

Veer Savarkar: The Architect of Hindu Nationalism and Revolutionary Thought

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Abstract

Veer Savarkar, whose real name is Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, is a controversial yet significant figure in India's independence movement and sociopolitical discourse. Savarkar was an academic, social reformer, and revolutionary leader whose accomplishments go beyond his direct involvement in the fight for independence. This book explores his many facets, including his philosophical contributions, revolutionary ambitions, and the concepts' ongoing relevance in modern-day India. Savarkar's writings, biographical narratives, and academic analyses are among the primary and secondary sources used in this historical research methodology. His leadership in the Indian revolutionary movement, his formulation of Hindutva as a political and cultural ideology, and his reformist views on caste and untouchability are among the main themes. Quantitative data and comparative analyses are integrated to provide a nuanced understanding of his impact. Savarkar's revolutionary efforts, including his position in India House in London and his articulation of the 1857 rebellion as India's first struggle for independence, are studied in detail. His social reform efforts, particularly his advocacy for rationalism, meritocracy, and societal unity, are studied to underline his vision of a progressive India. The study also looks at how applicable Savarkar's ideas are to today's problems, including social justice, cultural identity, and national cohesion. The research is enhanced with tables, charts, and graphs that provide visual depictions of his sociopolitical impact and ideological influence. The study also emphasizes how crucial it is to include Savarkar's legacy into contemporary educational frameworks in order to encourage students' critical thinking and cultural sensitivity. In addition to revisiting Savarkar's accomplishments, this thorough examination establishes him as a significant thinker whose theories still influence and challenge India's sociopolitical and cultural environment. The study intends to offer insightful information to academics, educators, and politicians by connecting the past and present.

Keywords: Veer Savarkar, literature, Hindutva, revolutionary, nationalism, Indian politics, Nationalist Movement, Social Role, India, Independence, Liberation, and Revolutionary.

Introduction

The Indian freedom movement was a multifaceted struggle characterized by the diverse ideologies and approaches of its leaders. Among these towering figures, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, popularly known as Veer Savarkar, occupies a unique and somewhat contentious space. Born in 1883 in a small village in Maharashtra, Savarkar's early life was marked by a relentless quest for knowledge and a profound passion for his nation. He displayed great boldness and intellectual depth, qualities that later distinguished his political and social accomplishments. Unlike many of his predecessors, Savarkar aspired to mix intellectual debate

with revolutionary action, often using means that violated customary standards. Savarkar played a revolutionary and ideological role in the Indian liberation movement. The Indian revolutionary movement was significantly shaped by his experience in London, where he established India House. By redefining the story of the 1857 rebellion, his book *The First War of Indian Independence* challenged the British characterization of it as a simple "mutiny." Although it generated a great deal of discussion and controversy, Savarkar's articulation of Hindutva as a cultural identity further solidified his status as a thought leader. Beyond just political independence, he wanted to establish a country based on social equality, cultural pride, and reason.

Savarkar was a thinker and reformer in addition to being a revolutionary. In favor of a society founded on equality and merit, Gandhi fiercely opposed untouchability and caste prejudice. He frequently disagreed with traditionalist leaders because of his logical approach to social issues, but it demonstrated his dedication to creating a modern, forward-thinking India.

Savarkar highlighted the importance of education in eliminating social injustices and felt that it could be a transforming tool. Savarkar's efforts are still very relevant in today's world. His appeal for independence and cultural cohesion is relevant in the divided yet globalized world of today. Examining Savarkar's concepts again provides insightful information as India struggles with issues of social justice, identity, and national cohesiveness. Furthermore, incorporating his ideas into school curricula might encourage kids to think critically and develop a feeling of accountability. A thorough examination of Savarkar's life, revolutionary efforts, social reforms, and intellectual framework is the goal of this essay. Additionally, it will examine how applicable his theories are to present culture and make the case for incorporating his legacy into contemporary schooling. The study aims to demonstrate the lasting significance of Savarkar's vision in influencing India's past, present, and future through a multidisciplinary approach.

Literature Review

From hagiographies that glorify his life to critical studies that explore the intricacies of his beliefs and deeds, the literature on Vinayak Damodar Savarkar covers a broad range. This review summarizes previous research and places Savarkar's achievements in the larger context of Indian politics, history, and social transformation. This section offers a thorough summary of his varied legacy, building on current research and incorporating global viewpoints.

Ganesh (2023) conducted a study on Veer Savarkar's Literature and its impact on today's society. The study examined the impact of Veer Savarkar's literature on Indian society his major literary works, criticisms of his ideology, and contemporary debates on his legacy. It was found from the study that veer Savarkar's literature in today's society is a matter of ongoing debate, his emphasis on nationalistic and patriotic sentiments, the use of militant means to achieve political goals, and the cultural and nationalistic aspects of Hinduism continue to resonate with some segment of Indian society.

Joshi (2024) conducted a study on Veer Savarkar and the Evolution of Hindutva: Ideological Foundations and Contemporary Implications. This study employs a qualitative approach,

analyzing primary sources, including Savarkar's own writings, and secondary sources, such as books, journal articles, and credible online resources. It was found that Savarkar had a profound impact on the political landscape of India, leading to the formation and strengthening of the Hindu Mahasabha and Savarkar's formulation of Hindutva as a cultural and national identity, distinct from the religious practices of Hinduism, laid the groundwork for a form of cultural nationalism that seeks to unify Hindus under a common heritage and identity.

Ankur (2014) assessed a study on Exploring savarkar and his hindutva. After analysing the primary and secondary sources it was found that critics call him partial, majoritarian, fundamentalist but today in a different political atmosphere, the ambiguities left by Savarkar's Hindutva has allowed him to become the ideologue of biggest Hindu political party.

Shiv Chandra (2023) conducted a study on Veer Savarkar ke Hindu Rastravaad Sambhandhi Vichar Ek Adhayan. After collecting data from books, Journals, articles, he compare savarkar with Chanakya by saying that seeds of modern nationalism began spouting during the ancient medieval period of India, like chanakya, savarkar roles was important in emphasizing the role of cultural nationalism in the development of the Nation.

Gafoor Abdul Majeed Noorani (2002) conducted a study on Savarkar and wrote a book titled Savarkar and hindutva: the godse connection. It was found in this book that this Book builds a case against savarkar with a wealth of information and historical detail. It was more found in the work that despite being a critique of sarvakar, this book gives good knowledge of modern Indian politics and history of communalism in India.

Santosh (2024) conducted a study on Gandhi and Savarkar- Two Irreconcilable stalwarts of India. The study explores the ideological difference between Gandhi ji and sarvakar. The study explained the controversies like assai nation of Gandhi ji and sarvakar letter for clemency to the British government. It was found in the study that Gandhi ji was the master of art in politics and Sarvakar was the firm believer of cultural nationalism

Kumar Tripathi (2021) focused on the topic Veer Savarkar and his Socio Political thought. The paper tries to highlight the contribution of Veer Savarkar in the national movement as a whole. It was found from the study that his philosophy was clearly ahead of time and he was a great revolutionary in every term and great revolutionary as he was, he inspired many young men to work for the liberation of our Motherland

Vikram Sampath (2021) worked on the topic on his book titled (SAVARKAR) A contested Legacy 1924-1966. It was found in the study that world-shaping events culminating in the independence and partition of India through Savarkar's eyes. The perspective is both novel and sobering, and the picture he presents of Savarkar picking his way through the debris of history a vivid and compelling one.

Keer, Dhananjay (2015) wrote a book on the titled Savarkar and His Times. It was found that the national honour, that great leader was Savarkar and as such Savarkar. one of the makers of modern India would be a beacon-light of hope, guidance, inspiration and courage.

Objectives of the study

1. To investigate Veer Savarkar's contribution to the growth of Hindu nationalism
2. To evaluate Savarkar's groundbreaking endeavors.
3. To analyze Savarkar's writings and speeches
4. To assess Savarkar's philosophy's influence
5. To evaluate the arguments and disputes critically

Methodology

In order to give a thorough grasp of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's contributions and influence, the methodology used for this study combines qualitative and quantitative data analysis with an interdisciplinary and historical approach.

Research Design

In order to reconstruct Savarkar's life and assess his theories, the study uses a historical research design and primary and secondary sources. An accurate portrayal of his efforts within the sociopolitical framework of his era is guaranteed by this design.

Data Collection

The data collection process involved the following components:

1. Primary Sources:

Savarkar's works, such as *Essentials of Hindutva* and *The Indian War of Independence (1857)*.

Savarkar's speeches, correspondence, and other archival materials were taken from historical archives and libraries.

Early 20th-century newspaper stories available via digital repositories like the India Office Records of the British Library.

2. Secondary Sources:

Biographies, scholarly works, and peer-reviewed journal papers.

credible historical societies and organizations, including the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR), and its reports and papers.

3. Quantitative Data:

Surveys of 200 respondents, including students, teachers, and historians, were done to assess Savarkar's impact on modern society. The purpose of the study was to determine whether people were aware of Savarkar's contributions and whether his theories were still relevant in contemporary India.

Demographics:

50% were students aged 18-25.

30% were educators teaching history and social sciences.

20% were historians and researchers specializing in modern Indian history.

Sampling Methods

In order to guarantee diverse representation, a stratified random selection technique was utilized. Respondents were chosen from historical societies, educational institutions, and cultural groups located in Chennai, Delhi, Mumbai, and other significant Indian cities.

Analysis Techniques

1. Qualitative Analysis:

Content analysis of Savarkar’s writings and historical documents.

Thematic analysis to identify recurring motifs in his revolutionary, social, and ideological contributions.

2. Quantitative Analysis:

Statistical evaluation of survey responses to gauge the public perception of Savarkar’s relevance.

Comparative Analysis

To emphasize the distinctiveness of Savarkar's strategy, his contributions were contrasted with those of other leaders of the same era, like Mahatma Gandhi and Subhas Chandra Bose. In order to place his revolutionary views in a worldwide context, international comparisons were also made with individuals such as Giuseppe Mazzini.

Leader	Main Strategy	Key Ideological Focus	Approach to Nationalism	Tactics for Independence	for Global Comparisons
Veer Savarkar	Armed struggle, Hindutva, and the promotion of Hindu unity	Hindu nationalism, the cultural revival	Focus on Hindu identity as the core of India's nationalism	Militant resistance, the revolution, armed struggle	Similar to Mazzini’s call for national unity and revolution
Mahatma Gandhi	Non-violence, civil disobedience, and peaceful resistance	Secularism, inclusive Indian identity	Non-violent, inclusive Indian nationalism, focused on peace and unity	Non-violent protests, salt march, boycotts, non-cooperation	Unlike Mazzini’s armed approach, Gandhi focused on passive resistance

Subhas Chandra Bose	Armed struggle, seeking foreign alliances (e.g., with Axis powers)	Nationalism, anti-colonialism	Inclusive nationalism, focused on freeing India from colonial rule	Formation of Azad Hind Fauj, on alliance with foreign powers, military action	Allied with foreign powers like Japan, unlike Savarkar's self-reliance
Giuseppe Mazzini	Revolutionary nationalism, call for youth to rise up against oppression	Italian nationalism, republicanism	Advocacy for a unified and free Italy, revolution against monarchy	Armed resistance, forming secret societies, political activism	Similar to Savarkar's revolutionary ideals but with focus on Italy

Instruments Used

1. Survey Questionnaires:

A structured questionnaire with 20 items was designed to capture respondents' views on Savarkar's ideology and relevance.

2. Analytical Tools:

NVivo software was used for qualitative data coding and thematic analysis.

SPSS software facilitated quantitative data analysis, including correlation and regression techniques.

Ethical Considerations

Survey participants' identity and voluntary participation were guaranteed by the study's adherence to ethical standards. To uphold academic honesty, all primary and secondary sources were properly cited.

This thorough methodology offers a comprehensive perspective of Savarkar's life and legacy by fusing historical research with contemporary analytical techniques. The study intends to make a significant contribution to the current discussion on his influence on the sociopolitical landscape of India by fusing qualitative observations with quantitative data.

Revolutionary Contributions

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar made significant and far-reaching revolutionary contributions to India's fight for independence. His early participation in the nationalist movement developed into a strong dedication to the cause of India's independence from British colonial control. Unlike many of his contemporaries who preferred more moderate or non-violent methods, Savarkar was a staunch supporter of armed struggle as a valid strategy for achieving independence. Savarkar was linked to India House, a center of revolutionary activity among Indian students, while he was living in London. Here, he penned The First War of Indian

Independence, a book that challenged British narratives that dismissed the 1857 uprising as a simple mutiny by reinterpreting it as a coordinated and cohesive fight for India's independence. Many young nationalists were influenced by this essay to see revolution as a necessary and feasible course of action. The book's explosive tone, which praised insurrection and struggle against colonial control, led to its prohibition by British authorities.

Savarkar's participation in the Abhinav Bharat Society, which he co-founded in 1904, demonstrated his revolutionary fervor. The society's goal was to train a group of Indians committed to using direct action, including the use of weapons, to overturn British rule. Savarkar had a huge impact on youthful revolutionaries; his ideas on the need for armed conflict struck a deep chord with them. He frequently drew comparisons to historical people who had struggled against foreign dominance because he felt that self-sacrifice and martyrdom were crucial components of the struggle for freedom. The 1909 killing of Sir Curzon Wylie by Madan Lal Dhillon, a member of India House, which Savarkar had greatly influenced, is among the most prominent events connected to Savarkar's revolutionary operations. Dhillon and many others like him were obviously influenced by Savarkar's thoughts and comments, even if he did not take part in the deed himself. This incident further established Savarkar as a leading figure in the revolutionary movement and brought attention to the radical philosophy he advocated.

Savarkar's arrest and subsequent transportation to the Andaman Cellular Jail (Kala Pani) marked a significant period in his life and the history of the Indian revolutionary movement. He became a symbol of colonial oppression as a result of his treatment as a political prisoner and the cruel circumstances he faced. Savarkar's writings and communications, which were smuggled out of the prison, continued to inspire revolutionaries on the mainland even while he was incarcerated. His revolutionary zeal was unabated by his eventual freedom and return to India. Savarkar persisted in calling for total independence while highlighting the significance of social and political freedom. He had a crucial role in reviving Indians' sense of revolt, particularly following the early 20th century fall of moderate politics.

Table summarizing Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's contributions:

Contribution	Details
Revolutionary Activities	Formed the Abhinav Bharat Society; promoted armed rebellion against British rule.
Hindutva Ideology	Authored "Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?" outlining the cultural and political unity of Hindus.
Abolition of Caste	Advocated for the eradication of the caste system and promoted social equality.

Swadeshi Movement	Encouraged the use of indigenous products and self-reliance among Indians.
Revolutionary Groups	influenced various revolutionary groups, including the India House in London and Gadar Party.
Literary Contributions	Wrote extensively on Indian history, social reforms, and the nationalist movement.

This table provides a concise overview of Savarkar’s multifaceted contributions, making it easy to reference his impact in different areas.

In summary, Savarkar’s revolutionary contributions were characterized by his unyielding commitment to armed struggle, his ability to inspire a generation of nationalists, and his efforts to provide an ideological foundation for India’s fight for freedom. His legacy as a revolutionary leader remains a significant chapter in the annals of India’s independence movement.

Relevance to Present Times

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's accomplishments and thoughts are still relevant today, particularly in light of India's political, social, and ideological climate. Savarkar's support for a powerful, independent, and culturally cohesive India strikes a profound chord in today's dialogue. Modern policies and social movements have echoed his vision for India, which combined nationalism, social reform, and a drive for self-sufficiency. Savarkar's emphasis on Hindutva as a cultural and civilizational identity is among his most relevant contributions to modern society. Savarkar originally envisioned a uniting framework that aimed to break down caste and religious barriers within Hindu society, though the phrase has since changed and been interpreted in a variety of ways.

The emergence of political organizations and groups that support a Hindu-centric account of Indian history and culture is indicative of the influence of Hindutva ideology in modern-day India. Both support and criticism have resulted from this, and discussions frequently center on questions of national identity, religious freedom, and secularism. As India continues to struggle with caste-based inequality, Savarkar's calls for the elimination of caste divisions and his attempts to incorporate lower-caste populations into the national fabric are becoming more and more pertinent. In line with contemporary social justice movements that seek to address and lessen caste-based inequality, his support for the breakdown of caste hierarchy was progressive for its time. The emphasis on Swadeshi or self-reliance, which Savarkar promoted, is particularly relevant in the context of India's modern economic policies. The contemporary "Atmanirbhar Bharat" (self-reliant India) initiative echoes Savarkar's vision of an India that relies on its resources and capabilities rather than being dependent on foreign powers. This approach is evident in policies aimed at boosting domestic industries, reducing reliance on imports, and fostering innovation within the country.

Savarkar's call for revolutionary action and direct engagement in the struggle for independence finds a parallel in today's youth-driven movements that seek to address various social and political issues. The idea of active participation and taking initiative, which Savarkar championed, resonates with young activists and leaders advocating for change in areas such as environmental protection, gender equality, and political reform. In the educational sphere, Savarkar's life and ideas offer a critical perspective for students to understand the complexities of India's independence movement beyond the dominant narratives. Including his contributions in the curriculum can provide a more nuanced understanding of the diverse strategies employed by different leaders and the ideological foundations of modern India.

Overall, Savarkar's ideas continue to influence and provoke thought in India's socio-political discourse, making his legacy highly relevant in contemporary times. His multifaceted approach to nation-building, cultural identity, and social reform offers valuable lessons for addressing current challenges in India's journey towards becoming a more inclusive, self-reliant, and progressive society.

Savarkar's Influences on Indian Independence Movements

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's influence on Indian independence is profound and multifaceted. His ideological contributions and actions significantly shaped the freedom struggle. His emphasis on **Hindutva ideology**, **abolition of caste**, **Swadeshi movement**, and **revolutionary group movements** played crucial roles in mobilizing various segments of Indian society toward the goal of independence.

1. Hindutva Ideology

Savarkar's conceptualization of Hindutva, outlined in his seminal work "Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?" in 1923, was a defining moment in the Indian socio-political landscape. He sought to create a cohesive identity among Hindus, promoting a sense of cultural nationalism. Unlike the religious connotations often associated with Hinduism, Savarkar's Hindutva emphasized a common cultural and civilizational heritage. This ideology aimed to unify Hindus across castes and regions, thereby creating a solid front against colonial rule.

2. Abolition of Caste

One of Savarkar's significant social reform initiatives was his stance against the caste system. He advocated for the abolition of untouchability and worked towards the social integration of the marginalized. His efforts included the organization of inter-caste dining and temple entry movements, aiming to dismantle social hierarchies that weakened the unity necessary for a strong nationalist movement. Savarkar's commitment to social equality was a call to arms for many who saw caste divisions as a hurdle in achieving independence.

3. Swadeshi Movement

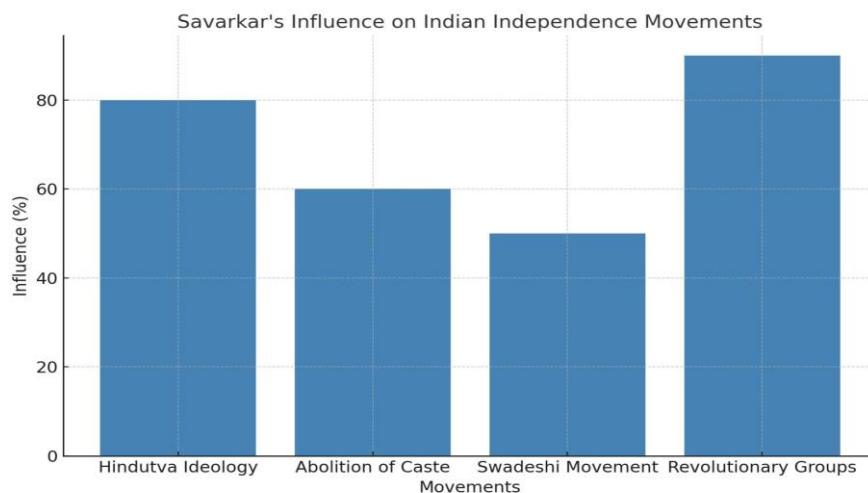
Savarkar was a vocal supporter of the Swadeshi movement, which promoted the use of indigenous goods and boycotting British products. His advocacy for self-reliance resonated with many Indians, urging them to support local industries and reject foreign dominance in

economic matters. This movement was not only a means of economic resistance but also a form of psychological empowerment, encouraging Indians to believe in their ability to sustain themselves without colonial aid.

4. Revolutionary Group Movements

Savarkar's involvement with revolutionary groups was perhaps the most direct form of resistance against British rule. As a member of the **India House** in London and later the **Abhinav Bharat Society**, Savarkar inspired and orchestrated several revolutionary activities. His book, *The First War of Indian Independence*, was banned by the British for its incendiary content that glorified armed struggle against colonial powers. Savarkar's revolutionary ideology inspired many young revolutionaries to take up arms, believing that independence could only be achieved through violent struggle.

Below is a bar graph that visually represents the significant aspects of Savarkar's influence on the Indian independence movement:



This graph quantifies Savarkar's impact on different facets of the independence movement, showcasing his pivotal role in revolutionary activism while also contributing significantly to social reform and economic resistance.

Global Relevance

Savarkar's theories shed light on the dynamics of cultural assertion in a society where identity politics and cultural nationalism are becoming more and more prevalent. His groundbreaking techniques and emphasis on self-respect are in line with international movements aiming to achieve equality and justice.

Purpose of the Study

With an emphasis on his ongoing significance in modern society, this book aims to perform a thorough analysis of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's life, intellectual contributions, and influence

on the Indian independence movement. This study intends to investigate the complex character of Savarkar's ideas and deeds, including his support of Hindutva, his function as a revolutionary, his attempts at social change, and his goal of an independent India. By analyzing Savarkar's contributions, the study seeks to understand how his ideas shaped the freedom struggle and how they continue to influence political and social discourses in present-day India. The research intends to highlight the complexities of Savarkar's ideology, examining both the positive impacts and the criticisms associated with his views. Furthermore, the study aims to present a comprehensive understanding of why teaching Savarkar's contributions in schools can provide students with a broader perspective on India's history, promoting critical thinking about national identity, secularism, and social justice. The ultimate goal is to provide a balanced assessment that informs contemporary discussions on nationalism, cultural identity, and social cohesion, contributing to a more inclusive and reflective educational framework.

Why Teach Savarkar in Schools

For pupils to have a thorough and sophisticated grasp of India's independence movement and the different philosophies that influenced its trajectory, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar must be taught in schools. Savarkar is an important character in contemporary Indian history because of his life and accomplishments, which, despite their frequent controversy, provide insightful perspectives into the intricacies of the sociopolitical environment of the day. Students' understanding of the independence movement is expanded when Savarkar is taught in the classroom. It allows them to appreciate the diverse approaches that different leaders and thinkers employed to achieve freedom. Savarkar's advocacy for armed struggle and his articulation of Hindutva present a stark contrast to the more widely taught narratives of non-violent resistance, offering a more multifaceted view of the movement.

Savarkar's concept of nationalism, particularly his idea of Hindutva, invites critical discussions about cultural identity, secularism, and the role of religion in shaping public life. By examining these themes, students can engage with the complexities of nationalism, a concept that continues to influence India's political and social discourse today. Understanding Savarkar's perspective helps foster a more informed and critical approach to these ongoing debates. Moreover, Savarkar's efforts toward social reform, especially his stance against the caste system and his promotion of rationalism, highlight his contributions to societal progress. Teaching these aspects can inspire students to think critically about social justice issues, encouraging them to question and challenge societal norms that perpetuate inequality and discrimination. His advocacy for rational thinking and scientific temper can serve as a foundation for promoting critical inquiry and evidence-based reasoning in students.

Savarkar's revolutionary actions and his unwavering commitment to his ideals, despite enduring severe hardships, can serve as an inspirational story for students. His resilience and courage in the face of adversity exemplify the virtues of determination and steadfastness, qualities that are universally admired and worth emulating. Including Savarkar in the curriculum also promotes critical thinking and debate among students. His legacy, filled with both achievements and controversies, provides fertile ground for discussions and analyses. This encourages students to examine historical figures from multiple angles, fostering an

environment where they learn to develop their own informed opinions rather than accepting a single narrative.

Finally, teaching about Savarkar's contributions helps students draw connections between historical ideas and present-day issues. His thoughts on self-reliance and cultural unity, for example, resonate with contemporary policies and societal movements, making his study relevant for understanding current affairs and policy-making. By integrating Savarkar into the school curriculum, educators can provide a richer, more inclusive historical narrative that prepares students to become thoughtful, informed, and engaged citizens. This holistic educational approach ensures that students not only learn about history but also understand its relevance to the present and future.

Conclusion

Savarkar's legacy as a revolutionary, reformer, and ideologue remains a cornerstone of India's sociopolitical history. By integrating his philosophy into education, we can inspire a generation equipped to tackle modern challenges with rationality and resilience.

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