

## **M.K. Gandhi's Philosophy Of Education In The Context Of Present Education System Of India**

Satyajit Kalita, M.A.

**ABSTRACT:** According to Gandhi, acquiring the right knowledge and all round development of body, mind and spirit should be the goal of our education. He is not in favor of the present-day system of education. Because the present-day system of education merely imparts instructions, or makes man literate. But Literacy or Capacity to read and write and accordingly simply acquiring degrees is not education according to Gandhi. It is only a means to it. Gandhi believed that the aim of education is to cultivate an element of goodness that essentially present in every man. Only moral or character building education can make possible it and accordingly able to change our selfish attitudes. Gandhi was not satisfied with the higher education system that is imparted today in Indian Universities. Because there is absolutely no relation between what a university student learnt and what he has to do. Higher education, according Gandhi, must be according to the national requirements. In this research paper an attempt has been made to analyze how far Gandhi's thoughts on education are relevant in the age of globalization, particularly in Indian context.

**Keywords:** Value education, Result oriented education, Swaraj.

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

M. K. Gandhi is known as the greatest teacher of mankind for all times to come – “a prophet of its spiritual regeneration.” As a political thinker and social reformer his contributions towards the domain of education is not any way less. We all believe that one of the most valuable legacies that he has left to posterity is his educational systems crystallized in the Basic Scheme of Education and in his diverse addresses. What is the value of this education? In order to realize the value of basic education, it is necessary to understand the theory behind it, the philosophy that inspired it. One very important thing is that M. K. Gandhi was not an academic philosopher. His theory or philosophy that he gave to the world was the result of his own daily living and his own experiences, since he was an experimenter all his life. Thus, to have a true perspective of Gandhi's philosophy of education we should have a clear understanding of his philosophy of life. In this paper I have not tried to give a detail account of his philosophy of life. Here I have just tried to discuss, how Gandhi's philosophy of education is relevant in the context of India. Life is full of suffering and ignorance is the root cause of it. The philosophy of Gautama Buddha has established this truth of our life long before. Only through the right knowledge we can root out our ignorance and accordingly our suffering. So, the whole process of education should be formulated in such a balanced manner so that it can able to be rooted out our ignorance. This is the view of MK Gandhi. By education, Gandhi means an all round drawing out of the best in the child and man – body, mind and spirit. Here the 'best' is nothing else but the inner voice or truth. Education which draws out the best or truth consist the development of the mind and body with a corresponding awakening of the soul. The system of basic education proposed by Gandhi leads to the development of the mind, body and soul whereas the ordinary system of education cares only for the mind.<sup>1</sup>

### **II. OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY:**

The aim of this research paper is to analyze the Gandhi's thoughts on education in the perspective of globalization. Here, the paper tries to focal point the role of education in view of M.K. Gandhi in the context of present education system of India. The paper is based on both analytic and descriptive methods.

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<sup>1</sup> Harijan, 9-11-1947, p.401.

### III. GANDHI'S PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

Gandhi's philosophy of education comprises all essential elements which any good or adequate philosophy of education should possess. He advocates the concept of value education, which is based on morality. According to Gandhi moral and ethical knowledge is the first point of any good philosophy of education. Any education system that lacks moral and ethical knowledge cannot be termed as good. The underlying meaning behind this thought is that, without morality or ethical knowledge no student in the real sense can be considered to be healthy-both mentally and physically. A person, who lacks the knowledge of morality, who does not differentiate between right and wrong, who has no control on himself, cannot be called educated in the true sense. For Gandhi morality and righteousness should always be considered as an essential part of an education, so that every student would be able to gain in terms of knowledge and spirituality. Every student should gain education under the strict regimen of high morals, self-control and right thinking. On the other hand, they would also be expected to provide service to the society in general. This implies their respect towards society and social traditions and constant awareness towards their duties and responsibilities. Mahatma Gandhi advocated the introduction of religious education, to strengthen the moral foundations of a student. He believed that religious education brings the values of forbearance, tolerance and reverence in one's character. Gandhi writes in the 'Young India' of 6<sup>th</sup> of December 1923, "A curriculum of religious instructions should include a study of the tenets of faiths other than one's own. For this purpose the students should be trained to cultivate the habit of understanding and appreciating the doctrine of various great religions of the world in a spirit of reverence and broad minded tolerance."<sup>2</sup>

Gandhi also suggested some guidelines for teachers. For him it is the duty of a teacher to develop high morals and strong character of their students. If teacher fails to do so, it implies that they are insincere in their noble profession and departed from their social and national responsibilities. A teacher should lay an example, to be followed, before society and students. This becomes possible when a teacher himself leads a life of high standards of morality and strong character. Thus it is the foremost duty of students, as well as of teachers to make it certain that moral and ethical knowledge continues to be the integral part of education process. By doing so, they can contribute in the development of value education. Another important aspect of Gandhi's philosophy of education is the basic (Buniyadi) education. Gandhi used the word 'Buniyadi' during the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> decade of 20<sup>th</sup> century, which meant the knowledge or education that could help rural people in promotion of village handicrafts. The ultimate purpose behind his attempt was to make young men and women self-reliant in the economic field. In the modern perspective also it has well-worthy. It is similar of today's job-oriented education. According to Gandhi every student should prepare for technical knowledge from the primary level of their education. It is the milestone of Gandhi's philosophy of education. Gandhi's basic idea was to make education self-supporting through craft, agriculture and other productive work there by by-passing potentially the need for government funding support.<sup>3</sup> Gandhi believed that unless and until education makes a young man and woman self-reliant, it has no value. In the Harijan on September 11, 1937, Gandhi remarked: "Education ought to be for them (the people) a kind of insurance against unemployment. The child at the end of 14 years – after he had finished his 7 years – is to be discharged as an earning unit...."<sup>4</sup> It is to be remembered here that Gandhi never wanted the child to be a mere bread – earner. He wanted him to learn while he earns and to earn while he learns.

### IV. RELEVANCE OF GANDHI'S VIEWS IN INDIAN CONTEXT

Education was recognized as a source of illumination, which provided correct lead in the various spheres of life. According to the contemporary thinking, education was the 'third eye' of man, which gave him insight into all affairs and taught him how to act.<sup>5</sup> If we see from the perspective of Indian education system, definitely we can say that Gandhi's philosophy of education has a great relevance. In India when a child starts his formal education, he enters at primary level and step by step, at an age of twenty or twenty two, he has completed his graduation or post-graduation from colleges or university. And after that he should definitely have a clear direction for their future. No doubt he should have toward his future goal. He should be full of self – confidence and side by side, he should be self – dependent and capable of tackle unavoidable problems. He must not be worried for a suitable job. But the reality that we see is that the today's generation is directionless. They lack a direction to begin his carrier, and then what could be the use of their education. What is the use of the degree for him that he has in hand? Consequently most of youths are diverted and a feeling of helplessness and dejection prevailing on them. According to a survey, there are millions of men and women who, even after

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<sup>2</sup> Young India, 06-12-1923, p.43.

<sup>3</sup> Chauhan, CPS, (2004), 1<sup>st</sup> edition, *Modern Indian Education: Policies, Progress and Problems*, New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers, p.36.

<sup>4</sup> Harijan, 11-09-1937, p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> Chauhan, CPS, (2004), 1<sup>st</sup> edition, *Modern Indian Education: Policies, Progress and Problems*, New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers, p.3.

completing their studies at graduation, post – graduation and doctorate levels, fail to seek an employment of their choice. Is it not a failure of our social and educational systems? Even after spending the golden years of one's life in attaining higher education, our youth generations are not self – dependent. As such how would they be able to get rid of their day to day problems and how would they contribute to their society and the nation? Therefore it is a challenge not only before the youths of this country but also before the educationists, scholars and those in the government? After independence of Indian, the Department of Education under the Ministry of Human Resource Development was set up. At that time the mission was the quantitative spread of education. Literacy was the ultimate goal of education, because of which unemployment still a burning problem of education. To tackle these problematic challenges M K Gandhi's views on education can be great support. Gandhi feels the need of result oriented education for India. He said that every child has some specific inherent qualities. It should be a duty of a good teacher to identify his students' potentials at the primary levels. A student should gain education according to curriculum and moral guidance and as such improve his physical strength. After completing studies to a certain level, a student must be provided facilities, in addition to general, moral and physical education, to gain technical education in accordance with the special trait that has already been identified in his personality by his teacher. After completion his study up to graduate level with this technical knowledge, he would have a direction. As such he would able to be a self- sufficient either by his technical skills or by academic skills. In this way, at least his education would be result oriented education. Thus in Gandhi philosophy of education, more emphasis was given to that education which makes us self-sufficient. He has a dream, if every people become self-sufficient in India; there would be no property and accordingly all social maladies would be rooted out. Gandhi used the term 'Swaraj' not simply in the sense that we are all independent from British. He also supposed to use it in the sense that we all have to be self- sufficient to realize the actual meaning of the term 'Swaraj.' If we look in to the present scenario of India, then it becomes clear that after the 65 years of independent we are still not able to be self- sufficient. Lots of educated peoples are still unemployed, they are becoming directionless. Government of India has been launching lots of projects to minimize these burning problems of India. But, can these projects really able to reduce unemployment problems? This is a very big question before all of us. India has lots of human resources. But because of proper management systems it has been becoming useless till now. Who is responsible for this? If we look in to the deep, then we see that the whole system of our education is responsible for this. Draw backs of India's education system has been an issue well debated over in the past. But still our education system fails to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Another important aspect of India's education system is that it fails to make man human beings in the true sense. Because, we the educated people mostly are the responsible for many inhuman activities now a days. We may have lots of university degrees, but until and unless we are not able to be morally sound, these degrees are meaningless. So we need such type of education which can able to make ourselves morally sound. Here Gandhi's philosophy of education can lead us a way. How can say that our education system is right, where teacher himself is involved in the rap case of his student? Jawaharlal Nehru in one of his speech said that status of a society depend how the women are treated in that society. Now we may ask ourselves, what is the status of our society, where women feel insecure after 6/7 pm in his city/ village? Literacy rate of India has been increasing from last few years. But are we really become educated? Does education means simply taking degrees?

## V. OVERVIEW

If we look in to the Gandhi's philosophy of education in the light of contemporary needs of our country it becomes clear that his educational philosophy which underlies the basic scheme of education have certain important shortcomings and limitations. One most important shortcoming is that his scheme is opposed to the machine-age civilization which exploits the poor and the weak. It is feared that such attitude may make us ignore the rapid mechanical and technological advances that India is making and may, thus hinder industrial progress. Besides this there are other limitations also. They are- neglect of English, neglect of physical education and the play activities of children according to developmental needs, absence of modern techniques of evaluation of children's education etc. Despite some of the shortcomings Gandhi's philosophy of education is still relevant. Because his philosophy of education lies in the fact that education should necessarily be helpful in employment and it foundations should be laid on morality. As the demand of time we may apply Gandhi's educational philosophy. His views on value education and result oriented education are unique; these are not only important but also worth applying not only in India but also rest of the world.

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