

Applications of Gandhian Education in the 21st Century

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ARTICLE DETAILS

Research Paper

Keywords:

*Gandhi's Philosophy,
Contemporary Education,
Vocational Education.*

ABSTRACT

Shortly after Gandhi's unanticipated death, Jawaharlal Nehru said, "The lamp has gone out but it will continue to illuminate for hundreds of years. In 1959, Dr. Martin Luther King, stated that Gandhi "was inevitable." Gandhi is unavoidable if the human race has to move forward. Gandhiji's educational theory was put into practice with his Basic Education initiative. His basic education necessitates the difficult task of educating young people to grow into morally upright, self-reliant, civic-minded, financially secure, and accountable citizens in the future. This can help to solve the unemployment issue by empowering young people to work for themselves through training for skills. His primary goal is to educate children in their mother tongue and has advocated for activity-based learning to help them become capable and self-sufficient. To help children, develop their mind, body, and soul in an integrated way he wished that some sort of local craft should be made as an element of learning. This paper aims to investigate Gandhi's educational philosophy and its relevance to the modern educational environment, while reviewing the various primary as well secondary sources we came up with the conclusion that the Gandhian system of education is fully appropriate to the needs and requirement

INTRODUCTION

"In my life, I have always looked to Mahatma Gandhi as an inspiration, because he embodies the kind of transformational change that can be made when ordinary people come together to do extraordinary things".

Barack Obama,

Mahatma Gandhi, the father of nation has passed away almost before 70 years but his ideology, ideas, and individuality has a significant application on the growth and the reconstruction of the current social structure worldwide. Gandhiji was a visionary leader and an educationist with extensive views on an array of topics related to society and human existence. The 74th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on September 30, 2019, after extensive discussion of the most pressing challenges, including digital dangers, terrorism, climate change, financial emergencies, and t religious beliefs. While making an effort to figure out how to solve all of these problems Gandhian ideas strikes the mind. The initial plan for the country's job-centered, value-driven, mass-oriented educational system was provided by Mahatma Gandhi with "The Wardha /Basic Scheme of Education,". This revolutionary educational model requires that knowledge be connected to action and real-world experience. His educational plan calls for a close integration of the community and the school to foster social and supportive skills among students (kabir1995).

EDUCATION AS DRAWING OUT THE BEST

By education, I mean an all-round drawing of the best in child and man in body, mind and spirit.

Mahatma Gandhi.

Gandhi said: "By education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man body, mind and spirit. Child should be taught some useful handicraft through education and enable them to manufacture from the movement the training starts." As per M.K Gandhi, real education is that which results in harmonious development of child's personality. He believed that most important aspect of the educational system was that it should foster an individual's full personality development in addition to providing some vocational training to meet their financial needs. Real education is that which stimulates and awakens the physical, mental, and spiritual faculties. Literacy is neither the inception nor the end of

education. Gandhi noticed that the outdated educational system would not be able to support the development of a new society. If education does not foster a spirit of sacrifice and service, it is useless. Workshop shouldn't be connected to a school; the school itself should be a workshop. He believed in bread and butter aim of education so learning should occur both during and after earning. Gandhi's perspective on education through "Basic Scheme of Education" never really took off or became a reality because it was not carried out in a sincere manner. As a result, educators are sceptical of its effectiveness and applicability in the modern era. But scholastic personalities are always contemplating on the limitations of the current system of education, because it has increased the proportion of educated unemployed people and is turning this vast pool of unemployed people into a threat to society as a whole. There is still hope that Gandhian educational ideas can be adopted to prevent the society from collapsing completely.

OBJECTIVES:

To explore Gandhi's educational thought and its applications in contemporary educational scenario.

METHODOLOGY:

This investigation has employed a comprehensive approach towards accomplishing its objective. The researcher has used both the primary as well as secondary sources to carry out this research. The primary sources, involves the compiled works of Gandhi, his public speeches, and articles published in periodicals and newspapers. The secondary sources that were evaluated in the research process were books, research articles, national and international magazines.

RELEVANCE OF GANDHIAN SCHEME OF EDUCATION

“Basic education links the children, whether of cities or the villages, to all that is best and lasting in India”.

M.K Gandhi

The objective of basic education, according to Gandhiji, is the all-round development of the child, which fosters social orientation. Education is now being implemented with this goal in mind. Education by doing was the aim of Gandhiji's fundamental education. Reading a book will not help them understand the material and will quickly be lost as a form of punishment. Basic stands for fundamentals, even though the Wardha Scheme of Education has also been referred to as "Nai Taleem" and "basic education." This indicates that the national culture and civilization of India served as the foundation for this educational programme. It would be closely related to people's fundamental needs and interests.

Free and compulsory education for all: Gandhiji believed that children of age 6-14 years shall have free and compulsory basic education. "I am a firm believer in the principle of free and compulsory primary education for India" declared Gandhiji. Additionally, I believe that the only way we can achieve this goal is by inculcating practical skills and employing this to develop their cognitive, affective, and psycho motor faculties.

Craft centred education: Gandhiji placed a strong emphasis on the worth of craft-centered learning experiences. Craft will allow education to become self-reliant and would aid in giving all citizens access to employment opportunities and helping them become self-sufficient. Gandhiji said that if the mind was trained from an early age through village handicrafts it would lead disciplined and critical mind.

THE GANDHIAN MODEL OF SKILL-BASED, INDEPENDENT EDUCATION

“Education shall be a kind of insurance against unemployment”

M.K Gandhi

The Gandhian education scheme, sought to transform children's hearts, minds, and souls. He stated in Harijan, "new types of education are necessary for the establishment of new world." Our approach to Basic-education directs to the blossoming of the body, mind, and the soul, Education mean bringing out the best in every child and man—in terms of body, mind, and spirit. As a result, child's education should start by teaching them how to make a practical handicraft and giving the tools, required for producing. A child's spiritual, intellectual, and physical potential should all be developed through true education, as stated by Bala (2005).

Democratic relevance

Gandhi's philosophy of democracy is successfully covered by non-violence. In his imagination, democracy unites, punishment is non-existent, and even institutions such as 'Rajya' are immobilised by it. Democratic governments ought to be exempt from every issue facing the modern world, Gandhi's educational programme is the most pertinent. It must be able to guarantee each citizen's equal development through an integrated approach.

Value education

Value-oriented education is the dissemination of knowledge about values that are deemed useful for the individual as well as for society. Understanding human values and modern social change requires an

awareness of Gandhi's social, religious, philosophical, and economic approach. Gandhi's principles of truth, nonviolence, peace, and love will enable us to inspire people all over the world through the education policy. Gandhi was especially interested in character development. He felt that education was not education if it did not foster character development. He believed that the foundation of a good citizen was a strong character.

REFLECTIONS OF GANDHIAN EDUCATION IN CONTEMPORARY SCENERIO

In its opening paragraphs, the National Education Policy 2020 acknowledges, “the shifting employment terrain and global system” and urges parents and educators to become more aware of and supportive of each child's unique abilities in both academic and extracurricular settings in order to promote holistic development (pages 3 and 5), along with the skills of the 21st century (page 12) serving as a cornerstone.

As an extension of this, the policy discusses enjoyable, practice-based curricula that offer the students of 6th to 8th grade "an investigation and hands-on experience of a sampling of key occupational arts and crafts, such as woodwork, electrical work, metallic work, cultivating gardens, making pottery, etc. as believed by the states and the communities at large and as established by neighbouring training needs." The policy emphasises that education needs to be integrated, integrated, enjoyable, and engaging. Students will take part in a 10-day bag-free event during which they will intern with regional career experts.

Reimagining the Vocational Education NEP 2020 critically assesses the state of vocational education at the university and school levels today and emphasises how urgent it is to accelerate its adoption. The goal of the document is to dismantle the social division that surrounds the vocational education. To achieve this, it calls for a phased insertion of vocational education programmes into all academic institutions (p. 44). It will guarantee that every child is exposed to multiple careers and learns at least one. The applications of Gandhian education in contemporary scenario can be reflected as:

- ❖ Emphasis on Mother Tongue
- ❖ Child-centered Education
- ❖ Emphasis on Democratic Values
- ❖ Development of Critical Thinking and Creativity
- ❖ Self-supporting aspect of education
- ❖ Women's Education

The NEP 2020 policy also has placed too much emphasis on all these factors. Everyone understands the value of education, so any time is a good time to start down this path. It is possible that one will not have the opportunity to finish their basic education in life, but if the means are there and you have the desire to learn, then the teachers will illuminate the way.

School education today

“The system prevalent in India tended to become increasingly book-centred. Even in the case of children it became more and more exercise of the memory than a development of intellect, emotions and character. So much concern with books tended to divorce education from the realities of Indian life. It often done the child away from his social and cultural milieu and encouraged in him a distaste, if not contempt, for manual labour”

(Kabir,1995)

Nothing much has changed, aside from the constitutional status, from the first post-independence National Educational Policy to the more current move of declaring basic schooling a fundamental human right. Policies at the federal and state levels have prioritised enrolment, or quantity. To entice the kids, a number of incentive programmes were launched, including free and required education, kid-friendly curricula, midday meals, neighbourhood schools, bare minimum infrastructure and facilities, and trained teachers. Being a social being, the child has richer socio-personal experiences when they start school. The scope that schools have to address and value heterogeneity in the classroom is limited. Although textbooks (NCF2005) were developed using a learner-centered approach, the transaction is still teacher-centered. We are unable to guarantee the anticipated results in terms of meaningful education until the child demonstrates his or her involvement in the school procedures. In Indian schools, there is diversity in the classroom. Children come from a variety of religious and socioeconomic backgrounds.

NEED OF LEADERSHIP

Gandhi's deeds and sacrifices won him the respect of the impoverished masses of India as well as the thinking people of the world. Because his actions and thoughts were almost identical, he was a popular mass leader and a credible figure. Morally strong and unwavering people are hard to come by these days, particularly in the leadership, which is usually perceived as power-hungry and dishonest. In this sense, even Gandhian has proven to be inadequate and incapable of leading the people.

Gandhi's belief in group action over individual action led to his relationship with the people. His actions were meant to shift people's perceptions, make them think about the bigger picture of society, and ultimately inspire change. These days, increasing social alienation is a result of consciousness-induced individualization and atomization. Social media's widespread use promotes a feeling of community, but atomization is also rising. People's lack of interpersonal connections causes them to feel more alone even in spite of their independence, which exacerbates psychological problems. It's hard to live a holistic life these days. Gandhian thought offers a suitable alternative. Fundamental change is required to raise a new consciousness and make Gandhian ideas appealing to a wider audience. Marketization has taken over people's thoughts, and they now regard consumerism as the holy grail. Therefore, there is resistance to taking Gandhi's difficult, alternative path into consideration.

CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED

We are once more discussing the Gandhian ideal of independent education with skill integration, nearly 90 years later. Exposure to diverse skills and vocational training can assist a child in determining their areas of interest.

Making education employable is necessary given the circumstances we all find ourselves in, but basic education shouldn't be sacrificed in this rush. Vocational education is also receiving attention because, as the New Education policy very clearly states, India wants to guarantee its participation in the global economy for its skilled youth in the next 30 years. Strong suggestions are provided by NEP2020 to reduce the disparities between academic and practical courses after critically analysing the shortcomings of previous policies and programmes in these directions. In addition, resources will be found at the state and local levels to introduce pupils to indigenous art and craft forms. To the extent that parents, educators, and students may indicate their interest in these courses, it is unclear how this will be implemented.

“I acknowledge that my suggestion is new. However, novelty is not a crime. I acknowledge that there isn't a lot of experience behind it. However, based on our collective experience, my associates and I are confident that the plan will succeed if it is implemented diligently. Even if the experiment fails, there is nothing the country can lose by trying it. And if the experiment is even partially successful, the benefits will be enormous”.

(Gandhi's idea towards new education) NEP 2020 strategically encourages ambitious Gandhian ideal.

CONCLUSION

In summary, it can be claimed that M.K. Gandhi saw education as a tool rather than an end in and of itself. It is regarded as a tool serving both the needs of the country and the all-encompassing development of each person's personality. Gandhi's idea of the education appears to be necessary in light of issues facing society today, including terrorism, violence, moral decay, student unrest, unemployment, and inequality. Gandhi's educational ideas are still relevant today and offer answers to numerous issues including poverty, unemployment, and corruption. We have attempted to explore Gandhi's educational philosophy in this work, where we believe that Gandhi's idea of education is relevant to needs of contemporary environment. The country's new education policy of 2020 seems to be the reflection of Gandhi's idea of education.

Making education job-oriented and productive for self-employment is a current focus of several educational committees. Gandhiji's idea of basic education should serve as the foundation for reforming the current educational system in light of the severe issue of unemployment among the educated youth. Gandhiji's concept of basic education is sound and productive, and it can serve as a guide in the current situation. Gandhiji's fundamental education's moral values and employability components need to be taken into consideration when reforming the current system of education, starting at the elementary level.

It would be nice to end with an admiration Albert Einstein had for Gandhi.: "*Generations to come, it may well be, will scarce believe that such a man as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth*".

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