



Relevance of Gandhiji's Values and life skills- a critical appreciation

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Abstract: According to Gandhi, the ultimate aim of man's life is the realization of God and all his activities, social, political, and religious have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God. His ideal is that of universal brotherhood, to be brought about by ahimsa, which implies love for all and hatred for none. In the matter of religion he was greatly influenced by Ray Chandhai by his living contact, Tolstoy's 'The Kingdom of God is Within You' and Ruskin's 'Unto His Last', and the other important factors were his comparative knowledge of the various religions, drawn from the Bible, the Koran, the Bhagavat Gita, the Ramayana of Tulsidas and Edwin Arnold's 'Light of Asia' Gandhi acknowledges his indebtedness to the above references in his autobiography. All the above mentioned seem to have awakened in him a religious quest-a quest for spiritual development and perfection which in its onward movement led him in the direction of making educational experiments as one of the means of attaining his cherished goal. In the 21st century Gandhi's values and life skills act as torch bearers for the youth who are aimless and filled with stress and strain due to several internal and external factors and forces

Key words: Appreciation, Values, Truth, Character, Skills, Factories, Ahimsa,

Introduction: 'Gandhi's ideals, the value system he preached and practiced and his inspiration is our sense of history' says YG Krishnamurthy. Gandhi is not of an age but for all ages... as millions of people across the world followed his values and regard him as the apostle of truth and non-violence. Gandhism is a repository of core-values and life-skills. It is a new sunrise with a love for global impulse and large effect. It will outlast many ideological decline and remains forever this sovereign concept.

Objectives:

- 1 To explain the meaning and definition of values and life skills
- 2 To high light the relevance of values and life skills in the 21st century

- 3 To trace out the values and personality traits of Gandhiji that made him the Mahatma
- 4 To throw light on Gandhiji's love for nature
- 5 To assess the ethical values of Gandhi
- 6 To present a discussion on the promotion of moral values through education
- 7 To present the message Gandhiji's truth
- 8 To present an estimate of Gandhiji's non-violence
- 9 To show case Gandhiji's constructive programme

Meaning and definition of values:



The term 'values' can broadly be defined as the beliefs people have about what is right and wrong and what is most important in life which control their behavior. Values are not static. They are dynamic in nature. However, the core-values and social norms which stood the test of time are universally accepted. The values are derived from the culture to which a particular society belongs.

Relevance of Values – life skills in the modern Era:

We are living in an age of science and technology, where there is an unprecedented increase in the tempo of change. It has begun to impinge upon almost all walks of human life. Materialistic attitude has become the order of the day. In such a scenario, selfish behavior of human beings is posing a serious threat to peaceful co-existence and social harmony. In a pluralistic society like India, values such as religious tolerance and respect for others' customs and traditions, love for humanity, equality, fraternity etc. play a vital role in keeping the nation together. Life skills is one of the importance job competence in the 21st century. The Values and life skills followed by Gandhi offer solutions to many problems that our country encounters. University Grants Commission also stresses the need for including value based education in the curriculum at all levels of education.

Evolution of Ghandhi's Values and life skills:

'Charity begins at home'. Gandhiji's parents who were very orthodox in their beliefs and religious practices developed a strong personality in Gandhi which is a culmination of core-values that are deeply rooted in Indian culture and ethos. During his three years

of stay in London initially Gandhi developed a sense of imputation for European life style and culture. Later, as he developed a habit of making regular introspections, he realized that one's character and core-values should not be allowed to suffer come what may. Though he wanted to make friends in England, he always maintained and adhered to what he believed was right. When he was in South Africa, he never entertained any thoughts of taking non-vegetarian food items. Some other incidents speak volumes about his integrity, honesty and composure.

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Gandhiji's Love for nature:

Gandhi loves nature because there is no touch of vulgarity in it. He knows the lash of passions and cauterizes the flesh. He pours vigilant affection on others and politely declines it himself. The torment of an epoch presses heavily on his heart. Yet a delicious vein of honour wells up from it. A lone rebel he is fused with an adored circle. For, there



is no morality in an ascetic cell. It strikes root in human groups. Prisoner of his own thoughts, he looks on the Ashram fields, starred with papayas, registering every shade of meaning. At the fall of sunlight his favourite song fills the air. He liberates a nation in bondage by liberating its truth. The world is familiar with his trinity; rosary, wooden spoon and watch. Do these disciplines and triumphs suggest the faintest clue to his smile which captures the gaiety of nature an trust of a child. It springs far beyond the passing seconds from a pre-established harmony, Dharma. Gandhi has the taste and strength of mind to look at things with the eye of the spirit.

Gandhi and ethical values:

The ethical genius of Gandhi is delicate, emphatic and mellow-Indian. It invites the masses to reflect and act. His personal values are hatched in the growing and conquering triple disciplines of Gita. These values are self-diffusing and firmly anchor themselves. First comes the intuition of permanence. It emanates from the mind which is a welter of creative flux. The cosmic outlook, which grasps the truth and the reality, is its feat. This discipline of mind would require a complete change of thinking.

The ichor of Gandhi's idealism is the passionate understating and fidelity to world-view. It makes him assume in life a sacrificial role. The discipline of the flesh gives an expansive sincerity which absorbs him in moral experiment. He holds the mirror to his soul and reveals to mankind its affirmations. The nation again and again accepts the burden of his temperament. It is the inner fidelity to world-view, the will and sacrifice it

involves, that unifies his moods and utterances.

Moral values though education:

Moral and ethical knowledge is he core around which Mahatma Gandhi concept of value education is based. Any education that lacks these two cannot be termed as good or complete. Without morality and ethics no student in the real sense can be considered to be healthy physically and mentally. A person who does not differentiate between right and wrong cannot rise to the essential level of a true student. Besides spiritual growth as described by Mahatma Gandhi can only be gained through morality and ethics. Reading traditional wisdom and Gandhi together, we understand that education as a means of attaining salvation is indistinguishable from spiritualism.

These values, Mahatma Gandhi said are fostered through respect for one's parents, teachers and elders, adoration for younger people, adherence to social traditions and constant awareness of one's duties and responsibilities. Towards this end, Mahatma Gandhi advocated introduction of religious education. This kind of education brings values of forbearance, tolerance and reverence in one's character. And in turn, these values are an indivisible part of ethics. Explaining the importance and need of religious education Mahatma Gandhi writes in the 'Young India of 6" of December, 1923

Gandhi's Message of Truth:

A true devotee of Truth Gandhi maintained that Gandhi is Truth and Truth is God and further That God is Love (of humanity) and Love is God. Gandhi's love for truth was derived from