the entire mankind is necessary to achieve the SDGs in every context.



Kabir Das:

Kabir Das, Sant Kabir or Bhagat Kabir was a well-known 15th century Indian mystic poet and saint who writings immensely influenced Bhakti movement, and his verses are found in Sikhism's scripture Guru Granth Sahib, the Satguru Granth Sahib of Saint Garib Das, and Kabir Sagar of Dharamdas. Today, his poems are not only sung by Hindus and Sikhs, but also by Muslims—specifically Sufis.

Born in the city of Varanasi in what is now Uttar Pradesh. He seemed to have spent his early life in a

Muslim family. He was deeply influenced Swami Ramananda, his teacher and the founder of the Hindu Bhakti Movement. Sant Kabir Das dohe (couplets) influenced the Bhakti Movement. He was not only a poet but also an eminent social reformer. He is known for being critical of both organized religion both Hinduism and Islam. He questioned what he regarded to be the meaningless and unethical practices of all religions, primarily what he considered to be the wrong practices in the Hindu and Islam religions. During his lifetime, he was threatened by both Hindus and



Muslims for his views. Like Gurunanak when he died, several Hindus and the Muslims he had inspired claimed him as theirs.¹⁴

Kabir believed in the virtue of truth. He asked everyone to follow the path of righteousness and said serving others serves God. Kabir's legacy is today carried forward by the Kabir Panth, a religious community that recognizes him as its founder and is one of the Sant Mat sects. Its members are estimated to be around 9.6 million. People of this community consider the principles and teachings of Kabir as the basis of their life.

Doha:

Doha is an age-old form of lyrical verse extensively used by Indian poets since the beginning of the 6th century A.D. Doha is an independent verse, a couplet, and its meaning is complete in itself.

Doha's of Sant Kabir and Sustainable Development Goal 4 Quality Education

Couplet 1

Guru govind dono khade, Kaake lagu paaye

Balihari guru aapne, govind diyo bataye

Meaning: Kabir wrote this verse to sing the glory of Guru, without whose help, one cannot cross this ocean of worldly life. He asks, "If both, Guru and God in form of Govind were to appear at the door, whose feet will I worship first?" He answers, "It has to be the Guru's feet first, because without him, how would I have recognized (known) God?"

In this couplet Kabir has stated the role played by a teacher in pupil's life.

Couplet 2

Jati na pucho sadhu ki, Puch lijiye gyan

Mol karo talwar ka, pada rehne do myan

Meaning: In the times of Kabir, the caste system was at its height of ugliness. Kabir was born to a caste of weavers. Another remarkable thing about the century when Kabir was born, was that many of the saints and

proponents of Bhakti were from the lower castes. They were widely accepted. At the same time, the higher caste people must have tried to revive the stigma attached to the people of lower castes who became spiritually advanced. Hence, Kabir here urges people to venerate a saint not by his caste but by his knowledge. He compares knowledge to the sword and caste to the scabbard. Even in modern times all over the world, many forms of discriminations are prevalent based on race, religion, region etc. In a wider context, a person should not be subject to bias based on his caste, creed, race, nationality etc. In this couplet Kabir has expressed his views on discrimination based on caste, creed etc and speaks about inclusivity and equality in general.

Couplet 3

Teerth gye ek fal, Sant mile fal chaar

Satguru mile anek fal, Kahe Kabir vichar

Meaning: Visiting a pilgrimage gives one a virtue, but with the company of saints one attains more virtues. And by finding a right teacher, many more virtues are attained in life. In this couplet Kabir says benefits of receiving a right educator.

Couplet 4

Jaka guru bi andala, Chela khara nirandh

andhe ko andha mila, Pada kaal ke fandal

Meaning: One whose teacher is irrational, his disciple himself will be very irrational. An unreasonable disciple got an unreasonable teacher, as a result both fell into the trap of death. Whom you make your guru is up to you, but it is very important to know and recognize him. In this couplet Kabir describes the consequences of having a bad educator.

Couplet 5

Gyan Prakasi Guru Mila, So Jan Bisar Na Jaaye

Jab Saheb Kripa Kari, Tab Guru Mileya Aaye

Meaning: Kabir says you have found Guru because of the blessings of the God. The Guru has enlightened your soul. O human never the Guru because you have



found Satguru because of uncountable blessings of God and you have received the true knowledge because of Satguru. In this couplet Kabir says finding a great teacher is a blessing of Almighty.

Couplet 6

Piche laaga jai tha, Lok ved ke sathi

Aage the Satguru milya, Deepak Diya Hathi

Meaning: Kabir is accepting the Guru as the provider of knowledge and accepting the right path by his grace. It is only by the grace of Guru that he is saved from drowning in the worldly ocean. Kabir says that like ordinary people, he too was blindly following worldly and Vedic traditions. But as he moved further, he met Sat guru. He kindly placed the lamp of knowledge in his hand. Only in the light of the lamp of knowledge could he realize that he was going on the path of ignorance.

In this way, only by the grace of Guru, he could see the simple path of devotion to God. Kabir says that like the ignorant people, he too was trying to cross the worldly ocean by riding on the raft of ego. The shabby raft of ego was about to drown him in the ocean of materialism, illusion, attachment etc., but the wave of Guru's grace hit him, shocked him, and alerted him. It was only in the light of Guru's grace that he came to know that the raft of darkness was in a dilapidated condition and was about to sink. So, he immediately got down from it. He abandoned his ego and adopted the path shown by the Guru.

Words from different languages have been used freely in this couplet. The style is didactic. It has been said that without a Guru, it is not possible to attain knowledge and liberation from the world. Man can be saved only by rising above the ethos and Vedic rituals and by doing spontaneous devotion to God. In this couplet Kabir explains that a true teacher guides a student on a right path.

Couplet 7

Na Guru Milya Naa Sish Bhaya, Laalch Khelya Daav Dunyoo Bude Dhaar Me, Chhadhi Paathar Kee Naav

Meaning: Greed played havoc on both, neither found a true Guru nor the disciple could become curious. After boarding the stone boat, both drowned in the current. In this couplet Kabir says greed is such an evil quality which can end both the teacher and the disciple.

Couplet 8

Ek boond eke mal mutar, Ek chaam ek guda

Ek jyoti mein se sab utpanna, Kaun baaman kaun suda

Meaning: Kabir emphasized on Equality. He made people aware that the actual religion is Humanity. Through this couplet, He wanted to make it clear that we all have the same skin and bone. Everyone has similar waste matter and has similar blood. We all are born from one drop (One God) so, why there is discrimination based on caste and creed. If everything is same, then how one can be brahmin and the other is Shudra. In this couplet Kabir addresses the issue of inequality existing in the society.

Couplet 9

Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Isai, Aaps me sab bhai bhai

Arya, Jaini aur Bishnoi, Ek Prabhu ke bache soi

Meaning: In this couplet, Kabir Saheb Ji said that you people are divided in different religions but in reality, all are the same and are the children of One God only. In this couplet Kabir says people may follow different religion and worship different God. But at the end we all are human beings, and our only religion should be humanity.

Couplet 10

Nari narak na janiye, Sab santan ki khaan

Jaame harijan upjay, Soyee ratan ki khaan

Meaning: In this couplet, Kabir Ji mentioned that every woman should be respected. No one should think of women as hell as she is the goldmine of all Saints. It



is women only who give birth to the men of God. The women are the mines of jewels. In this couplet Kabir is drawing our attention towards gender equality.

Couplet 11

Nari ninda na karo, Nari ratan ki khaan

Nari se nar hot hai, Dhruv Prahlad samaan

Meaning: Kabir, in respect of women, says that never defame a woman, she is the mine of jewels. All famous, religious men or Saints come out of women, like Dhruva and Prahlad. In this couplet Kabir speaks about honour of women.

Couplet 12

Kushtee Ho Sant Bandagee Keejie,

Je Ho Vaishya Ko Prabhu Vishvaas, Charan Chit Deejie

Meaning: If a devotee has leprosy and he has started doing devotion then the devotee society should not hate him. They should greet him just like they greet other devotees. He should be respected. He should be encouraged. His life will be successful by doing devotion, and the disease will be cured too. Similarly, if a prostitute (daughter-sister) is inspired to do devotion, attend spiritual sermons, then she has faith in God. If she listens to the spiritual sermons, then she will get rid of evil. Her welfare will be done. Vices would be eradicated from society. How will she realise her sinful deeds if she does not attend the spiritual sermon? In this couplet Kabir highlights on inclusive society and fair society.

Couplet 13

Kabeer, Nau Man Soot Ulajhiya, Rishi Rahe Jhakh Maar L

Satguru Aisa Sukajha De, Ulajhe Na Doojee Baar LL

Meaning: Kabir has said that the nine maund (360 kg Approx) yarn of spiritual knowledge is entangled. It took weavers more than a day to untangle 1 kg tangled yarn. If the thread breaks while unravelling, the cloth will get knotted. No one buys knotted clothes. Kabir

gives a perfect example of weavers and explained that no one unravel the heavily tangled yarn. Spiritual knowledge is like the same nine maunds i.e., 360 kg of tangled yarn, which the Sat guru (enlightened saint) i.e., Tatvdarshi Sant will unravel in such a way that it will not get entangled again. In this couplet Kabir glorifies the qualities of a great teacher.

Couplet 14

Jo tu brahman, Brahmi ka jaya

Aan baat kaahe nhi aaya

Meaning: Kabir did a lot to remove discrimination, casteism among Hindus and Muslims. He pointed out to the egotist Brahmins that you all take birth in a similar way as others do. In this way, all are equal. In this couplet Kabir throws light on inequality present in the contemporary society.

Couplet 15

Kabira te nar andh hai, Jo guru kahte aur

Hari ruthe guru thor hai, Guru ruthe nahi thor

Meaning: Kabir says he who does not follow his teacher's teachings is blind. If Lord abandoned us, the teacher would lead us to Salvation, but if teacher left us, there will be no salvation. In this couplet Kabir explains the role of a teacher in learner's life.

Couplet 16

Guru so gyan ju lijeye, Sish dijaye daan,

Bahutak bhondu bahi gaye, Sakhi jeev Abhimaan

Meaning: Kabir says receive knowledge from the Guru by offering your head. But many fools, not following this lesson and being proud of their body, wealth etc., got carried away from the world and did not join the Guru. In this couplet Kabir mentions the consequences if one does not follow the instructions of a teacher.

Couplet 17

Guru paras ko antaro, Janat hai sab sant

Vah loha Kanchan kare, Ye kari laye mahant

Meaning: Kabir says all saints know that there is a



difference between a Guru and a philosopher. The philosopher turns iron into gold, but the Guru makes the disciple as great as himself. In this couplet Kabir talks about qualities of a great leader.

Couplet 18

Guru kumhar shish is kumbh, Garhi-Gadhi Kadhai Khot

Antar haath Sahar de, Baher bahe chot

Meaning: Kabir says Guru is a potter and disciple is a pitcher, by giving support from inside and from outside by hitting and making pot, the evil of the disciple comes out. In this couplet Kabir talks about role of a facilitator.

Couplet 19

Guru saman data nahi, Yachak shisha saman

Tin lok ko sampada, Sao guru tinhi dhan

Meaning: Kabir says there is no giver like a Guru, and no beggar like a disciple. The Guru gave more knowledge than the wealth of the three worlds. In this couplet Kabir comments on generous nature of a teacher.

Couplet 20

Jo guru base banarasi, Shish samundar tir

Ek palak bikhare nahi, Jo gun hoy Sharir

Meaning: Kabir says if the Guru resides in Varanasi and the disciple is near the sea, but the disciple's body will have the qualities of the Guru, he will not forget the Guru even for a moment. In the couplet Kabir writes about the bond shared by the teacher and the disciple.

Couplet 21

Sab Dharti kagaj karu, Likhani sab banray

Saat Samudra ki masi karu, Guru guna likha na jaye

Meaning: Kabir says Guru's qualities cannot be written even if the whole earth is written with paper, all the forests are written with pen, all the seven oceans are written with ink. In this couplet Kabir elaborates about the value and worth of a teacher.

Couplet 22

Soi soi naach nacheye, Jehi nibahe guru prem

Kahe Kabir guru prem bin, Kitahu kushal nahi shem

Meaning: Kabir says use your mind and senses in such a way that your love for the Guru increases. Kabir says that without the love of Guru, there is no prosperity. In this couplet Kabir justifies about the presence of right teacher in life.

Couplet 23

Satguru sam koi nahi, Saat deep nou khand

Tin lok na pahiyee, Aru eikisa Brahmanad

Meaning: Kabir says in seven islands, nine continents, three worlds, twenty-one Brahmandas, you will find no one as equal to Satguru. In this couplet Kabir has highly appreciated the teacher.

Couplet 24

Satguru to satbhava hai, Jo asa bhed batai

Dhanya shish dhan bhag tih, Jo aisi sudhi paye

Meaning: Kabir says Satguru is the one who tells the difference between truth and feeling. Blessed is that disciple and blessed is his fate who has realized his true nature through the Guru. In this couplet Kabir states that finding the right teacher in life is a blessing.

Couplet 25

Satguru mila ju janiye, Gyan ujala hoi

Brahma ka bhand todi kari, Rahe nirala hoi

Meaning: Kabir says you have found your true Guru - know this only when the light of knowledge dawns in your heart, you break the veil of illusion and attain the unique form of knowledge. In this couplet Kabir details about positive effects one experience after the entry of right teacher in one's life.

Couplet 26

Manahi diya nij sab diya, Maan se sang sharir

AB deve ko kya raha, Yo kathi kahi Kabir

Meaning: If you have given your mind to the Guru, then know that you have given everything, because along with the mind is the body, it has automatically



surrendered. What is there left to give now? In this couplet Kabir discusses about student - teacher relationship.

Couplet 27

Kete padhi guni pachi mui, Yoga yagya tapa lai

Bin satguru pave nahi, Kotin kare upay

Meaning: How many people pretend to become knowledgeable by reading the scriptures, doing Guna, and doing yoga, fasts, but without a Satguru one cannot attain knowledge and peace, no matter how many measures one takes. In this couplet Kabir certifies that a teacher is an encyclopedia of knowledge.

Conclusion:

Sant Kabir Das was a renowned saint, poet and social reformer of India who lived during the 15th century. His esteemed works and poems describe the greatness and oneness of the Supreme Being. Sant Kabir was a foremost proponent of Bhakti Movement. Some of his famous writings include 'Sakhi Granth', 'Anurag Sagar', 'Bijak' and 'Kabir Granthawali'. His great writing, Bijak, has a huge collection of poems. After being an illiterate, he had written his Doha in Hindi mixing with Avadhi, Braj, Khari Boli, Punjabi, Urdu, Persian, Marwari, and Bhojpuri. In the 15th century, when Persian and Sanskrit were predominant North Indian languages, he chose to write in colloquial, regional language. Sant Kabir Doha's has a direct and indirect correlation with Sustainable Goal 4 Quality Education. Kabir had written the Doha's in 15th century but are truly relevant to contemporary scenario. Kabir Doha's speak at length about how an education system should be. Kabir through his Doha's elaborate on qualities of a teacher, qualities of a disciple, role of a teacher, role of a student, student - teacher relationship, gender equality in education, inclusivity, and equality in education. Kabir's reflections on education in general are noteworthy

and should be considered while implementing New Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

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Cite This Article:

Dr. Kadam B.M. (2024). *Sant Kabir's thoughts on Sustainable Development Goal 4 Quality Education.* In Electronic International Interdisciplinary Research Journal: Vol. XIII (Number I, pp. 1–8).

EIJR. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10578206>