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# A review of Gandhiji's thought and in contemporary education

**Dr. Madan Mandal**

SACT, Department of Political Science

Bankim Sardar College, Canning, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal, India

**Abstract :** Gandhi's concept of education is highly relevant to this day. He had clearly voiced the concerns of the deteriorating education system, about the necessity of craft-centered training, building up of character, issues of unemployment, student unrest and relevant message to the students. To this day, many of these issues have remained unaddressed, inspite of several educational reforms. Akin to the issue of politics, Gandhi did not annul the relation between religion and education. Rather, it was a constructive means to inculcate cultural and moral values as prescribed in various texts and the best way to practice the virtues. With the moral and spiritual values taking a backseat, the educational standards as envisioned by Gandhi have been taking a downward slide. The only plausible answer seems to be a national regeneration of the Gandhian values that would highly unburden the system from its inherent contradictions.

**IndexTerms-** Gandhi's thought on education, Wordha scheme.

## Introduction

Education is one of the most defining features in the life of an individual. It enables one to acquire literacy, to analysis the situations with logic and wisdom and also use it greatly for individual as well as social development. Education, in this context, is more a way of life, a crucial instrument in character-building, which enables us to determine the course of our thoughts and actions and also achieve goals and ideals of life. It is this logic to which Gandhi attached greater importance. He was undeniably one of the greatest proponents of modern education in India and his scheme of education sought to further the moral, individual, social, political and economic progress of man. His scheme of education aimed at the truthful and non-violent way of life and the ultimate goal of self-realization. His methods were simple and practical and this was evident in his scheme of education.

Gandhi was a firm believer in the essential unity of man and all lives. His faith in God truth and non-violence enabled him to lead a much-disciplined life and attain a spirit of moral superiority in all his actions. He envisioned a society free of exploitation and injustice and a social structure based on moral and equitable principles. His steadfast reliance on his

principles all through his life, even under adverse circumstances made it possible for him to translate his ideals into practice

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To explain and talk about "Gandhiji's education."
2. To investigate the many aspects of Basic Education Program of Mahatma Gandhi

### **Methodology:**

The nature of this paper is theoretical and descriptive. This paper uses only secondary sources of data, which is appropriate for this kind of research.

**Meaning of education:** Gandhi defined education as the "all-round drawing out of the best in child and man—body, mind, and spirit".

**Character Building** - The basic aim of education according to Gandhi is to make man a human in the true sense. Education which does not contribute to the development of human virtues and does not pave the way for the all-round development of the individual, is useless. Being human is the most important education, for this, the education of character development is the main aim of education.

**Building self-reliant citizens-** By teaching human for hard work he wanted to build skilled citizens. Wanted to see every person doing production work by physical exertion. It can be started from childhood by giving such education in which the child becomes involved in a useful enterprise for himself and the society, gets attached to it.

**Sarvodaya Samaj** - His goal was to establish a Sarvodaya-hard-working society by giving equal opportunities to all the people in the society for development. All human beings should have the right to equality and freedom in society

**Village Swaraj** - Gandhiji wanted to prepare Indian society for independence before freedom from British slavery. He wanted man to be free from all forms of exploitation. Establishment of Sarvodaya Society by developing the best human and physical qualities in human beings was his basic objective and the basic mantra for the creation of this society was the establishment of Gram Swaraj.

Some of the practical methods and exercises he described for the development of child in his educational thought in Wardha scheme in year 1937, and this was only a step forward,

- Boys and Girls should be taught together.
- Their time should be mostly spent on manual work under the supervision of a teacher. This manual work should be considered as a part of education.
- The child should know the Why and The How of every process.
- General knowledge should be imparted to the child as soon as he is able to understand the things.
- The hand of the child should be trained to draw geometrical figures before he learns to write, i.e., good handwriting should be taught from the beginning.

- The child should learn to read before he is able to write, means he should learn to recognize letters as as if they were pictures and then draw their figures. Through this method and by word of mouth- oral expressions, the child should acquire much knowledge before he is eight years old.
- Children should not be bound to learn anything and he should be interested in learning.
- The process of teaching should be conducted in a playful manner.
- All the education should be imparted through mother tounge of the children.

**Method of Teaching:** Gandhi taught his own children for some time and thus experienced that the essence of good teaching is stimulated the energies of children so that learning may take place in natural way leading them towards harmonious development. In fact, basic education is a technique of teaching in itself. Its main contributions have been recognized in the field of science of pedagogy. In brief, Gandhiji recommended the following methods of teaching: -

- 1) Mother tongue to be the medium of instruction.
- 2) Productive craft as the basis of all education.
- 3) Teaching through creative and productive activities.
- 4) Learning by doing.
- 5) Lecture, questioning and discussion method.
- 6) Correlation the most valid technique of teaching.

**Teacher:** Gandhiji was a great teacher himself. He was a world teacher. He wanted right type of teachers dedicated to their profession and ready to serve the illiterate masses, teachers must be well-trained, proficient, men of knowledge and faith, zeal and enthusiam, men of action and devotion, character and nationalistic feelings. Teacher are responsible for carving out the statues of their students. According to Gandhiji - “Teacher should be friend, philosopher and guide”. He should be able to establish heart to heart contact with the students.

**School:** According to Gandhiji, a school is a place to live by making enquiries, discoveries and experimentations. It is a community centre, cradle for future citizenship and place for physical, intellectual, social, moral and spiritual development.

Gandhiji’s view on women education: Gandhiji felt strongly for the emancipation of women. He said, “My greatest hope is in women. They want a helping hand to lift them out of the hall in which they have been kept.” Education should be given to them according to their particular aptitudes and life demands. Gandhiji believed that women by means of their equipment and nature are best fitted to take up the work of educating small children.

### **Wordha scheme**

Principal Elements of the Basic Education Program of Mahatma Gandhi

**Education through Craft:** Gandhi's program focused on teaching pupils skills and self-reliance through practical work and handicrafts.

**Mother Tongue as Instructional Medium:** To improve comprehension and retention, it promoted instruction in the child's native tongue.

**Integration of Intellectual Development and Manual Work:** The program promoted the dignity of labor by combining academic learning with productive manual labor.

**Emphasis on Character Development:** The curriculum sought to foster moral principles, self-control, and social responsibility.

**Decentralization:** Schools were to be run locally to represent the needs and culture of the community.

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**Practical and Vocational Orientation:** Education was in line with rural livelihoods and economies.

**Holistic Development:** The program aimed to develop the hand (skills), heart (values), and head (thinking).

**Insufficient Teacher Training:** Teachers lacked the necessary training to instruct students in both academics and crafts.

**Difficulty in Scaling:** It was challenging to expand the localized, craft-based strategy to satisfy the needs of a sizable population.

**societal and Economic Challenges:** Regular education was difficult due to poverty, child labor, and societal injustices.

### **Conclusion**

To end the discussion, we may say that Gandhiji, successfully synthesized different philosophies of education and emerged as a naturalist, idealist and a pragmatist. As a true Indian, man of God, a practical philosopher and a man of the masses, he stood for freedom, self-realization, spiritual development, learning by doing etc. With all these philosophical assumptions, Gandhiji envisaged his scheme of education known as Wardha Scheme, Nai Talim or Basic Education.

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