



Social Change through Importance and Objectives of Mahatma Gandhi's Basic Education: An Analysis

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Abstract

This focuses on the social change through Gandhiji's basic education and its importance and objectives for handicrafts activities. Gandhi's model of education was directed toward his alternative idea of the social order. Mahatma Gandhi's basic education was, therefore, an embodiment of his perception of an ideal society consisting of small, self-reliant communities with his ideal citizen being an industrious, self-respecting and generous individual living in a small cooperative community. Basic education is a creation of the self-supporting, self-independent plan, character building, improve the moral, spiritual education development to poor people and it helped to improve the social change in every village in our country. Gandhiji advocated that education was the means to attain virtues. Basic education was every person's right. Children not only learn to read and write, they must also learn skills which will make them independent and self-reliant.

Keywords: Gandhi's Basic Education, Features, Objectives, Importance of Handicrafts, and Social Change.

Introduction

Basic education is a very important fundamental concept of Gandhiji's. He had realized that this will improve the small-scale industry,

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which in turn, will bring a self-sufficient economy for every country. Gandhi's model of education was directed toward his alternative vision of the Sarvodaya - Gandhi's basic education was, therefore, an embodiment of his perception of an Ideal State consisting of small, self-reliant communities with his ideal citizen being an industrious, self-respecting, and generous individual living in a small cooperative community. Basic Education is not a separate knowledge and work. Mahatma Gandhi promoted an educational curriculum with the same name based on this educational principle. It can be translated with the phrase Basic Education for all. However, the concept has several layers of meaning. It developed out of Gandhi's experience with the English educational system and with colonialism in general. In that system, he saw that Indian children would be isolated and career-based thinking would become dominant. Besides, it embodied a series of negative outcomes: the disdain for manual work, the development of a new elite class, and the increasing problems of industrialization and urbanization.

The three important pillars of Gandhi's education were its focus on the lifelong character of education, its social character, and its form as a holistic process. For Gandhi, education is the moral development of the person. Gandhi's concept of basic education included manual work as a means to make basic education inclusive aspect. He believed in a holistic curriculum, even in primary education that introduces children to work-experience through agriculture, weaving, carpentry, and several other skills.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the concept and characteristics features of Mahatma Gandhiji's basic education.
2. To study the objectives and importance of Gandhiji's basic education.
3. To study the social change through mahatma Gandhi's basic education

Research Methodology of the Study The present research paper was mainly based on secondary sources like books, journals and articles, magazines, national and international journals, seminar and conference papers, newspapers, online sources, etc.

Concept of Basic Education

Gandhi's basic education is a breakthrough in the prevalent and traditional system of education. He holds the view that a child's education should begin with the teaching of a useful

craft to enable him to produce something right from the beginning of his study and training. Gandhi firmly believed that basic education was an important means to develop the body and the mind. Basic education refers to the whole range of educational activities taking place in various settings, which aim to meet basic learning needs. According to the International Standard Classification of Education, basic education comprises primary education and lower secondary education.

Characteristic Features

Mahatma Gandhiji is one of the well-known leaders of Indian revolutionary and he was first thinking about the basic education system, he called Nai Talim. It is related to New Education, due to its unique nature and structure of education. It stands positive novel characteristics that cannot be found in the contemporary system of education. Basic education is a creation of the self-supporting, self-independent plan, character building, improve the moral, spiritual education development to poor people and it helped to improve the ideal state in every village in our country as well as world harmony. Several of these characteristics features the following have given below:

- A. Correlative Feature of Knowledge:** This is a major feature of Gandhi's Basic Education. It was given here centering on the handicraft and training center. It understood that knowledge was inclusive and it should not be compartmentalized. Knowledge of the school subjects could be given in a correlated way through handicraft. And also the students may derive a comprehensive view of knowledge that may assist them in the solution to their problems of human life.
- B. Self-supporting Feature of Education:** It is the second important feature of Gandhiji's Basic Education at that time. The idea of economic self-sufficiency in basic education through handicraft was the basis of Gandhi's basic education. It is believed in the most principle of earning while learning, so that the learner may become economically self-dependent. It is mainly related to making education available to the poorer section of people.
- C. Handicraft as the Medium Subject:** Gandhiji's Basic Education has the essential subject of handicraft to promote the medium of education should be creative labor and skill development, it is not a subject. Education in handicrafts teaches method the dignity of labor and combines learning by doing. Thus handicrafts are the training center for teaching all

subjects. According to Gandhi, education was harmonious progress of the human body, mind, and soul. Handicraft was the prime subject through which knowledge of the other subjects was communicated.

- D. The ideal of Good Citizenships:** In basic education, handicraft teaching bears the prospect of citizenship training. It may train in the sense of co-operation, understanding, and interdependence of students. Further, they may develop the idea of living a better life in society with dignity, honor, and non-violence. Economic contributions to society may also develop a sense of social belongingness.
- E. Maintenance Cultural Tradition:** Basic education was mainly based on traditional and cultural development. It was a problem with Western-oriented thought and culture. It was basic in the sense that it was based on Indian cultural tradition. Further, it aimed at serving the basic socio-cultural essentials of the normal individual of the nation. It is through the study of the mother tongue that children may be introduced to the rich cultural heritage of the past.
- F. Creative Ability Development:** Any person has creative development and knowledge through a basic education system. It had tried to establish a good relation connection between the natural and social environment of the children. And also, it advised the talented child to develop his creative and problem-solving ability through the learning situation.
- G. Creation of Self-employment:** It is another sign of the main feature of basic education by Gandhi. It provides enough scope of employment and self-employment for the students on completion of their education. It trains them to make effective utilization of the natural resources available in their locality. Therefore, it had the potentiality of solving the unemployment problem in the young population.
- H. Strengthen of Pragmatic Philosophy:** This education was based on the sound philosophy of modern education. Practice, utility, and productivity which are the essence of pragmatic philosophy were being worked out through basic education. Also, this philosophy of education may only serve the need of the ground reality of individual and society, at present.

Objectives of Basic Education

Basic education is an invention in the predominant and traditional system of education by Gandhi. He holds the view that a child's education should begin with the teaching of a useful

handicraft to enable him to produce something right from the beginning of his study and training. It is meant to provide basic skill knowledge to the children and to make them for normal human life. They are important aims following have been determined of basic education as given briefly explained.

- ✓ **Physical and Mental Development:** Gandhiji was aware that man is a psychological being, so he emphasized his physical and mental development first. Gandhiji also revealed that the constructing the curriculum on its basis.
- ✓ **Implementation of Sarvodaya Society:** Basic education is a prominent and support for creates welfare for all in society. Social is human well-being, however, education should help his social development. So, Gandhiji took social development in a specific meaning. Gandhi believes to build such a society in which nobody will exploit anybody, all will love each other, it will co-operate with each other and all will support each other's development. It will be the rise of everybody in further social development.
- ✓ **Cultural Development:** Basic education has another important aim of cultural development, according to Gandhi. So, he wrote with great focuses that if a generation becomes ignorant of the efforts of its ancestors, and feels ashamed of its culture, then it is destroyed.
- ✓ **Moral Development:** Mahatma Gandhiji realizes the importance of the force of feature. His companions too had envisaged moral development by education. This is a significant aim of basic education.
- ✓ **Vocational Development:** Mahatma Gandhiji revealed two major things about it and they are the firstly, handicrafts taught to the children should produce so much of production that from its benefits the schools can be run and secondly, the children should be able to earn their livelihood after having gained knowledge in these handicrafts.
- ✓ **Development of Citizenship:** A person is called a citizen from a state viewpoint. It is needed for the citizens of any country to follow the national rule/ regulation and they should make their duty and protect their rights. Basic education is a national education policy/ plan; it is natural for it to have this aim. It also has the very component of the development of citizenship and their improved skill and knowledge.
- ✓ **Spiritual Development:** Mahatma Gandhi's said that about basic education to "By education, I refer an all-round drawing out of the best, in child and man-body, mind and

spirit". Spiritual development is the note that the Gandhiji needed to effort spiritual development too by education.

Importance of Handicrafts Basic Education

In historical background according to Mahatma Gandhi, traditional and colonial forms of education had emphasized literacy and abstract, text-based knowledge which had been the domain of the upper castes. His suggestion to make handicrafts the center of his basic education had as its main goal to bring about a radical restructuring of the sociology of school knowledge in a nation in which the literacies of the lower castes like spinning, weaving, leatherwork, pottery, and metal-work, basket-making, and book-binding would be made central. The other important goal of this use of handicrafts was to make schools financially and socially independent of the state an even more radical concept. Thus in his effective study on education in Harijan in 1937, Gandhi said that the literacy is not the end of education or even the beginning. It is only one of how man and woman can be educated. Literacy in itself is no education. I would therefore begin the child's education by teaching it a useful handicraft and enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training. Thus every school can be made self-supporting.

According to Gandhi, handicraft-centered education generates a balance between theory and monotonous learning through creative stimulation and self-expression. It helps in reducing discrimination between manual and intellectual skills and overcoming prejudices through respect for socially meaningful work that meets the needs of urban and rural nations. It makes one feel proud about earning a decent livelihood through sustainable sources of income and community initiatives that result in cooperative societies and micro-enterprises. For Gandhi, students should learn the principle of self-help, self-reliance, and dignity of labor along with their several academic subjects. He desired that the medium of education should be creative labor i.e., employment creation and it is not a subject. Education in handicrafts teaches method the dignity of labor and combines learning by doing. Thus handicrafts are the training center of all subjects. According to him, education was harmonious progress of the human body, mind, and soul. Gandhi's idea of education was the education of mind through handicraft. For Gandhi, education should be handicraft training centered. Education must be built around a handicraft. It would

refer that all subjects, arithmetic, geography, history, science, etc., must be taught as arising in learning a handicraft.

Social Change through Mahatma Gandhi's Basic Education

Gandhiji's basic education will be helpful to indicate briefly the various types of knowledge, skill, attitude, and habit, which should be correlated with these social change activity in the scheme of the basic education are following in given below:

The Change of Clean and Healthy Living in Society: This will include the development necessary for individual health and cleanliness and community hygiene. It will include the practical skill to carry out all types of cleaning and sanitation work efficiently. It will involve physical education and the study of the elements of physiology, hygiene, sanitation and dietetics in a scientific manner.

The Change of Self-reliance: This concept, as has been pointed out in the introduction, is of more far-reaching educational significance than that of economic self-support alone, but it must include economic self-support both for its own sake and as very valuable means of character training. Self-support in clothing includes learning all the processes by which the cotton is grown and the cloth manufactured and sufficient skill in needlework and dress-making to make and repair simple garments for oneself and for younger children. It naturally involves much practice in arithmetical and some understanding of simple mathematical and physical concepts.

The Change of Productive Basic Handicraft: There are handicrafts recommended as those which have been proved by experience to be most suited for children of basic school age and most valuable for developing intelligence and general knowledge like agriculture and gardening, spinning and weaving, and wood and metal work. The basic handicraft will be learned stage by stage up to a considerably higher level of efficiency than is involved in the concept of all-round self-reliance.

The Change of Citizenship in a Society: It will include the development of habits and attitudes of cooperation and neighbourliness at home, at school, in the village or local community and in relation to the State and to humanity as a whole. On the theoretical side it will involve a

study of history, geography, civics and of sociology and economics in an elementary form related to the conditions and needs of the locality.

The Change of Recreational and Cultural Activities: These activities can be of wide range and great variety. Games and dancing, music and drama, the celebration of festivals of social, religious, historical and national significance, will all be included. They will involve the study of good literature in the mother tongue, an introduction to the national language and training in the appreciation of good art and music. The aesthetic side of the children's nature will be developed largely through these activities.

Conclusion

In conclusion that the basic education links the children, whether of cities or the villages, to all that is best and lasting in India. It develops both the body and the mind, and keeps the child rooted to the soil with a glorious vision of the future. Gandhiji basic education advised for free and compulsory education for all boys and girls between 7 and 14 years. A free primary universal education is to be imparted to all the children in the village. For Gandhi the goal of basic education was character building. He advocated that National Education had a great role to play in the formulation of self-rule. The future of the individual and the progress of the nation were thus wholly dependent upon education. Gandhi never lost sight of the manifold problems and challenges that confronted the nation. His prescription thus envisaged a meaningful, useful and relevant education that would cater to the needs of a post independent Indian society.

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