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NEED OF GANDHI & TAGORE'S EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY FOR RECONSTRUCTION OF MODERN INDIA



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ABSTRACT:-

This paper aims to discuss the historical background of Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore, the names, which need no introduction. Both Gandhi and Tagore are counted among the greatest educationists of the world. The ideas & philosophies of education propounded by them bear great importance to the whole humanity. The paper argues that Gandhi & Tagore's ideas on the education emerged from his vision of an alternative society and polity that he envisaged for the country. They were well aware of the importance of education in building modern India. They not only enlightened India but also the whole world by his outstanding personality and intellects. The paper proposes to focus on Gandhi & Tagore's philosophy on education an idea of extending equal right of education for all.

KEY WORDS: - Hi.unanity, Education, intellectuals, equal rights etc.

INTRODUCTION :

India's recorded and unrecorded culture and civilization is one of the longest in the course of world history. Today, along with modernization, it is very much a part of our living culture, at every level of the society, as well as a documented testimony to the greatest strength of education, which catapulted the Indian Civilization to its zenith. Gandhi & Tagore influenced the lives of our

countrymen for more than half a century. Their approach to most issues was down-to-earth and holistic, be it social, cultural, economic, health or education. Their philosophies were very deep and farsighted. Their strategies were very realistic and the villagers were the center of his economic thought. His warnings against the British Education system were prophetic. Today, when Indian people face problems like illiteracy, crime, violence and corruption and more than a third of our population lives below the poverty line, it is time to re-evaluate the relevance of Gandhi & Tagore's contribution to education as well as their model of basic education, incorporating their philosophy, approach and strategy.

Gandhi's thoughts of Education: Gandhi was perhaps the only Indian leader who anticipated that developments taking place under the British Raj would make the people of India lose their control over national affairs including social and economic policies, culture, language and identity. He could anticipate the dangers of an increasing gap between the traditional rural masses and the Westernized urban elites. Thus, he gave a call for popular education both on moral and critical mass communication forms was necessary to relieve the people of their ignorance about the modern state, its laws and institutions, which had left them behind making them feel alienated. According to Gandhi, in a situation of ignorance and alienation, all laws and systems of governance were of little value for the people. He believed that when education becomes an instrument of dominant groups with vested interest in it, it loses its capacity to train individuals to develop rational-judgment skills. Public participation in swaraj (self-rule) requires that each individual has an unrestrained ethical autonomy to exercise reason and choice rather than conform to some pre-decided pedantic knowledge. Gandhi found the existing system of education defective on three counts:

- a) It was based on an alien culture, almost to the exclusion of the indigenous languages, traditions and social practices.
- b) In its exclusive emphasis on intellectual and technocratic - managerial training, it had completely ignored the culture of the heart, which is character, and the Culture of hands found in artisanal and manual skills.
- c) A popular, creative and useful education was at variance with foreign models of education, influenced by the social and educational philosophies of rich colonial countries, which were divorced from the actual needs of a disadvantaged majority.

BASIC EDUCATION:-

In 1936 Gandhi put forward his own alternative scheme of mass elementary education - 'Basic Education' or 'Nai Talim' as he called it. His scheme was quite different from the philosophical ideas of both the Romantic tradition and the Brahmanical tradition. Gandhi emphasized a different aspect of learning usually ignored by earlier traditions. He emphasized that artisan apprenticeship skills, manual training and related discourses should be the central and the main basis of all primary and elementary education. He believed that in a largely agrarian and poor society like India, communication and manual skills related to artisanal work and vocational training could be the most profitable form of popular education. For Gandhi, true education consisted in acculturation and training of the whole person, by which he meant the 3Hs rather than the 3Rs: 'heart' (character), 'hand' (practical skills) and the 'head' (mind). By education of the 'heart', he meant training the 'character' and spiritual or moral advancement, which he placed above all knowledge, whether intellectual or vocational. Gandhi's 3H education is not only inclusive but also broader than Paulo Freire's 'problem-posing' education.

TAGORE'S THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION:

Rabindranath Tagore maintained that a wholesome education must educate the mind along with the senses. Tagore was brought up in a family atmosphere where freedom was emphasized freedom of language, imagination, spirit and mind. Thus beheld that the main purpose of education is to promote freedom, freedom from structured and oppressive school education, freedom from the confined walls of the classroom, freedom for consonance with child's nature, and freedom of movement Typical of the romantic idealist tradition, Tagore stressed on the natural development of the child, emphasizing spontaneity and creativity as the crux of learning. Tagore's ideas on education were very much in the tradition of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Montessori and Wordsworth and this enabled him to develop a critique of the Anglicized education system in India, not on nationalistic grounds but on universalistic principles.

However, some of his thoughts have a direct bearing on primary education and the acquisition of basic skills. The tragedy with the Tagorean vision was that it was too idealistic and romantic in the context of mass education in India. In Tagore, learning takes a romantic journey under conditions of full freedom but it does not consist of a critical elaboration, a consciousness of what one really is, knowing oneself as a product of historical processes. He wanted to criticize the inhuman face of libertarian education guided by a market economy, which produced competition, division and alienation and accepted foreign domination. But he did not see the hegemonic relationship of education to politics or the political domination of powerful groups in determining the content and curriculum of modern education. Tagore did not give much attention to the political nature of the Nonetheless, he rightly pointed out the significance of a learning environment for children to grow freely and creatively, but he conceived of this environment as a Tapovan, within the modern national and international system, rejecting implicitly any attempt to criticize or even comprehend the system in its political relationship to the power of different groups or nations. He was also right to point out the need for introducing new teaching methods, which are supported by modern humanist psychologists. His reflections on teaching methods stressing play, group learning, flexible class organization and mother-tongue education were valuable pedagogic contributions to the psychology and philosophy of education.

CONCLUSION:

Tagore & Gandhiji's model were not only historic and practical, it was highly decentralized and integrated with a demonstrated capacity to motivate the entire community and place responsibility and accountability at the community level versus the State.

Tagore & Gandhi worked in the colonial! post-colonial societies of the Third World fragmented by narrow domestic walls of racism, casteism and class antagonism. They deeply contemplated on the plight of the mute millions of their people and sought ways and means by which their economic, political and social conditions could be improved. Though they are no more in the world but the volumes of work done and left with us will inspire the human civilization forever Gandhiji's basic education cannot be denied that it is India's heart and soul. It is a scheme which is mostly suited to the needs, aspirations, culture as well as social, political and economic background of the Indian people. In Tagore system of education problem children were handled with love and sympathy. Santiniketan (Abode of Peace) provides all freedom to students, trains them to do their work, and teaches them amity of people and unity of mankind. Thus, Visva-Bharati has brought Tagore name and fame. It is regarded as modern Nalanda. So Gandhi and Tagore will be remembered for ever with their outstanding ability as an educator of excellence. It is Most of the educational writings and experiments of Tagore and Gandhi centered around education of children and adolescents. Tagore's concept of

education called for an all-round development of the personality. Finally, we can say "Gandhi & Tagore's educational vision have relevance for the new generation"

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