



Gandhiji views on Value Education

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Abstract: Mahatma Gandhi laid down some rules for students so as to ensure that morality and righteousness always be considered as an essential part of education so that every student shall gain in terms of knowledge and spirituality. He said that, on the one hand, where students should gain education under the strict regimen of high morals, self-control, and right thinking; on the other, they should also be expected to provide service to the society in general. This includes their respect towards parents, teachers and elders, love for children, following of social traditions and constant awareness towards their duties and responsibilities.

Key words: Basic education, virtues, ethical knowledge

Introduction

Education should be so revolutionized as to answer the wants of the poorest villager, instead of answering those of an imperial exploiter. Education in the understanding of citizenship is a short-term affair if we are honest and earnest. Basic education links the children, whether of cities or the villages, to all that is best and lasting in India. Real education has to draw out the best from the boys and girls to be educated. True education must correspond to the surrounding circumstances or it is not a healthy growth. What is really needed to make democracy function is not knowledge of facts, but right education. National education to be truly national must reflect the national condition for the time being. The function of Naye-Talim is not to teach an occupation, but through it to develop the whole man.

The function of education is to create ideal citizens. Ideal means an individual is overwhelming with virtues and is always well behaved. Ideal citizens are the pre-requisite for coherent and comprehensive development. The

education to produce the best citizens means the education of the hearts of people. This expects education to change the hearts of individuals.

Explaining the meaning of genuine education Mahatma Gandhi says, "Genuine education does not consist of cramming a lot of information and numbers in mind. Nor it lies in passing the examination by reading a number of books, but it lies in developing character. It is a real education which inculcates internal virtues (values) in human beings. If you can develop such virtues, it will be the best education". Education is a process of comprehensive development of the best things (point, parts) lying in the mind and soul of children or men and bringing them out"¹ Gandhi has shown the royal path to us and to the world to observe and implement the lofty virtues and daily life practice by setting an example of himself by putting in to practice those ideals in his daily life activities. Value education means the education that teaches to put the virtues and values in to practices.



Analysis

According to the concept of value education given by great Indian thinkers like Gandhiji, Gurudev Tagore, Dr. Radhakrishnan, Maharshi, Arvind, Swami Vivekanand and the values presented by the National Education Commission and NEC 1986, it is made clear that value education means -

- Morality, equanimity, sympathy and spiritual development education.
- Education of development of virtues like simplicity, freedom, laboriousness, aesthetic sense etc.
- Education of universal values like truth and non-violence.
- Education for noble embellishment, expression of basic growth by good conduct and change of heart.
- Education for development of humanity, broad mindedness, serviceability, fearlessness (boldness), honesty, devotion, respect, co-operation, sense of responsibility etc.
- Education for integrity and democratic sense development. There lies the opportunity for all the above values to develop in basic Education.

Moral and ethical knowledge is the first point on which Mahatma Gandhi's concept of value education is based. Any education system that lacks these two cannot be termed as good. The reason behind such a thought is that, without morality and without ethics, no student, in a real sense, can be considered to be healthy in mental and physical terms because, for it, self-control and

good character are essential. A person who is not a moralist and who does not differentiate between right and wrong cannot rise to the essential level of a true student. The attainment of spiritual growth that has been described by Mahatma Gandhi as an essential part of education can be gained only through morality and ethics. Seeing it through another viewpoint also proves the same thing, because when we consider education as a means of attaining salvation and also as a support on the pathway to liberation, we cannot differentiate it from spiritualism.

Mahatma Gandhi laid down some rules for students so as to ensure that morality and righteousness always be considered as an essential part of education so that every student shall gain in terms of knowledge and spirituality. He said that, on the one hand, where students should gain education under the strict regimen of high morals, self-control, and right thinking; on the other, they should also be expected to provide service to the society in general. This includes their respect towards parents, teachers and elders, love for children, following of social traditions and constant awareness towards their duties and responsibilities.

In order to strengthen morality and ethics in students, Mahatma Gandhi advocated the introduction of religious education. This kind of education brings the 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, Gandhi writes in *Young India* of 6 December 1923: "A curriculum of religious instructions should include a study of the tenets of faiths other than one's own. For



this purpose the students should be trained to cultivate the habit of understanding and appreciating the doctrine of various great religions of the world in a spirit of reverence and broadminded tolerance."

Mahatma Gandhi calls upon all teachers to impart proper education of morality and ethics to students both at the school and at the college levels. In this regard while suggesting some guidelines for teachers, he says that it is the duty of teachers to develop high morals and strong character in their students. If teachers fail to do so, it means that they depart from their social and national responsibilities and, as such, they are also insincere towards their noble profession. He said that a teacher should lay an example to be followed before society and students. This can only be done when he himself leads his life with high standards of morality and strong character. An ideal teacher should be free from any addiction. He needs to be polite and should set an example of simple living and high thinking. He should also remember that wasting time is a sin; therefore, he should be aware of his duties towards students and society. Moreover, he should have a good reputation in society. Therefore it is the foremost duty of students, as well as of teachers, to make certain that moral and ethical knowledge continues to be an integral part of the educational process. By doing so, they can contribute to the development of value education.

It is not that Mahatma Gandhi did not talk of all-round or complete education on different occasions. He definitely spoke of imparting education based on curriculum; he, more or less wrote about graduate and postgraduate levels of education. Not only this, as I

have just discussed, he laid emphasis on moral and ethical knowledge, which is helpful for character building and for the physical and mental development of a student from the very beginning of his education. He clearly believed that without a healthy body; the mind could not be developed fully.

It is but obvious that when a child starts his formal education, he enters at the primary level and, step by step, at an age of twenty or twenty-two, he graduates from university. After so many years, if he does not find a goal or lacks a direction to begin his career, then what could be the use of such an education? What is the use of the degree that he has in his hand? After obtaining a degree, students should have a clear direction for their future; they should have no doubts towards their future goal and should be full of self confidence. Side by side, they should be self-dependent and capable of tackling unavoidable day-to-day problems. They must not be worried about a suitable job.

But, in reality, these days we see that our younger generation is directionless. Our youths are diverted and a feeling of helplessness and dejection is prevailing on them. According to a survey, there are millions of men and women who, even after completing their studies at graduation, post graduation, and doctorate levels, fail to seek an employment of their choice. Is it not a failure of our social and educational system? Even after spending the golden years of one's life in attaining higher education, our youths are not self-dependent. As such, how would they be able to get rid of their day-to-day problems and how would they contribute to the society and the nation? Therefore



it is a challenge not only before the youths of this country but also before the educationists, scholars, and those in the government to solve this problem.

To tackle this problem, Mahatma Gandhi's views can be of great help. In this reference, he has said that there is a need of result-oriented education. He said that every child has some special qualities that can also be termed as inherited traits of personality; so at the primary level, a student's quality and worth should be identified by his teacher. A student should gain education according to a curriculum and moral guidance and as such also improve his physical strength. But the teacher should watch and identify his quality that could be of help in his later life.

Gandhi's view-point pertaining to value education which should be applied in a wider perspective. It's worth lies in the fact that education should necessarily be helpful in employment and its foundations should be laid on morality and ethics. We who are concerned with education need to think over Gandhi's views on education. We have to apply Mahatma Gandhi's ideas according to the present circumstances of our country and also as per the demands of time.

References :

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