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ACADEMY AND EDUCATION IN GANDHIAN PERSPECTIVE: EXPLORING THE EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT

Ms. A.N. SINGH

Univerisity of Lucknow, India

dransingh@gmail.com

Abstract: Mahatma Gandhi was the practical follower of peace. Gandhi always maintained that education must be for the attainment of the moral and spiritual development of the character. According to Gandhi, cultural and moral side of learning best suits the personality of the citizens. For him, ultimate goal of education is to spark a pursuit of knowledge in the child from the beginning of his learning process and it will definitely lead towards innovative mindset. Gandhi stressed on the development of a child as a whole, not just the mind. He advocates the all-round education tendency. For a civilized and cultured society, education is the only way. This study tries to catch out the Gandhian perspectives and his believes on education system and will also find out that how his principles were as fresh as were then and still realizes the importance of his educational ethics. 'Knowledge is power' will always be acknowledged. A saying truly said, "Gandhi is dead but Gandhism is alive".

Keywords: Education, Academy, Development, Knowledge, Goal, Nayee- Talim

Academy and education are correlative and conjoined conception and main aim of every educational institution is to develop the mind, body and soul of the learner. Mahatma Gandhi was the practical follower of

peace he always maintained that education must be for the attainment of the goal of peace and development of civilization. Gandhi ji believes in the assessment of practical learning and preaches to develop the society and

civilization by educating oneself. According to Gandhi, education is the realization of the best in man-body, soul, morality, ethics and spirit and it purifies the heart and mind of all people and creates a society which is free from all exploitation and cruelty. Now the boundaries of morality and values, which were enclosed the fences of academy, traversed its own limitations and we strictly need to follow the good terms because education and development goals to develop the harmony between the individual and the state, between physical and mental development, between thought and action.

Undoubtedly, Gandhi was a social thinker and engineer who always try to make a new human society with all possible peace and development. Mahatma Gandhi observed, "If individual ceases to count what is left of society? Individual freedom alone can make man voluntarily surrender himself completely to the service of society. If it is wrested from him, he became an automaton and the society is ruined. No society can be built on the denial of

the freedom of individual (Dutta 18)". Mahatma Gandhi always worked hard to create Sarvodya Samaj and Soshan Vihin Samaj to save civilization from inequality and exploitation. He believes in the equality of rich and poor, high and low. Now it is universally known that Gandhian ideas and principles of gender equalities, evil practices, uniformity, practices of non-violence and untouchability, prohibition of child marriage, non-violent march for freedom has succeeded in transforming the Indian society.

Let's explore what is education? and what is Academy? After that the study will discuss about Gandhian perspective about education and academy. Etymologically, the word Education has been derived from different words-educare, educere, educatum, educates, education and every word consist the same meaning like- to bring to nourish, to lead, act of teaching, to train, to educate, to learn, to instruct, to teach. In Indian perspective, we basically use the words 'shiksha', 'vidya' which also means the same as education. On the other hand, academy is the social institution, a

place to gain knowledge. Institution and knowledge are conjoined products, which assimilates the practice of learning as a social whole. The main aim of knowledge is to enhance the character of the learner for the betterment of the whole civilization. So far, Academy and education is basically the subject matter of knowledge and learning which has the power to shape the life.

The educational philosophy of Gandhi was basically influenced by his own education, upbringing and life's learning process at various ashrams and believes. The tolerant, non-violent and peace worshiper Gandhi is a global figure and role model with all his personal characteristics. He believes in the advocacy of sustainable development. He advocates that if a child will only be a passive listener then the education in itself is a waste and harmful so the creative ideals of the education must not be lost. Gandhi believes that only thoughtful and practical education can build up the solid step towards the evolution of a new India and it would not be exaggeration to say that it was

Mahatma Gandhi who revolutionized the, then set system of education.

Learning in itself is a womb to tomb process, which starts by birth and ends with death. Gandhi advocates that the pillar of education must be based on the lesson of non-violence. He was the strict worshipper of non-violence so he admits that truth will prevail at any cost and on the other hand, violence is not the solution of any problem. Problem can be solved in calm way too and it can only be possible through education, which spread the lesson of love and brotherhood among learners. He proved it when he used his ahimsa tool to fight with colonial rule and gifts us freedom. He said, "Where the whole atmosphere is redolent with the pure fragrance of ahimsa, boys and girls studying together will have like brothers and sisters in freedom and yet in self-imposed restraint; the students will be bound to the teachers in ties of filial love, mutual respects and mutual trust (Jha 32)." The time and atmosphere when Gandhi ji raises his voice for joint education of boys and girls, was a time when going school in itself was a big deal. It was the impact of Gandhi and his advocacy which later

on implemented as a co-education of boys and girls.

Mahatma Gandhi was in favor of vocational education. He believes that vocational education provides the all-round development to the mind and the body. He was also in favor of practical and skillful learning. According to him practical education leads towards the overall development of the mind. Now a day, learning is mostly practical, teachers and students are interested in practical method of learning. We are now interested in proving even the theoretical aspects in practical ways. Now academy provides some set parameters to explore and enhance practical learning. Gandhi ji died on 30 January, 1948 and has left India free and gave precious pattern of education and its importance exists with the fact that his views on education are still relevant.

Mahatma Gandhi opposed western education because according to him western education sets an inferior mindset in Indian people, their self respect, positivity, dignity in at stake. He was unsatisfied with western medium of teaching. He realized that

education must be in our mother-tongue, English medium education must not be mandatory for education, because the clarity level of understanding and development of ideas can only be possible when we receive education in our mother-tongue. Mahatma Gandhi clearly stated that first of all we should develop our motherland. He also believes in the conception of local education and development with universal step.

Academy or the similar sets of learning institutions have the main goal to give a proper and all round developer education to the learners. It is like a coin which has always a two side and importance of both sides cannot be underestimated for a single side, similar to the coin, academy and education helps us to connect the world within a larger frame and assigned us some qualities in our personality and spirit to give our share in the development of the nation. Mahatma Gandhi was also firm believer of the idea that only by this way any nation can be developed and civilized.

Mahatma Gandhi believes that Indian way of education needs some basic changes because it lacks career developing quality. He voices for the craft and skilled based education system for student to develop a quality to live life systematically. What Gandhi has said is relevant now, it is evidently clear that we are facing a huge problem in employment sector, but it is also clear that, government cannot provide every life a job, howsoever, we must develop such qualities to help and shape our self to give our self a livelihood to live life, and the best way to develop or learn something is academy. Basically, Gandhi denied the type of education which teaches to discriminate between good and bad, between rich and poor, rather he believed in the concept that true education must correspond to the surrounding atmosphere or it cannot be taken as a healthy growth for learners. He believes in the *Nayee-Talim*, which according to him is not just to shape the occupation but to develop the whole man. According to Gandhi, the aim of university education should be to make people who will live

and die for the country's freedom. He advocates:

Persistent questioning and healthy inquisitiveness are the first requisite for acquiring learning of any kind...All education in a country has got to be demonstrably in promotion of the progress of the country in which it is given. The emphasis laid on the principle of spending every minute of one's life usefully is the best education for citizenship (Gandhi 95-97).

In a Gandhian perspective, education is the pathway to progress. Education and non-violence, education and harmony, education and morality, education and ethics are very closely linked to each other. That is the reason why he talks about the importance of education with practicality in every field. He follows that man must be religious in nature. According to Mahatma Gandhi, education is an unending exercise which is filled with devotion and which should be performed till death. For Gandhi, only education can act as a catalyst to a successful civilization. Likewise, education can help mould and shape the human body, mind and character in

such a manner that they may act as the means to achieve joy and efficiency for peace and freedom from inequality.

Furthermore, Mahatma Gandhi practiced over the basic aim and vital role of education that the central aim of education is to build high moral character which assimilates truth and non-violence at social perspectives. Education is the only way to grasp the quality of goodness and morality. Gandhi clearly distorted the parameters of education which is unskilled and uses students as a storage device on theoretical basics. He believes that having a status in society is not just the goal of gained knowledge but to elevate society is the real purpose. He advocates the importance of education for making life purposeful, "This works for the all-round growth of man right from the beginning till the end. Its ultimate aim is to turn human knowledge into his ability. It is for the purpose of making his life worthy and meaningful, and it is not only for earning his livelihood (Dutta 105)."

Gandhi is clearly a role model in light of his contribution in educational and social perspective. His non-violent,

humanistic and tolerant nature wins all. On the common grounds, his personal characteristics, his way of struggling, universal understanding of brotherhood, his educational remarks, implement of peace and values has set an example valid up to infinity. His basic philosophy of Satyagraha, Ahimsa and overall approaches of his views and attitudes shapes his educational thoughts. Gandhi's understanding of education is basically purposive and developmental.

Mahatma Gandhi criticized the view that teachers can act violently or can give violent body signs; he argues that it will imprint the scene of violence in student's mind. The seed of harmony and love must be sown in the mind of people from the very beginning of their educational life; it will definitely help to spread harmony in society. His advocacy for non-violence paradigm became a guiding factor, till then to now. Mahatma Gandhi believes in the advocacy of learning, he believes:

By education, I mean all-around drawing out of the best in child and man-body mind and spirit. Literacy is

not the end of education, not even the beginning. It is one of the means whereby men and women can be educated. Literacy in itself is no education...learning by doing and tries to stimulate the individual's mind to think creatively (Gandhi 102).

He advocates the character building education system for dynamic and responsible citizens. For him literacy is not only about gaining knowledge but also about enhancing the capability to live. So he insists over the moral development of the character. Character building for him is the essential aim of education. He has always given top position to the education of women. He also speaks for adult education as an important point to educate. For Mahatma Gandhi, teacher and Student relationship and mediums of education must be highly violence free in nature.

The two things Gandhi advocates the most are ethics and morality. His all beliefs, principles and movements are clearly filled up with these two conceptions. When he spoke about 'buniyadi shiksha' (fundamental education) he has clearly mentioned

the need of moral and character building education. Mahatma Gandhi considered youth as a social transformer who has the power to construct society within the terms they achieved from learning. Education is like an art which draws the picture of what is in mind of the learner. Only by educating our self one can find the difference between good and evil, what to assimilate and what to avoid, what are the pros and cons of being morally and culturally enriched and got benefited by the effects of spiritual learning. The practice of learning makes a man perfect for his own being and for the society as well.

Gandhi was a utopian and follower of humanity and preaches the message of simple living and high thinking. He emphasized over the learning by practicality. His personality and believes and practices are now universally acclaimed, though he is dead as a person but his philosophies are alive in the heart and character of everybody. Gandhi ji had a charismatic personality; he always maintained that education is necessary for the achievement of the goal of peace and progress. His idealism of utopian

society was based on equality irrespective of caste, creed, colour, gender, religion and violence. He always thought that true education always leads to do the right thing and stands against wrong ones because he thinks 'literacy in itself is no education'. He also emphasized over the spiritual learning of the character because this type of education, according to him, develops a good heart. Mahatma Gandhi always believed that education, learning and discipline is something which has the power to mend society and civilization as a whole.

The philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi is still resides in us and continues to reside till the end of the civilization. Many writers, not just only Indians but also other country writers have written a lot about Mahatma Gandhi and about his endless glory. Many writers have glorified the glory of Gandhi as an international hero, not just as a simple man but as an extraordinary persona. The universal value of his character and universal understanding of peace and democratic values achieves a universal

worldwide view and sketches him like a world citizen. Mahatma Gandhi believes in the democratic scheme of education. What we badly need today is to pay attention to his believes once again for the betterment of self and civilization. Only education has the power to lead civilization to the path of performativity and progress. His advocacy of education for sustainable peace and development is truth for all civilizations and will always be till our existence.

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