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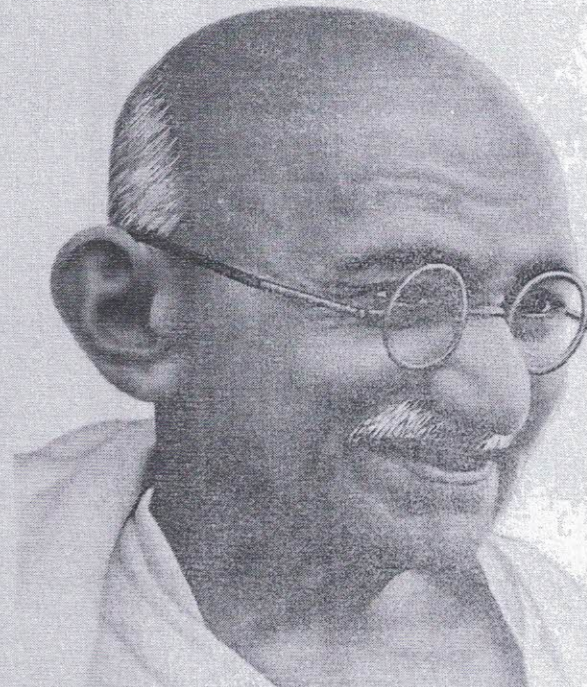
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**MAHATMA @ 150**

on

2nd March 2019



Organized by  
**Gandhi Study Centre**

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## The Relevance of Value Education: Gandhian Perspective

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Mahatma Gandhi needs no introduction as his immense contribution to the nation building is well known to all. His reputation as a true patriot as well as a world leader is accepted without any dispute. Gandhiji has influenced almost all the walks of life such as art, religion, literature, movies, politics, national economy so on and so forth. In spite of all the issues, educational system of the country was the core issue for his concern. He had his own views about the education to be imparted to the students of the country. He expressed his opinions regarding the need of moral and value education which would give the shape to the personality of citizens. The thoughts of Gandhiji provide us with a guideline to proceed towards value education. Not only this, if we apply them even in the modern perspective, they can definitely give a new dimension to our education system.

Gandhi once said: "Education means all-round drawing out of the best in child and man—body, mind, and spirit." As such, education becomes the basis of personality development in all dimensions—moral, mental, and emotional. Therefore we can say that in the long run education forms the foundations on which the castles of peace and prosperity can be built. Since ancient times, it is said *Sa Vidya Ya Vimuktaye*, which means that with education we finally attain salvation. This small Sanskrit phrase essentially contains the thought and essence of Value Education that is relevant in all perspectives. Gandhiji held educational

experiment at Shantiniketan, Kochharab Ashram, Sabarmati Ashram and Gujarat Vidhyapeeth after returning from South-Africa, and gave a new vision (philosophy) of education to The report of Wardha Education Scheme-1937 include ( covered) only the primary stage of education. But in 1945, Gandhiji put the concept of "comprehensive basic Education (Samagra Nai Talim) Training before the nation".

The five national values presented under the title of National Panchsheel included in NPE 1986 viz (1) Cleanliness (2) Truthfulness (3) Hardwork (4) Equality and (5) Co-operation

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 Gandhiji 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 into practice. This very concept, when applied to the simple but refined approach of Mahatma Gandhi, can provide us with a new dimension of educational development. As such, while analysing the views of Mahatma Gandhi, we can examine his views under two main heads: *morality* and *ethics*.

Moral and ethical knowledge is the basis of Mahatma Gandhi's concept of Value Education. That education system is considered as good which reflects these two virtues. The reason behind such 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 fundamental 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 and ultimately all round development will be achieved.

According to Gandhiji religious education can imbibe moral values and ethics among the students. This kind of education brings the values of forbearance, tolerance, and reverence in one's character. Gandhi wrote an article 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 disseminate proper education of morality and ethics to students both at the school and at the college levels. 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.

Another important aspect of Mahatma Gandhi's value education is basic or technical education. The word *buniyadi* (or basic), which Mahatma Gandhi used in the third and the fourth decades of the twentieth century, meant knowledge or education that could help rural people in the promotion of village handicrafts or to establish cottage industries. The ultimate purpose behind his attempt was to make young men and women self-reliant in the economic field. Even in the modern perspective, his idea of *buniyadi* or basic education is applicable and it does not clash with the concept of today's job-oriented or technical education. In fact, Mahatma Gandhi wanted the students to prepare themselves for technical knowledge right from the days of their primary level of education. In this regard, his logic is not only important but adaptable; it can prove to be a milestone in the direction 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. Simultaneously, 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.

For that purpose, it is necessary that after completing studies up to a certain level, he must, in addition to the three kinds of education—general (according to syllabi), moral, and physical—be provided facilities to gain technical knowledge in accordance with the special trait that has already been identified in his personality by his teacher. Since by nature he has interest in that knowledge, he will easily gain it; he will become adept in that. When he completes his study up to graduate level and with this extra knowledge comes out of a college or university, he would have a direction. As such, even if he does not get a private or government job, he would manage to get through some sort of self-employment on the basis of his technical knowledge. At least, then, his education would be considered as result-oriented.

The view-point Gandhi, pertaining to value education lies in the fact that education should necessarily be helpful in employment and its foundations should be laid on morality and ethics. It is our noble duty to exercise his thoughts into practice. His ideas are universal and we have to reframe those on the current scenario of national requirements.

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