

Mahatma Gandhi Views on Women Education Thoughts- A Study

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Abstract

Mahatma Gandhi an Idealist, Pragmatist and Naturalist Philosopher and his educational philosophy is based on his philosophy of his life. Gandhi made a special contribution to education. He was the first Indian to support an educational programme built around the core principles of Indian cultures and civilization. In this paper an attempt has been made to discuss the educational philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and its relevance to the present scenario. Descriptive method and secondary sources of data has been used for the present study. Mahatma Gandhi believed that people have no idea about the true education because the value of education is assessed from the economic point of view. The parents provide their sons and daughters such type of education which enable them to earn money. But this is not the main objective of true education. The main objective of education should be the development of character. The nature of true education is defined as the formation of character. He wished that some local craft should be made as medium of education for children so that they develop their mind, body and soul in a harmonious way and also meet the needs of their future life. Such Gandhi Educational thoughts are relevant for development and providing solutions of the current problems like unemployment, poverty, corruption and many others. An attempt has been made in this paper to discuss the Gandhi women's educational thoughts.

Keywords: Mahatma Gandhi, Education Philosophy, Non-Violence, Women's Education and Education as Liberation

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I. Introduction

Gandhi (1869-1948) was two major figures of the 20th century India, owing to the former's literary and the latter's political and philosophical sensibilities. Gandhi's ideas and ideals regarding education are multi-faceted. For him education has multiple aims and objectives. For him education is not only a means to serve an individual or a national cause but goes on to serve the still larger cause of humanity. It is this aspect of his teachings which will remain the focuses point of this paper.

The novel *Swami and Friends* (1935) is written in the characteristic Narayanian vein which refuses to evolve and incorporate serious issues on the surface. Though primarily it appears to be apolitical and plain in style, the novel nonetheless exhibits some serious issues related to education. Efforts would be made in the paper to show how the educational system portrayed in the novel is in stark contrast to the educational philosophy and the ideals for which Gandhi pined throughout his life.

Education, like family, marriage, religion, law and politics is one of the important institutions of society which play pivotal role in maintaining and developing social system. Gandhi contribution to education is unique in this sense that he made the first attempt to develop an indigenous scheme of education in British India. With the advent of British colonial rule in India, an alien system of imperial education was introduced which was in contradiction with the age-old, unique and all-inclusive holistic educational system of India. It has not only caused irreparable damage to Indian education system in the long run, but also created numbers of all kinds of differences, class-consciousness, ever increasing crave for western materialistic life style, etc.

His philosophy of education is a harmonious blending of Idealism, Naturalism and Pragmatism. Idealism is the base of Gandhi philosophy whereas Naturalism and Pragmatism are the helpers in translating that philosophy into practice. Therefore he is known as practical- idealist. His nation was education for life, education through life, and education throughout life. This definition of Mahatma Gandhi would comprise everything that can be conceived under education. In the present paper an attempt has been made to discuss about the Gandhi's Educational thought which were influenced by his philosophy of life.

Mahatma Gandhi is a spirit of profound wisdom and captivating humility, armed with only an iron will and inflexible resolve and a frail man who confronted the brutality of military strength with the dignity of a simple human being. He believed in God implicitly. According to him, though individuals have different bodies,

yet the same soul pervades in all of us. In short, Gandhiji experienced and realized Unity in Diversity. His philosophy of life has four elements namely Truth, Non-Violence, Fearlessness, Satyagraha, and Truth Telling.

Gandhi Educational Thoughts

Gandhi Basic Education was the practical embodiment of his philosophy of education. His basic education takes up the challenging task of preparing the young learners to become morally sound, individually independents, socially constructive, economically productive and responsible future citizens which can prove helpful in solving the problem of unemployment by making youth self-employed by giving them skill training. Gandhiji believed that education should develop all the capacities of the child so that he becomes a complete human being.

In this way, fully and harmoniously developed personality is able to realize the ultimate aim of life which is Truth or God Gandhiji has himself explained By education I mean all-round drawing out of the best in child's and man's body, mind and spirit. Literacy is neither the beginning nor the end of education. This is only a means through which man or woman can be educated. His Basic Principles of Education includes

1. Education should be made self-supporting through some productive work. Education should lead to economic independence and self-reliance for livelihood.
2. Education should create useful, responsible and dynamic citizens by education all the hidden powers of child should develop according to the community of which he is an integral part.
3. Education should achieve the harmonious development of child's body, mind, heart and soul.
4. All education should be imparted through some productive craft or industry and a useful correlation should be established with that industry.
5. The industry should be such that the child is able to achieve gainful work experience through practical work
6. From seven to fourteen years of age, education of each child should be free, compulsory and universal
7. Mere literacy cannot be equated with education. Education should employ some craft as a medium of education so that the child gains economic self-reliance for his life
8. Education should develop human values in the child.
9. The medium of instruction should be mother-tongue

According to Gandhi through education a child must be able to learn a productive craft to meet his future needs of life by adopting some industry or business. Hence, he advocated education for self-reliance and capacity to earn one's livelihood as the main aim of education by this aim he did mean to make the child a labourer but wished that each child should earn while engaged in learning and gain some learning as he is busy with earning. He advocated that together with vocational education cultural advancement should also be achieved. The two aspects of development should go together side by side. Gandhi insisted that education should develop all aspects of individuality harmoniously.

He also believed that one of the essential aims of education is the moral development or character development. Gandhi wishes that every child should grow into a divine human being by realizing Godliness in his self. Gandhi himself writes to develop the self is to build character and to prepare the self for complete realization and realization of Godliness

Gandhi Women's Education

Gandhi advocated women's education Gandhi strongly emphasized the emancipation of women he opposed boarding, child marriage, untouchability and extreme repression of Hindu counts and sati. The same was recommended by the Kothari Commission and the new education policy. The Government of India is working in this direction and the state of women's education is on a better platform than before. Today the government is trying to make reservations in jobs, politics etc for the betterment of women.

In the 2020 National Education Policy, special attention has been given to women national education policy 2020 aims to address gender inequality in the recruitment of teachers in rural areas. It is hoped that new methods will be introduced into policy to ensure that merit and qualifications are taken into account and that women teachers are given appropriate forums for recruitment.

Mahatma Gandhi opined that true education lies in serving others. 'Great deals of religious obligations on us are fulfilled when we nurse the sick. He was not worried about the bookish learning so long as the students performed their duties and observed solemn ethical conduct. To him carrying out the fundamentals of ethics is duty. He told, I shall support you if you want to study further out of your love for it or for excellence. But I won't scold you if you do not do it. Try your best to carry out the decisions you have made write to me what you do at the press, at what time do you get up and about your work at the farm.

Education Liberation Strong laying Foundation

That is true education which leads to freedom that which liberates is education Liberation is of two kinds. One form of liberation consists in securing the freedom of the country from foreign rule. Such freedom

may prove short-lived the other kind of liberation is for all time the ultimate moksha. Mahatma Gandhi considered education as the foundation of life. The ordinary meaning of education is knowledge of letters. To teach boys reading, writing, and arithmetic is called primary education.

He gave example of a peasant who earns his bread honestly but has ordinary knowledge of the world. He knows fairly well how he should behave towards his parents, his wife, his children and his fellow villagers. He understands and observes the rule of morality. But he cannot write his own name. What is the need of giving him knowledge of letter he should not be made discontented with his cottage.

He will not need such an education. He believed that a man has had a liberal education that has been so trained in youth that his body is the ready servant of his will and does with ease and pleasure. One who is truly educated 'whose intellect is clear, cold, logic engine with all parts of equal strength and in smooth working order whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the fundamental truths of nature whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience who has learnt to hate all vileness and to respect others as himself.

Such a one and no other, I conceive, has had a liberal education, for he is in harmony with nature. He will make the best of her and her of him. Our ancient school system is enough. Character-building has the first place in it and that is primary education. A building erected on that foundation will last.

Education and Culture

Culture is the refinement of feelings. Education makes a man cultured. Cultural progress achieved through education makes a society and nation healthy. 'Education' means knowledge of literature. 'Education is a means and culture is the end. The latter is possible even without education. For instance, if a child is brought up in a truly cultured family, it will consciously imbibe culture from its family, in our country at any rate. Present-day education and culture have no connection with each other.

Mahatma Gandhi advocated the education of the hand training of hands is the source of skill development. So a socially useful productive handicraft is the heart of Basic Education. Training of hands habituates man to think critically and creatively. Man becomes a creator of through the education of hand. He said, 'Literary education should follow the education of the hand the one gift that visibly distinguishes man from beast.

Nonviolence and Social Development

According to Gandhi's thought, education should not only be about imparting knowledge, but should focus on the social development of the child. The child must learn to live in society and follow the norms of society. Now the world is going through a phase of social mobility. Because there is social unrest in the society and only responsible persons can help to maintain the harmony of the society, otherwise there can be social unrest.

This could damage the democratic system that Gandhi always advocated. Discipline and responsibility cannot be imposed from without, but must come from within. If you follow this in life, your life will be more beautiful and you will enjoy healthy relationships with your parents, sister, brother, wife, neighbours, friends, classmates, colleagues, young, old, etc.

Nonviolence is central in Gandhi's educational thought, which was the great weapon Gandhi used against the British Raj during India's freedom movement. Gandhi believed that non-violence and tolerance required great courage and patience. In a world passing through stages of warfare characterized by violence and terrorism, Gandhi's ideas on nonviolence are in demand more than ever. The International Day of Non-Violence is celebrated on October Second, the anniversary of the birth of the hero of the Indian independence movement, Mahatma Gandhi.

In its resolution of 15th June 2007, the United Nations General Assembly identified Remembrance Day as an opportunity to spread the message of nonviolence through education and public awareness. The resolution affirms the universal importance of the principle of non-violence and the desire to ensure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non-violence.

II. Conclusion

The modern system of education acts as an instrument to increase the value of consumerism, materialism, undue competition and violence the growing concern over the erosion of ethical values, youth unrest, ecological violence and increasing cynicism in society have brought to focus the need of revival of indigenous Indian heritage and life-style. Gandhi could foresee such possible developments half a century ago and advocated a new alternative of Basic education by which of course, the emphasis on learning through craft may be retained, but perhaps modified to suit the times.

Gandhi had been one of the most sensational experimentalists that the world has ever seen. His 'Basic Education' has the force to uplift the downtrodden and the weak. Contrary to popular opinion his educational

philosophy is quite relevant in the contemporary 21st century. And hence any effort to call his educational philosophy as impractical and over idealistic needs a proper reassessment. Moreover, there is an urgency to reevaluate, reassess and refine his educational philosophy for the larger cause of the nation.

It is high time we acknowledge the need of a new and an all-inclusive educational system. The Mahatma Gandhi Way of Education can be a great starting point. His educational thoughts are based on eternal principles of truth, love, and self-sacrifice, character building non-violence, so, will never lose their relevance. The requirement is to adapt his thoughts according to the present scenario. When Environmental consciousness, moral values, intrapersonal skills, community and society oriented awareness are all inculcated in young minds through education, then only development of the country in true sense can be possible.

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