



Gandhian' Perceptions on Education

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Abstract

This paper highlight the relevance of Gandhian thought on education. Gandhi always advocated mandatory universalization; vocational, economic orientation of education he believed that the education a child is imparted should suit him for better living which should equip him with ethical values. Mahatma Gandhi considered education as the backbone of a civilized society. It was largely responsible for its upliftment his Wardha scheme was a pointer to his thoughts on education. His views on education have been praised across the world for its universality. His observations on education have been praised for its values. He stressed on practical learning which is today becoming more popular. Universities are molding their syllabi to incorporate practical teaching methodology. Classrooms have been becoming smarter paying way to realistic learning. The rationality, reasonability & sensibility have become the mantra of today's new methodology of schooling .But it was the dream of Gandhi that youth should reason before understanding anything.

Key words: Community Ethical values, learning, Mother Tongue, Universal Education

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

INTRODUCTION

Mahatma Gandhi considered education as the backbone of a civilized society. It was largely responsible for its upliftment his Wardha scheme was a pointer to his thoughts on education. He always stressed on vernacular education because children learn more easily. He always believed that the school should be an extension of home & children should playfully learn instead of stricter version of verbal learning. He thought basic education should link the children to the best of life as education is the

understanding of whole gist of human living. According to him education is not spreading literacy but education makes the whole man education should change all his thinking.

Mahatma Gandhi's views

1. Mahatma Gandhi's views on compulsory education -He advocated free & compulsory education. He suggested that it should be imparted in primary in mother tongue



- 2. Mahatma Gandhi's views on education-** He is considered as a greatest teacher of our times. According to him education means an all round drawing out of the best in the child and man body mind & spirit .It was away to bring out the ideals of non violence& truth. (Cribb, R. B. (1985). "The Early Political Philosophy of M. K. Gandhi, 1869–1893". Asian Profile **13** (4): 353–60)
- 3. Mahatma Gandhi's views on practical learning-** He recommended economic activities through education such as vocational education. He favored introducing handicrafts as means of making students learn vocational education & be a self reliant employee it has modern relevance as today governments are pursuing policies similar to Gandhian thoughts. (Gandhi, M. K.; (2002). Louis Fischer, Ed. The Essential Gandhi: An Anthology of His Writings on His Life, Work & Ideas. Vintage Books)
- 4. Mahatma Gandhi's views on universalization** -Universalization of education compulsory education & elementary education were the 3 keys of his policy.
- 5. Mahatma Gandhi's views on sarvodaya-**He dreamt of introducing Sarvodaya society where all members of the society are equally looked upon. He dreamt of setting up a Ramarajya where truth non violence& brotherhood rule. He favored domestic science for girl students (selected from Gandhiji in Ceylon by Mahadev Desai p 92).
- 6. Mahatma Gandhi's views on teacher-** He did not like the traditional method of teaching. H thought it was passive & only verbal. He said character cannot be built with mortar & stone It cannot be built by hands other than your own (selected from Gandhiji in Ceylon by Mahadev Desai p 96).He said the teacher & the taught should have close relations. The affinity between the two would support each other in learning. The closer proximity between the two will lead to wonderful learning outcomes.
- 7. Mahatma Gandhi's views on subjects -** He wanted all subjects such as mathematics, basic science; social science should be taught with a craft. He stressed on a activity centered teaching rather than verbal teaching. He stressed on crafts as a means of production as a recreation & as a way of character building.(Gandhi M.K. Village Swaraj ; Pub. Navajan ; Ahmedabad; Page 43-44) Craft making should be focal in teaching & it should be practical oriented (selected from Gandhiji in Ceylon by Mahadev Desai p 94). But he subjects what they study must help them to understand the rationale behind their reading.
- 8. Mahatma Gandhi's views on community orientated learning-** He stressed on cooperative activity where a whole community was interested & took part jointly. He



stressed on community initiative because he thought each individual was responsible to the growth & progress of the community (Gandhi, M. K.; (2002). Louis Fischer, Ed. The Essential Gandhi: An Anthology of His Writings on His Life, Work & Ideas. Vintage Books). Hence the education should orient the children to identify them with the needs of the community. Education should enhance his social affinity. Education should assist in social transformation.

9. Mahatma Gandhi's views on personality building-

He insisted on development of mental emotional & manual power of the children through writing & reading. Through education each individual would get spirituality & individuality. He emphasized the importance of self reliant villages where the all the raw materials needed by the village would be locally available. (Gandhi M.K. Village Swaraj; Pub. Navajan; Ahmedabad; Page 23-33). This concept holds good everywhere because Indian villages suffer from deficiency of inputs & this has led to migration to urban centers.

10. Mahatma Gandhi's views on handicraft learning-

Earning while learning was the motto of Gandhian philosophy of education. He wrote in Harijan dated 21-12-1947 that the notion of education through handicrafts rises from the contemplation of truth & love permeating life's activities. (Gandhi

M.K. Village Swaraj; Pub. Navajan ; Ahmedabad; Page 23-33). He always emphasized on education which helps in making the individual self reliant. His views are an answer to the present day unemployment. Id children are taught the ways of earning their livelihood they can support themselves without reliance on anybody.

11. Mahatma Gandhi's views on mother tongue learning-

He favored teaching in mother tongue because the child would learn the basics only through mother tongue. Should adopt Hindi as the basic language. He thought that important western book should be translated in Indian languages. He was sure that those who have received education through a foreign tongue could not represent the masses because the people do not identify themselves with such persons. (Gandhi M.K. Village Swaraj ; Pub. Navajeevan; Ahmedabad; Page 10-29) He said basic education should link the child with the environment he is living which is necessary for the improvement of the child in his formative years.

Mahatma Gandhi's education views included

1. Overall personality building
2. Character
3. Purity of thoughts
4. Self sufficiency
5. Self reliance



6. Self confidence
7. Morality
8. Ethical backing
9. Spiritual knowledge

Mahatma Gandhi pointed out that "What is the meaning of education? It simply means knowledge of letter. It is merely an instrument, and an instrument may be well used or abused. Therefore, whether you take elementary education or higher education, it is not required for the main thing. It does not make men of us. It does not enable us to do our duty. In its place it can be of use and it has its place when we have brought our senses under subjection and out our ethics on a firm foundation. 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." (M. K. Gandhi, Hind Swaraj, Chap. XVII)

Conclusion

As Rig Veda says education should make man self reliant & self less. Even Sri Shankaracharya believed that education is the realization of the self. Gandhi also believed that education was for self liberation. He stressed on vernacular education because children learn more easily. He always believed that the school

should be an extension of home & children should playfully learn instead of stricter version of verbal learning. Gandhian concept of Basic education links the children to the best of life as education is the understanding of whole gist of human living. According to him education was not spreading just literacy but education should change one's thinking. Thus his views on education have been praised across the world for its universality. He stressed on practical learning which is today becoming more popular.

References

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