



STUDY OF THE VISION OF MAHATMA GANDHI ABOUT EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Mahatma Gandhi, the leader of the Indian independence movement, was also a profound educational reformer. His vision of education, articulated through his concept of Nai Talim or Basic Education, aimed to provide an education system that was inclusive, practical, and aligned with the socio-economic realities of rural India. This paper explores Gandhi's educational philosophy, its key components, and its relevance in contemporary times.

KEYWORDS: Vision, Education, Basic Education, Philosophy, Gandhi

INTRODUCTION

Mahatma Gandhi's vision for education was fundamentally different from the colonial education system imposed by the British in India. He believed in an education system that was rooted in Indian culture, integrated with practical skills, and accessible to all. Gandhi's educational philosophy, often referred to as *Nai Talim* or Basic Education, emphasized the holistic development of individuals, including their intellectual, moral, and physical aspects.

The Core Principles of Gandhi's Educational Vision

1. Holistic Development

Gandhi advocated for an education that went beyond literacy and numeracy. He emphasized the development of the head, heart, and hands. This meant education should not only impart knowledge but also instill moral values and practical skills.

2. Integration of Work and Learning

One of the central tenets of Nai Talim was the integration of productive work with academic learning. Gandhi believed that engaging students in productive activities, such as handicrafts, would make learning more relevant and help them develop a respect for manual labor.

3. Community-Centric Approach

Gandhi's educational model was community-centric. He argued that education should be tailored to the needs of the community and should contribute to its development. This meant that local languages and traditions were integral to the curriculum.

4. Self-Sufficiency

Gandhi envisioned schools that were economically self-sufficient. He proposed that the skills learned by students through productive work should contribute to the financial sustainability of the educational institutions.

5. Character Building

For Gandhi, character building was a crucial aspect of education. He stressed the importance of inculcating values such as truth,

non-violence, and social service in students.

Aspect	Traditional Colonial Education	Gandhi's Nai Talim
Objective	Creating clerks for administration	Holistic development of individuals
Medium of Instruction	English	Local languages
Curriculum	Western-centric, theoretical	Practical skills integrated with academics
Methodology	Rote learning	Learning by doing
Role of Teacher	Authoritative	Facilitator and guide
Connection to Community	Detached	Community-centric
Economic Model	Dependent on external funding	Self-sufficient through productive work
Focus	Intellectual development	Intellectual, moral, and practical development

Table 1: Comparison of Traditional Colonial Education and Gandhi's Nai Talim

Gandhi's Educational Experiments

1. Tolstoy Farm

In South Africa, Gandhi experimented with his ideas on education at the Tolstoy Farm. Children were taught in an environment where manual work, such as farming and carpentry, was integrated with academic learning.

2. Wardha Scheme

In 1937, Gandhi's educational ideas were formalized in the Wardha Scheme, which was later endorsed by the Indian National Congress. This scheme laid down the framework for implementing Nai Talim across India.

Relevance of Gandhi's Educational Vision Today

1. Skill-Based Learning

In the 21st century, there is a growing emphasis on skill-based education. Gandhi's approach of integrating work and learning is particularly relevant in this context, as it promotes practical skills alongside academic knowledge.

2. Sustainable Education

Gandhi's idea of self-sufficient schools aligns with modern principles of sustainability. His vision encourages the use of local resources and sustainable practices in education.

3. Moral and Ethical Education

The focus on character building and moral education is crucial in today's world, where ethical challenges are increasingly complex. Gandhi's emphasis on values such as non-violence and truthfulness remains pertinent.

CONCLUSION

Mahatma Gandhi's vision for education was revolutionary for its time and continues to offer valuable insights for modern educational practices. By promoting holistic development, integrating practical skills with academics, and emphasizing community involvement and self-sufficiency, Gandhi's Nai Talim presents a comprehensive model for an inclusive and practical education system.

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