



SOCIAL & EDUCATIONAL VIEW OF MAHATMA GANDHI

DR. NIRANKAR SINGH

Associate Professor Sociology

M.G.M. College Sambhal

(UP) INDIA

ABSTRACT

The mother India given birth to so many heroes in her country. Gandhiji was also one of them. His educational idea's based on love peace and equity. He shines like a luminous star in the galaxy of intellectuals. Gandhi's educational philosophy is dynamic and realistic. Gandhi is vision on education was truly civilized for the betterment of society as well as whole country. Education not only educate the students but brings a new change in the society. It reflects a society's fundamental assumption. His experience in South Africa not only changed his out look ideology but also helped him to see the real picture of country. Gandhiji's educational philosophy is dynamic and realistic. His vision on education was truly civilized for the betterment of society as well as whole country.

Key Words: Women Education, illiteracy, knowledge, complement of man, letters and speeches.

INTRODUCTION

The history of education is the history of the life and experiments of great educational philosophers whose gems of ideas continue to inspire educational thought and practice across the world. The last two hundred and fifty years will go down in history as the most formative years of modern education. Education, as we see it today, owes much to the wisdom of the east as well as of the west. Rousseau, Froebel, Dewey, Mahatma Gandhi, Tagore, Vivekananda, Aurovindo to count only a few names-have done so much to save the future course of educational practice at home and abroad. Generally people regard Gandhiji great politician only but the fact is that he valued social reform and development more than more political growth and advancement. According to him in an evil society, no concept of any good rule is possible. As such, he advocated social revolution and reform to go hand in hand

DR. NIRANKAR SINGH

1P a g e



with any political revolution. In this the main roll to be prayed by education. Education is a sub social system. As it is a life long process. Education makes the man prefect and capable to perform certain duties during the years to come. Education helps the man to brought out the hidden to lent in every and each person who are living in the universe. At present there is a essentiality inculcate quality education among students. The real difficulty that people have no idea what type of education is prefect. We assess the value of education in the same way as we assess the value of other articles which are lying around us or in our society. We want to provide only such education as would enable the students to earn more. We hardly give thought to the improvement of character or improvement of all round development. Gandhi was in favouring of it that one should provided such type of education as would enable the person to earn more and more. According to Gandhiji education is an all round drawing out of the best in child an man-body ,mind and spirit.

Literacy is not the end of education not even the beginning. It is only one of the means where by men and women can be educated. Literacy in itself is no education.

In Gandhi ji is philosophy of education the personality of those to be education is of primary importance, and not the tools and subjects education should cover the full period of life in each and every field and must provide better opportunities for the all round welfare of the moral , spiritual and physical attributes of human being Gandhi's education philosophy also displays materialistic outlook. Gandhiji does not teach to run away from the world to attain peace, as he advocates to live in the world doing self –less action to attain peace. Gandhi ji has recommended to make the productive action as the medium .For this is essential that child forms the habit of earning his livelihood from his childhood itself. Education should have the ability to connect labour and scientific knowledge.

The foundation of basic education is usefull because its goal is to impart such skill to Indian children by which they can become self-dependent earning hands. According to him “My idea is not merely to teach a particular profession or occupation to the children, but to develop the full man through teaching that occupation” . The most essential feature of Gandhiji's philosophy of education instead of taking handicrafts of the school and impose it on the educational curriculum insisted that education must proceed from the handicrafts. Gandhi said, ‘The core of my suggestion is that handicrafts are to be taught not merely for production work but for developing the intellect of the people’. Another important feature of Gandhiji's philosophy of education is the supporting aspect of the craft chosen as a means of education. All education to be true must be self supporting.

Non-Violence

DR. NIRANKAR SINGH

2P a g e



Education is backbone of society and is largely responsible for the upliftment of the society. Gandhi was a critic of traditional educational and viewed that, By education, I mean an all-round drawing of the best in child and man in body, mind and spirit. His Wardha scheme was pointer in this direction. Accordingly, these should be the basic tents of Gandhian education.

Free Primary Education

Gandhiji advocated for free and compulsory education for all-boys and girls between *7 to 14* years. Education should be imparted in primary level in the student's mother tongue. A free primary universal education is to be imparted to all the children in the village. This will make the backbone of a country strong. Earning while learning was the motto of this education. This wills increasing the creativity in a student. As Gandhi wanted to make Indian village's self-sufficient units, he emphasised that vocational education should increase the efficiency within the students who will make the village as self-sufficient units.

Place Of Vocational Education

A love for manual work will be injected in the mind of children. This is not a compulsion but the child will learn it by doing-Being free from mere bookish knowledge a student should resort to manual work.

Emphasis on Morality

By education, Gandhi meant the improvement of morality within a student. Without being bookish, a student should adopt certain moral ethical codes like truth, nonviolence, charity and so on which will illumine his character. Thus a character building through education was a prime concern for Gandhi.

Non-Participation in Politics

Gandhiji wanted to keep the students away from politics. If students will participate in politics, they will be pawn at the hands of the politicians who will utilize them for fulfilling their desire. This will hamper the development of a student and his education will suffer a setback. So, he advised the students to keep themselves completely away from politics.

Women Education



Gandhi was a protagonist of women education. He advocated that there should be no distinction in equality of status between men and women in society. He vehemently opposed purdah system and widowhood. He wanted to free women from social serfdom. So, the number of girl students considerably rose in various educational institutions inside the county. Thus, Gandhi emphasized the need of women education to improve the lot of society. Gandhiji's idea on education is a novel one. His idea of vocational education was unique which even now a day's is being promoted by the government of India.

Education for the Individual

According to Gandhiji education must prepare the learner or learners for self realization or liberation (moksha). He emphasised the ancient Indian wisdom-Sa vidya ya vimuktaya. (That which liberates knowledge). In his socio-political and education thought. Views regarding liberation – Gandhi talked about two kinds of liberations. One form of liberation consisted in securing the freedom of the country from foreign rule. Which for him would also include development indigenous models of school, economical, educational development. Such freedom however may prove short-lived if not understood in the right perspective and light of the other kind of liberation (moksha) which is for all time. As Advaitin he is referring to the liberation from the cycles of birth and death on the earth, from the suffering of the world, and he is emphasising this liberation, moksha as the ultimate goal for life (one of the four purusharthas thus other three being dharama) artha, Kama. It is important to emphasise here that this liberation is an individual liberation and does not transform the earth –nature in any way.

Social Aim of Education

Education is not a matter that concerns only the individuals, but it also deeply concerns the society, the collective. Gandhi recognize and deeply value in the inter-connection between individual and collective, as reflected in his thoughts on education including its aims. The major contribution of Gandhi for the betterment of whole established Sarvodaya Society. The key to Gandhi's social thought and concept of man is characterized in one word Sarvodaya. A strong emphasis on the Sarvodaya the upliftment of all, Certainly gives a very clear orientation to Gandhi's educational approach. At the same time, the purpose of education for Gandhiji is to raise man to a higher moral and spiritual order through the full development of the individual and the evolution of new man, a satyagrahi one that grasps the truth. This type of man making goal of education for Gandhi's achieved by service to man kind, by self-giving.

Education for Knowledge

DR. NIRANKAR SINGH

4 Page



Education is considered as a process of bringing perfection in the human beings education carries out these humans and social functions by directing, guiding and reshaping the innate potential and impulses of the child, by helping the individual in the process of growth, unfolding what is within and preparing him to assume the responsibility of adult life. But education carries out all these by introducing him to the total experiences of the human race classified into heads of knowledge. Historically speaking education has become a process of the individuals identification with a large variety of classified information grouped under particular subjects. Much emphasis was given to the communication of classified knowledge to the individual.

Education for Social Development

Education in the Gandhian sense aims at the development of society. This aim of education primarily adds a great responsibility on the individual who is being educated as well as on the one after his education. The development of society is not an automatic thing ; individual have to be pressed into service for that purpose. This requires great training for the individual as part of education that enables him to commit himself on a permanent basis for the welfare of society. Gandhi's educational thought attach great importance to this goal of education. Exhortations to students and educationists in the country to attach importance to the value of social service and social welfare in all aspects of education were common in his speeches and writings. For Gandhi, "individual development and social progress are interdependent"⁴. He wished that a society in which all people should have to play their roles for the betterment of the whole without losing their individual character. Every goal of education that Gandhi envisaged in fact harmonized with others. He pleaded for character formation with its spiritual and moral values. Education for social development aims at thus creating in the education to number of social oriented values which is related to social atmosphere in which every individual has to adjust himself. Education in schools and colleges do everything at its disposal to nurture in students a love and affection concern for society and its current needs. Individual must be ready to help the society as a active member all the time. Individual must have a compassion for all creation of life.

Education and Life Experience

Gandhi too made life experience a centre aim of education. There was all the same major difference – Dewey's Value of practical usefulness was an end itself, while for Gandhi it constituted a major means of more remote ends and consequently to the ultimate end itself . Gandhi did not wish to leave things to chance and looked at the events of day to day life with immense care and attention. Louis Fischer says," he discovered a new dimension of action;



He split the social atom and found a new source of energy. Basically this is an ability that renders him quite different from the animals living around him. By stressing this aspect an education is helping the individual to undertake something proper to man as man. He becomes able to exercise his rational mind on everything around him, accept or reject things and experiences that life ordinarily presents to him. This would mean the individual learn to value in every step during his whole life. A link is established between the time and becomes available to one self and the series of responsibility and duties one is expected to carryout. For Gandhi life experience constitute the primary means to gain the full flowering the individual personality for the betterment of oneself, society and God.

Wardha Scheme

This principle of non-violence was the basis of Gandhiji scheme of basic education. Though this scheme he considered necessary for building a non-violent society. His system of education wanted to root out exploitation and centralization in society and create a non-violent social order. In 1937 Gandhiji evolved a scheme popularly known as the Wardha scheme of basic National Education. This wardha scheme was based on same principles of education which were listed by Gandhiji in a paper in 1932 in yesvada jail. These postulates were as follows:

1. Boys and girls should be taught together.
2. Their time should be mostly spent on manual work under the supervision of the teacher. Manual work should be considered as part of education.
3. Work should be entrusted to each boy and girl after ascertaining his or her inclinations.
5. General knowledge should be imparted to the child as soon as it is able to understand things. This knowledge should precede literary education.
6. The hand of the child should be trained to draw geometrical figures before he learns to write, that is good handwriting should be taught from the beginning.
7. The child should learn to read before he is able to write. i.e. he should learn to recognize letters as if they were pictures and then draw their figures.
8. By this method and by word of mouth, the child should acquire much knowledge before he his eight years old.
11. All education should be imparted through the mother tongue of the child.
12. Every Indian child should learn Hindu-Urdu, i.e. Hindustani as a national language before his literary training commences.
13. The second stage of the child's education begins when he is eleven and lasts up to sixteen.
16. He should acquire a general knowledge of world History, Geography, Botany, Astronomy, Arithmetic, Geometry and Algebra.



23. English can and should have a place in the syllabus only as a language. Just as Hindi is our lingua franca, English is a language of international intercourse and commerce.

On October 23, 1937, a conference was organized at Wardha to finalise the basic system of education. This conference resolved that the children should be provided free education for seven years. Mother tongue should be the medium of education. Every educa must be taught some basic craft. The expenses of education should be met by the sale of the production in the school. In order to implement these recommendations a committee was formed under the chairmanship of Dr. Zakir Hussain. This Committee highlighted the basic principles, aims and organization of basic education in its first report on December 2, 1937. In its second report in 1940 this Committee reviewed the curriculum of basic education. Its recommendations were accepted by Indian National Congress in its session at Haripura. After Zakir Hussain Committee, another Committee was formed under the chairmanship of B.G. Kher to review basic education. This Committee connected it to Sargeant scheme. In the final form, the basic principles of Gandhi's scheme of primary education were compulsory free education, education through craft, education through mother tongue, self-reliance, education connected with the life of the educand and finally inculcation of the ideals of democratic citizenship. A booklet was published by Government of India to popularize Gandhian system of education entitled Understanding of Basic Education. "Our education has got to be revolutionized. The brain must be educated through hand. Those who do not train their hands go through education lacking music in their life..... they are not thought to make the right choice. A education which does not teach us discriminate between good and bad, to assimilate the one and eschew the other is a misnomer. "

Philosophy Behind Basic Education

Basic Education is an out come of Gandhi's philosophy of life and education. Although it does not represent his entire philosophy of education. It is said that the underlying philosophy of education is that of democracy. There is stress on the need for a social order which would be conductive to each man's realizing the highest aim of his life. The attainment of ideals, for which Gandhi ji put forwards this scheme of education, are clearly derived from a democratic philosophy. These ideals are:

1. Ideal of classless society.
2. Freedom and equality for all.
3. Dignity of labour.
4. A non-violent social order.
5. Development of a sense of social responsibility.

Dr. M.S. Patel rightly says that Gandhiji's educational philosophy original in the sense that he arrived at it through personal experience. It may not be original in the sense that the like of it war never preservation and adaptation on a nation-wide scale are undoubtedly novel and



original. Vinoba Bhave has said, “It may not be new thing but it has been presented in a new light.” 16 Basic Education took its concrete form at all India Educational conference at Wardha (oct,1937). It was followed by Dr. Zakir Hussain committee, which laid down a detailed syllabus and passed four and resolution incorporating Gandhiji’s ideas on education. BASIC TENENT OF BASIC EDUCATION Education for Sarvodaya Gandhiji was very much aware of the needs of the countary and considered basic education as the only type of the education which may lead to success his chief aim in planing for education in india was to fulfil the needs of the country. India is a country of villages. Most of the villager in india cannot affrod to play for their children’s education. In addition to it they require their childern ‘s assistance in their occupation. Therefor, Gandhiji planned for basic education whichmay not be burden upen the parnts and through which the children may be able to earn to meet the expenses of education themselves . He laid stress upon the importance of dignity of labour and manual skill. He was an experimenter in every field of life . Before devising his plan of basic education he experimented upon its different aspects. For him all human truths were relative. God was the only absolute. There fore him all tested everything before suggesting it for the education of the child he postulated that the child should himself gather knowledge from the environment and put it in actual use in life. Like the pragmatists and instrumentalists Gandhiji stressed the importance of interest and activity and the need variety in subjects taught to the educand. Sarvodaya Society The social philosophy of M. K. Gandhi may be termed as Sarvodaya. This was the foundation of this philosophy of education. Sarvodaya aims at all round development of all, without distinction of caste, creed, sex and nationality. Gandhi wanted to establish a welfare state in India which he called’Ram Rajya’. The ideal of Sarvodaya does no aim at the maximum number but maximum good of all without exceptions. Centralisation, according to Gandhiji aimed at political, economic, social and all other types of decentralisation. In the political field decentralisation requires establishment of village panchayats. In the economic field it requires that wealth and money should not be allowed to be concentrated in few hands but should be distributed among all the people. Social decentralisation means the abolition of all types of untouchability and social distinctions. Nai Talim In order to achieve the above mentioned aims of Sarvodaya in India, Gandhiji presented his plan of basic education. He called it Nai Talim (New education) because it sought to build up a new society in the country. “Nai Talim without the self support basis would be like a lifeless boy” 17 The basic educationsought to fulfil the needs of the education in a Sarvodaya society. It is hence that Gandhi planned for craft centred education with mother tongue as the medium. Literacy, according to him, is not an end but only a means of education. Education ultimately aims at the development of both mind and body and the capacity of earning one’s livelihood. Thus, according to Gandhiji India can play her role in the community of nations only by adopting the gospel of non-violence. India also tried to build brought about through force destroyed individuality. Only when the change was effected through the persuasive power of non-violent non-cooperation (i.e. love), could

DR. NIRANKAR SINGH

8P a g e



the foundation of individuality be preserved and real, abiding progress be assured for the world.

Gandhi's Views on Education

Gandhiji propounded his views on education in the following words:

1. "Education for a just social order:- The ultimate objective of the new education is not only a balanced and harmonious individual but also a balanced and harmonious society-a just social order in which there is no unnatural dividing line between the haves and have-nots and everybody is assured of a living wage and right to freedom.

2. Meaning of education:- In the words of Gandhi, By education, I mean an all – round drawing out of the best in child and man-body, mind and spirit.

3. Education through craft:- The uniqueness of this scheme is that education is to be given through village crafts. The end in view is not to be accomplished by merely adding a village craft to the current syllabus. "the brain must be educated through hand".²⁴

4. Self-supporting aspect:- Self-sufficiency is not a 'prior' condition, but to me it is the acid test. This does not mean that Basic Education will be self-supporting from the very start. But taking the entire period of seven years, income and expenditure must balance each other. Otherwise it would be mean that even at the end of this training the basic education. 'Nai Talim' without the self-support basic would be like a lifeless body.

5. Dignity of labour:- It is a crime to make education merely literary, and to unfit boys and girls for manual work in later life. Indeed I hold that as the large part of our time is devoted to labour for earning our bread our children must from their infancy be taught dignity of such labour. Our children should not be so taught as to desist labour. "useful manual labour, intelligently performed, is the means par excellence for developing the intellectual"

8. Spiritual training:- In the words of Gandhi, I made the children memorize and recite hymns, and read to them from books on moral training. But that was far from satisfying me. As I came in to closer contact with them I saw that it was through books that one could impart training of the spirit. Just as physical training was to be imparted through physical exercise, and intellectual through intellectual exercise, even so the training of the spirit was possible only through the exercise of the spirit.



11. Medium of instruction:- Our language is the reflection of our selves and if you tell me that our languages are too poor to express the best thought, then I say that the sooner we are wiped out of existence the better for us.

12. The foreign medium:- The foreign medium has caused a brain fag, put an undue strain upon the nerves of our children, made them crammers and imitators, unfitted them for original work and thought and disabled them for filtrating their training to their family or the masses. The foreign medium has made our children practically foreigners in their own land.

15. Co-education:- Before launching on such experiments, a teacher has to be both father and mother to his pupils and be prepared for all eventualities, and only the hardest penance can fit him to conduct them.

17. Women's education:- in the words of Gandhi, as for women's education, I am not sure whether it should be different from men's and when it should begin. But I am strongly of opinion that women should have the same facilities as men and even special facilities where necessary.

18. Handwriting:- Handwriting is an art. Every letter must be correctly drawn, as an artist would draw his figures. This can only be done if the boys and girls are first taught elementary drawing. 28

REFERENCE

- *Gandhi M.K. Harijan February 25, 1939*
- *Dr. Inderdev Singh Nandra, Teacher in Emerging Indian Society, Tondon Publication Book Market Ludhiana P. 181*
- *Basic Education P-108 18. Gandhi M.K. Harijan March 2, 1947*
- *Aggarwal J.C. Education for Values, Environment and Human Rights, Shipra Publication H.O. L.G. 18-19, Pankaj Central Market Patpargarg Delhi P-39 20.*
- *Gandhi M.K. Basic Education, P-190 25. Ibid P-106 26. Bose Nirmal Kumar Selections from Gandhi, P-254 27. Ibid P-37 28. Gandhi M.K. True Education P-229.*
- *Bhatia B.D. Philosophy of Education, P-129*
- *Tandulkar Mahatma Vol-IV, P-175.*
- *Narasima char, K.T. A day book of thoughts from Mahatma Gandhi P-74*
- *Dr. Inderdev Singh P-176 10. Ibid P-176 11. Pillai, N.P. (ed.) Education P-31 12.*
- *Gandhi M.K. To the Student's P-31 13. Gandhi M.K. Harijan 6 October, 1946*
- *Dr. Girish Pachauri, Education in Emerging India R.Lall Book Depot, Near Govt. Inter College Meerut P-455*