



Relevance of Gandhian Thought of Education in Present Time

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ABSTRACT

Mahatma Gandhi's Nai Talim, established in 1937, revolutionized education by emphasizing 'learning by doing,' utilizing hands-on activities conducted in the mother tongue of students. This innovative educational framework integrates vocational training with moral development, aiming to foster self-reliance among learners while nurturing their physical, mental, and spiritual growth. By engaging children in practical pursuits such as spinning and farming, Nai Talim addresses issues like youth unemployment and character building, fundamentally enhancing community well-being. Gandhi's vision for free and inclusive education resonates with contemporary educational policies like India's National Education Policy 2020, which promotes the integration of vocational skills at an early stage. This alignment aims to cultivate a just society where every child is provided with opportunities to flourish and contribute positively to their communities. This paper highlights on the relevance of MK Gandhi's educational thoughts in present days' society.

Introduction

The modern education system has been criticized for promoting consumerism, materialism, unhealthy competition, and violence. This has caused worries about the decline of ethical values, increased youth unrest, environmental damage, and growing distrust in society. To address these issues, it is important to revive and adopt traditional Indian culture and lifestyle. Mahatma Gandhi recognized these problems long

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ago and suggested Basic Education, which focuses on learning through crafts. Although this idea started in a different time, it can be adapted for today's needs. Gandhi's principles are based on important values like truth, love, self-sacrifice, character development, and non-violence, which are still important today. To achieve real national development, it is necessary to update and apply his ideas, teaching younger generations about caring for the environment, moral integrity, personal skills, and community responsibility.

Objectives

The key goals of the study are:

- To understand and examine Gandhi's principle of basic education.
- To point out some key features of Gandhi's basic education and its importance in today's world.

Methodology

To achieve the objectives of the study, a historical methodology was employed, utilizing both primary and secondary sources. Gandhi's model of basic education is explored through an examination of various journals, online content, and educational books, along with references to his writings, highlighting the significance of his educational ideas.

Concept of Education

Mahatma Gandhi emphasized that true education should foster the development of the entire individual—body, mind, and spirit. He proposed the concept of Basic Education, or Nai Talim, advocating for learning through practical work rather than solely through academic texts. Additionally, he believed instruction should be conducted in the mother tongue to enhance comprehension and critical thinking. The ultimate aim of education, according to Gandhi, was to cultivate self-reliance and strong moral character, shaping responsible individuals who uphold good values beyond just literacy.

Aims of Education

Education should foster holistic growth—developing the body, mind, and spirit. Gandhi emphasized character building as essential for a complete personality. Self-reliance is nurtured through learning practical skills, making individuals independent and valuable. Key principles of Nai Talim include: learning by doing, valuing hands-on training over rote memorization; using the mother tongue for effective communication and cultural connection; and ensuring that education is free and compulsory to promote social equality, truth, and non-violence.



Seven Sins Concept

Mahatma Gandhi's Seven Social Sins, published in his newspaper Young India on October 22, 1925, highlight actions detrimental to society. These principles are: Wealth without work (money earned without effort), Pleasure without conscience (enjoying life at others' expense), Knowledge without character (learning devoid of values), Commerce without morality (business lacking ethics), Science without humanity (technology developed without care), Religion without sacrifice (faith without service), and Politics without principle (power sought without ethics).

Four pillars

The four main ideas of Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy include:

- Truth (Satya): The highest reality and God, guiding all actions and speech.
- Non-violence (Ahimsa): The active demonstration of love, avoiding harm, and resisting oppression.
- Universal Uplift (Sarvodaya): Focus on the well-being of all, prioritizing the needs of the poorest.
- Soul-force/Nonviolent Action (Satyagraha): A peaceful method of resisting injustice and changing oppressors through moral beliefs and personal suffering.

Educational Thoughts

Gandhi's Basic Education exemplifies his educational philosophy, focusing on nurturing young learners into morally upright, independent, socially accountable, and economically viable individuals. This approach aims to combat unemployment by equipping learners with self-employment skills. Gandhi emphasized the needs for developing the full range of a child's abilities to foster well-rounded individuals. The ultimate aim of this holistic education is to lead students towards Truth or God. He articulated that true education involves enhancing a person's body, mind, and spirit, with literacy being merely a facet of a broader learning process. His Basic Principles of Education advocate for this comprehensive developmental approach. They are as- From the ages of seven to fourteen, it is essential for every child to receive free, mandatory, and universal education, delivered in their native language. This education should extend beyond mere literacy; it must equip children with skills that foster financial independence and encourage the development of human values. A well-rounded education will empower children to become responsible, active members of society, nurturing their innate talents in harmony with community needs. Additionally, education must support comprehensive growth, encompassing the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of a child's development. Practical work linked to productive skills or industries should be integral to the learning experience, offering children valuable hands-on experience. Ultimately, such an educational



framework aims for self-sustainability through productive activities, promoting economic independence and self-reliance for future living.

Gandhi's perspective on education emphasizes the holistic development of a child's personality over mere academic learning. He believed education should center around the child and real-life experiences, integrating the basics of Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic with the development of the Hand, Heart, and Head. The aim of education, according to Gandhi, should be to cultivate well-rounded individuals prepared to adapt and contribute positively to societal changes. He argued against the separation of work and knowledge, asserting that such a divide fosters social injustices. To combat issues like frustration and anxiety among youth, education must equip individuals with practical skills for self-reliance and future livelihoods. Gandhi envisioned a system where children learn through work, promoting both vocational training and cultural growth simultaneously. He asserted that education should balance the development of character and morals, aiming for children to grow into virtuous human beings.

Gandhi criticized rote learning, deeming it flawed. He advocated for the incorporation of crafts and skills in education, aiming for a holistic development of children's bodies, minds, and spirits to prepare them for the future. This approach distinguished his teaching methods from conventional ones. Key principles of his educational philosophy include:

1. Integrating sensory and bodily training to develop the mind.
2. Prioritizing reading over writing.
3. Increasing opportunities for experiential, hands-on learning.
4. Promoting learning through direct experiences.
5. Ensuring teaching methods are connected to these learning experiences.

Conclusion

Mahatma Gandhi's Nai Talim integrates skill development, moral growth, and community engagement, emphasizing practical learning in the mother tongue. It promotes self-reliance and aims to address unemployment and social inequality, especially in rural India. Grounded in principles of truth, non-violence, and equality, it connects education to daily life and encourages community service. Reflecting values in modern policies like India's National Education Policy 2020, it underscores the importance of free, accessible education for all. Nai Talim advocates for viewing education as a tool for social justice and personal growth, embodying Gandhi's vision of empowering individuals to contribute positively to society amid ongoing challenges like youth unemployment and social divide.



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