

**“MAHATAMA GANDHI TEACHINGS AT INTERNATIONAL ARENA”****PRADEEP KUMAR MAURYA**Research Scholar
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Shilong Meghalaya**DR. TIRYUGI NARAIN**Supervisor
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Shastrinagar Ghaziabad**ABSTRACT**

In the present scenario of education it is anomaly that education has not been able to give right direction to our youths and it does not provide them opportunities for their all round development or make them self reliant. In our country 80% of population is belongs to agriculture and 10% occupied in serving the needs of them. Now a days the students may pass and earn degree or degrees with first or higher division or may acquire the highest degree, but even though they does not become self reliant and unable to face the challenges. So to overcome this situation there is need of such education which was predicted by Mahatma Gandhi viz ‘Basic Education’ or ‘Nai-Talim’. In Boramani village of Sholapur district “Mahatma Gandhi Global Village” endeavors to provide education with the views of Mahatma Gandhi, which shows effective and positive results among the children.

Key Words: Educational Philosophy, Spiritual Thought, Buddhism

INTRODUCTION

The thoughts and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi are guidelines not only for India but also for overall the world that is why to disseminate the ideology of Mahatma Gandhi UNO decides to celebrate his birthday 2nd October as the International Non violent Day. Because of the development in the field of Information Technology there is optimum use of computer and internet. On one side this IT has brought the world at the next door. Now the world has become a tiny village and on other side so many issues and problems are faced by the population. These issues and problems are not only related to India but it co-relates all over the world. These challenges can be overruled by assimilating or adopting the Gandhian philosophy and thoughts through education.

Gandhiji not only gave India its freedom but also gave the world and us a new thought on nonviolence and sustainable living. His teachings and experiments are more valid today than ever before, especially when we are trying to find solutions to worldwide greed, corruption, violence and runaway consumptive lifestyle which are putting a very heavy burden on the world’s resources.

Through ages India has time and again given to the world a new thought. Thus Buddhism, Jainism, Yogic system, Sikhism are part of the great **spiritual** thought given by India from time to time. Gandhiji’s message of nonviolence and sustainable living is a continuation of that long tradition.

To my **mind** Gandhiji’s greatest contribution to sustainable development was twofold. Firstly his experiments in simple living and high thinking. He believed that with simple living the resources of the planet earth can sustain us comfortably and his famous saying that earth provides us enough for our needs but not for our greed is extremely apt today. Secondly his insistence on all inclusive growth of the society and hence his focus on rural development.

GANDHI’S SPIRITUALITY

Gandhiji was a highly evolved and spiritual human being. To him spirituality came first. Other things like politics, public **life** etc. were by-products of his spirituality. Also as a person progresses on the **path of spirituality**, his or her priorities in life change. The focus of life shifts more towards getting personal

happiness through mental peace or by helping others and less on material needs, greed and desires. Gandhiji's experiments on simple and sustainable living followed his own spiritual progress.

He also realized from an early age the importance of a great body and mind. In this he was following the tenets of ancient Yogic system which stresses on a healthy body and a powerful mind. Thus all his experiments on food, brahmacharya (celibacy) and fasting came from this belief. Besides he also realized that to fight a powerful enemy like Britain, he had to make his body-temple extremely powerful so that it could sustain long fights. This meant that it had to need least amount of comforts and external inputs and thus Gandhiji showed that with simple living he could produce the highest quality of thought. To my mind this was an ultimate example of sustainable living.

The spirit of Bhagwad Gita's Karma *Yoga* guided him in his endeavors and he considered it as his duty to help his countrymen and fellow beings. There are many instances of people who saw his glowing skin, aura, and felt the **presence of his personality** whenever they met him. That is only possible for a Yogi of very high order. In early 1940's just before the quit India movement, a mammoth public meeting took place in Allahabad. Between half to a million people were present. Gandhiji was late for the meeting. All the great leaders of independence movement were giving their speeches and trying to calm the crowd, which was quite restless. Then suddenly Gandhiji came, climbed on the dais and put a finger on his lips. A wave of silence swept the grounds starting from dais. My father termed it as a remarkable experience of the power of a small frail man over the masses.

Possessed with a great body and a powerful mind he also became fearless and it is this quality of fearlessness which made him blaze new trails and produce novel political strategies like nonviolence, Satyagraha, etc. Time and again he showed his fearlessness by dealing with British on equal terms. In 1920s and 30s during the height of colonial rule such a behavior of a subject in front of his colonial masters was unique and provided a quantum jump in raising the consciousness of Indians.

Besides this quality of fearlessness also rooted him deeply in the path of *Karma Yoga* and hence he believed only in work and power of will and never in any astrologers, palmist etc. When the brain becomes very powerful it also becomes sensitive to the surroundings. This is the genesis of nonviolence as this makes all life sacred. Gandhiji as the pujari (priest) of nonviolence used it for everything including industrialization. He rightly thought the industrialization of 1920s to be a violent system with heavy machinery, very inefficient energy and materials conversion technologies and no concern for the environment. Intuitively he revolted against those systems and felt that simple life (with few needs) and most of the daily things to be produced from locally available materials was nonviolent and in tune with the nature.

Gandhi was not anti-technology or science. He was a prisoner of his times. He always said that he was a pujari (priest) of "body-temple" and since it was the most complex machinery in the world so how could he be anti-machinery! He believed in rural-based and economically viable local production and consumption systems. Hence he was against things made in Bombay and shipped to rural areas. Similarly he said that he objected to electricity being produced in Bombay and transmitted to Wardha (where his ashram was). He wanted it produced in Wardha from local resources – again showing his vision since decentralized power production is gaining currency.

Not being a student of science or engineering he could not express his feelings in a scientific way but always talked about his dream village which he felt will be self-sufficient with its inhabitants living in harmony with nature. Modern technology which is following bio- mimicry allows for the first time to have softer and efficient systems to achieve our purposes and for the Gandhian dream becoming a reality.

As a spiritual being and a visionary Gandhiji was far ahead of his times. For example he was energy conservator par excellence. He lived in his ashrams without electricity or any modern amenities. His

insistence on use of self/human labour for majority of needs was legendary and was usually frowned upon by his closest colleagues who thought it was anti-progress and pushing back India to stone ages. Nevertheless with the development of sophisticated man-machine interface technologies like free play radios, human powered electricity producing units for laptops, cell phones etc, the use of self/human labour maybe able to solve the twin problems of obesity and energy.

Sometimes Gandhiji carried his energy conservation experiments too far. His experiments on conserving his sexual energy proved quite controversial. He was obviously following the age-old tradition of abstinence that yogis practice. Thus when, at the age of 70, he had a wet dream he felt that his world had collapsed. He wrote about it and said that he felt ashamed of himself. Recent scientific evidence however has shown that our brains are full of sexual chemicals, which help in memory improvement and general well being. It is therefore possible that the practice of abstinence was done intuitively by yogis to conserve these chemicals to enhance their brain quality, which would help them in practice of yoga. More than the loss of chemicals, Gandhiji felt a lack of Sanyam and a loss of control over his purity of thought and hence his anguish.

Gandhiji believed in all - inclusive growth and felt that India can only become a great nation when its teeming and impoverished rural masses become better off. He therefore focused on rural development for last 30 years of his life and felt intuitively that future of India is in decentralized rural development. This vision which he stated in 1920's is even more valid today after almost 100 years.

For example it is a sad state of affairs that even 63 years after independence around 60% of our rural population lives in primitive conditions. They have hardly any electricity; they cook on primitive chulhas which create tremendous indoor air pollution and have not changed in thousands of years; and have no clean drinking water. Their lives are in darkness and somehow the modern technology has not touched them. There are estimates that nearly 1 million deaths take place every year in India because of indoor air pollution and unclean drinking water. Unless and until scientists, technologists and decision-makers improve their quality of life India will not join the ranks of developed nations.

In order for this to happen, creation of wealth and employment should take place in rural areas. I believe this is possible when agriculture provides both energy and food security for India in an economically viable manner. It is the land that provides the wealth of the country - a message that Gandhiji always gave regarding rural development.

Presently these residues, which constitute 60-75% of total biomass produced, do not fetch any money for the farmers. Since these residues can produce very high-quality energy like electricity and chemicals they should be properly priced. With such pricing the farmer can easily get an extra income of Rs. 5000-7000/acre per season. This extra income can make farming remunerative and change the face of rural India. Besides easing India's present energy crisis it can be a Rs. 200,000 crore/year (Rs. 2 trillion/yr) industry. At the same time the use of biomass for energy production can also produce about 50 million jobs in rural areas. Thus farming for energy will lead to a very prosperous India.

In coming years quite a lot of these residues may also be diverted to produce organic fertilizer in rural based high-tech units. Which stream the residues will go will be dictated by local market forces.

I strongly feel that when the farmers are neglected the long term sustainability of the country is threatened. When farms produce both food and fuel then their utility becomes manifold. In India 65% of its population depends on farming and with energy from agriculture as a major focus, India has the potential of becoming a high-tech farming community. This will help improve the rural environment and create better India, something that Gandhiji always stressed.

I also believe that this can be done by the use of high technology for rural applications. High technology allows the conversion of abundant locally available “dilute” energy resources like biomass, solar, wind etc. into useful end-products and services. Together with modern methods of production and distribution they can also be very economically feasible. In this process we need to follow nature and so the mantra of technology development should be biomimicry.

Natural systems through millions of years have evolved into very efficient materials and energy converters. In this process, size of the system reduces and its efficiency and complexity increases. Some of our designs and technologies are following this strategy. For example, computer chips, cell phones, power plants, etc. are all becoming very efficient, small in size, complex and economically viable. Technology developers should follow this strategy in developing rural technologies.

LESSONS FOR FUTURE

Every citizen of this earth aspires to a decent lifestyle. I believe such a lifestyle is possible with much less energy than is consumed by an average US citizen. For example, in the US the per capita energy consumption is 350 GJ/yr, whereas in India it is a low of 18 GJ/yr. If every citizen of India has the consumptive lifestyle of Americans then all the resources of earth will only be sufficient for India alone.

I feel energy consumption of 50-70 GJ/person/yr or one-fifth that of the US can provide a decent and emotionally satisfying lifestyle. This energy consumption will give the lifestyle that Europeans had in 1970s. This type of energy consumption will put much less pressure on the earth's resources besides reducing substantially the environmental pollution. However, it can only happen if each one of us become spiritual and follow the Gandhian maxim of ‘simple living and high thinking’.

Once our basic needs are satisfied, all of us long for some meaningful existence. Even the very rich are looking for some meaningful actions and purpose in their life. Happiness cannot be obtained by money alone. It only comes when there is some meaning to life. That meaning, I feel comes from helping other less fortunate people and by giving back something to the society. As engineers and scientists we can do it by providing right-sized technologies at the right ‘price’ to the poor. It is a doable goal. What is needed is the direction and will of political leadership to make the life of poor people better.

I also believe that the whole purpose of our existence is to increase personal and societal infrastructure. Personal infrastructure includes our health, happiness and general well-being. By improving our personal ‘infrastructure’ through spirituality, we become better human beings and it helps in our emotional growth and evolution. By giving back to the society so that its ‘infrastructure’ increases we help in mankind's evolution. Both these activities when carried out simultaneously, can give us great joy and satisfaction – a message that Gandhiji gave through his actual work and experiments. Thus the mantra of India's development should be spirituality with high technology. Both these things allow us to reduce our greed for resources and live in harmony with nature - something that Gandhiji preached intuitively all his life.

BASIC EDUCATION

Mahatma Gandhi in his article entitled ‘Basic Education’ has written that, this education is meant to transform the village children into model villagers. It is principally designed for them. He also wrote that, the inspiration for it has come from villages. 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.¹ In Harijan published on 6 April 1940 he clarify the concept and broadly focused on the objectives of Basic Education. He wrote that, the object of such education is the physical, intellectual and moral development of the children through the medium of handicraft² viz “learning by Doing”.

FUNDAMENTALS OF BASIC EDUCATION

1. All education to be true must be self supporting, that is to say, it will pay its expenses expecting the capital which will remain intact.
2. In this, the skill of fingers will be utilized up to the final stage, that is to say, hands of pupils will skillfully work on the object for some period during the day.
3. The education must be imparted through the medium of the regional language.
4. In this there is no room for giving sectional religious training. Fundamental universal ethics will have full scope.
5. This education, whether it is confined to children or adults or male or female will find its way to the homes of pupils.

The introduction of such manual training through basic education will serve a double purpose in India. It will pay for the education of our children and teach them an occupation on which they can earn their bread. Such an education system must make our children self-reliant and inculcate the value of respect for manual labour.

PRESENT SCENARIO OF EDUCATION

Mahatma Gandhi in his article titled 'The New Education' published in 'Young India' of 1 September 1921 has written that, whatever may be true of other countries, but in India where more than eighty percent of the population is occupied with agriculture and another ten percent occupied with industries, it is a crime to make an offence that to make education merely literary and unfit the boys and girls for manual work after life. When we focus on these lines we came to know that, according to Mahatma Gandhi, education is not only to push or gain the literary knowledge. In my view education cannot be confined to the knowledge of letters of alphabets. In addition to this literary knowledge, education should include moral, physical and mental development of a person.

In the present scenario of education it is an anomaly that, education has not been able to give right direction to our youth and does not provide them an opportunity for their all-round development or to make them self-reliant.

Now days the youths may pass the graduate examination with first division or may acquire the M.Phil. or Ph.D. degree, but still they do not become self-reliant and are not able to shape their future. In such a case, the education or degrees earned by them are meaningless or useless. Due to an increasing population and competition there is no prospect for the young graduates who acquire only degree or degrees. Many of them have no hope for a bright future. The present education without life skill produced only a literate unemployed youth force without confidence, which could not face the challenges. It appears that education today has failed in giving any direction. It is a fact that present system of education has been defective for the last many decades. After independence many committees & commissions have been formed, but how much improvement has been made in the reformation of education is the question.

The youths who belong to agriculture background received degree or not, they want to work or serve in the cities on fewer salaries, which could not meet their day-to-day needs. Due to these youths from rural villages drained towards cities. This situation affects the economy of villages or rural area.

If we do not awaken at the right time and take efforts to bring changes in our defective educational system according to the views of Mahatma Gandhi, the situation would become so serious that we would not be able to manage it.

MAHATMA GANDHI GLOBAL VILLAGE: MODEL OF BASIC EDUCATION

To inculcate the Gandhian philosophy and thoughts among the society Late B.I. Chanshetti Guruji Pratishthan established the Mahatma Gandhi Global Villages on site 503 B/2 near Primary Health Centre at Boramani, Dist. Solapur.

This Mahatma Gandhi Global Village is model of sustainable rural development through Gandhian views of education i.e. Basic Education.

In “National Council of Education” which was held at Wardha in October 1937 Mahatma Gandhi was firmly in favor of the revolution of education and the principle of free and compulsory education in India. He further stated that the brain must be educated through the hand, if I were a poet I would write poetry on the possibilities of five fingers. Those who do not train their hands, who go through ordinary route of education they lack music in their life. With these views of Mahatma Gandhi to transform the livelihood of today’s scenario, this “Global village” endeavor to give the education with the concept of basic education i.e. learning by doing.

At present 182 from 5-10 year age group students of the nearby villages belongs to farmer and laborer families are admitted for basic education. The teachers (mentors) of Global Village cater the formal education along with agro based vocational education. In this Global Village students learn Science and Mathematics through soil by sowing the seeds, cultivating the vegetable. In this Global Village students learn Science and Mathematics through soil by sowing the seeds, cultivating the vegetable, Social Science through corporate life, Geometry through carpentry, masonry etc. Marketing skills and Economics through activities like Gandhi Bazar, Diwali Bazar. Through such activity based education students learn with joy and in addition to literary knowledge they acquired moral, physical, mental development. Which helps them to become self reliant and think to realize the dignity of labour? They not only able to earn their bread but also able to fulfill the obligations of their family and in carving the path of their progress, ultimately they become able to achieve their goal in life.

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