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**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
THROUGH GANDIAN IDEOLOGY**

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**ABSTRACT**

An all-round development of man depends only on education. The sole basis of achieving our aims in life goes through true education. Gandhian educational thoughts can ascertain ultimate peace for mankind. Gandhiji followed the strategy of a true combination of non-violence, service for mankind, truth in ideas and deeds and cooperation in achieving the goals. According to him one should always be brave but never use violent ways to achieve his aim. The truth and non-violence should be used as weapons to face an enemy. He thought non-violence as an ultimate solution for problems of any kind in the world. In the present times when the world is facing global violent movements in the form of strikes, militancy and wars and also the environmental degradation due to increasing pollution, the Gandhian principles can come as an important tool to overcome all these problems. Gandhiji's satyagraha which is based on truth, non-violence, non-cooperation and honesty is a holistic approach for life and is based on the ideals of moral courage and truth. According to Gandhiji, the weapon to oppose the evils must always be non-violence and also based on moral values of humanity. Gandhiji was of the view that to win our opponent permanently, we should treat him with love and respect. The thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi about social development, inequality and non-violence if brought in practice can give a solution to overcome and negotiate for not only the social and economic challenges but many other ethical dilemmas of present times also. Gandhiji's ideas on technology development, village self-sufficiency, his economic concepts and development of cottage industries etc. can prove helpful for environmental protection. The teachers are the key that are able to inculcate these values among the future generation. This paper tries to make an attempt to find role of teachers to blend the peace education and the education for the establishment of global peace through Gandhian ideology on education in a general sense.

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**INTRODUCTION**

The importance of education in human life is not possible to describe in words. The significance of education has been described by many ancient scholars, thinkers and scriptures. Education is certainly a powerful tool for an all-round development of mankind. In simple words, the true path for the human development runs through educational lanes. The true education is the foundation for attaining the goals and purposes of life. It is only through a mutual relationship between education and peace that education has been declared as an ultimate basis and means of peace. The importance of education can be seen in all walks of life including the role of education in making the life prosperous and attaining peace under the prevailing circumstance. The education is a very important tool for developing a dignified and valuable human life. The atmosphere of disharmony and conflict arise mainly in those societies where the values of a true education are lacking. The present educational system focuses mainly on achieving social and economic goals and also aims at development of a balanced individual personality but Gandhian value education and peace education are the founding stones for moral development and welfare of mankind as a whole. The Gandhian views on education are

very important in making a relationship between education and global peace.

Peace education is the stream of education which is helpful in facilitating the global peace through various principles. Mahatma Gandhi, a man of millennium imparted Indians as well as world the lesson of non-violence, truth and peaceful living. His philosophy was based on the principles of self-sacrifice, truth, human service, cooperation and non-violent means to achieve one's goals. According to Mahatma Gandhi, an individual should be brave in his acts and words and not a coward but always using non-violent methods to achieve his aims and presenting his views, thoughts and suggestions. According to him, the most important weapons to win a war against the enemy are non-violence, truth, love and respect. Gandhiji was of the view that non-violence is an ultimate solution for the problems of any kind in the life. The power of truth and non-violence can be judged from the example of Mahatma Gandhi himself that how a single soul in the body of Gandhiji by persuading all the countrymen to follow the path of non-violence and truth could become successful in attaining freedom of nation from the British rule. Gandhiji initiated the activities of non-violence and truth during movements like Non-cooperation Movement, the

SavinayaAvajnaMovement and Quit India Movement. Gandhiji became successful in bringing a change in the attitude and emotionality of Indians. He realized that in spite of becoming a leader, it is more useful to create leaders and the result was that India could achieve freedom for British rule by the experiment of non-violence and truth.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

Indian educational philosophy will always remain debtor to the thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi. The educationists do not consider Gandhiji a theoretician in a strict sense. However, the writings of Gandhiji on states and democracy in societies, the relationships between the society and the individual, the ethical and moral values in educational system and also various other writings on the economic as well as social issues make him an invincible and important part of debates among academicians in different disciplines including history, economics, education, sociology, political science and also among other subjects. The thoughts of Gandhiji are well reflected in the words of Akeel, Bilgrami (2003) that the interests of a social scientist and a historian vested in him have sought out a nationalist leader having striking influence and effective method of truth and non-violent political action. Bikhu Parekh (1997) is of the view that Gandhiji was basically a man of actions having a major contribution in leading the struggle of his countrymen towards achieving independence through the weapons of non-violence and truth. The thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi on value education and development of international peace are acknowledged worldwide. Mahatma Gandhi is considered a synonym for non-violence and global peace. This is the reason that the United Nations Organization has announced to celebrate World Peace day on October 2<sup>nd</sup> every year, the birth date of Mahatma Gandhi.

The contribution of Mahatma Gandhi for the welfare of mankind and establishment of global peace cannot be compared. According to Mahatma Gandhi, it is the education which decides the overall development of individual as well as society. The provision of a true education is necessary for the students to enable them to learn to imbibe the ethical values of justice, humanity, global peace and universal brotherhood. Page (2008) has emphasized over peace education in his words as “the peace education is that stream which makes a concern for preventing the wastage and suffering in warfare in this modern age”. The view of Harris and Morrison (2003) is that “the peace education refers for teaching for global peace, its meaning, scope and means to achieve the global peace”. United Nations Children Emergency Fund by its peace education working group has also defined the peace education. In the viewpoint of this group peace education refers to a process which helps in promoting the attitudes, skills, values and knowledge of people for preventing the wars, conflict and violence in the society. Bose, Anima (1981) viewed on the Gandhian ideology of satyagraha and his challenging goal of welfare and good for all which he called sarvodaya. She considered Gandhian strategy full and a very rich democratic concept for welfare of people and society. Gupta (1968) emphasized that the idea of passive resistance and trusteeship both are important foundations of a peaceful and justice loving society.

The concept of education according to Mahatma Gandhi is based on an overall development of human personality. It includes the spiritual, intellectual and physical development

of an individual. Gandhi also quoted “By education, I mean an all-round drawing out the best in child and man- body, mind and spirit”. Gandhiji pioneered the basic education in 1937 at Wardha which is also known as Basic National Education or Wardha Scheme of Education. Ravindra (1999) in this regard mentions, “This is the education which helps to mould and to shape the body, mind and character of human being in such a way that he will act as the means to obtain joy and efficiency”. In the viewpoint of Samuel Ravi (2011) the basic education is completely based on the principle of non-violence and activity. Basic education included art, craft, health and education under one common head. Field, Gregory (2006) has emphasized that “Gandhian education or non-violence education has emphasized on the positive values of global peace”. In his study which was conducted on Gandhian thoughts and values, Bajaj Monisha (2010) has argued that “Gandhian philosophy lays much emphasis on the social and collective actions for the universal peace and non-violence as it has focused on the structural as well as cultural forms of violent activities”. In the like manner Prasad and Tint (2007) have also argued that there exist several kinds of programmes in the thoughts of Gandhi which lay stress on non-violence and peaceful existence.

### ***Mahatma Gandhi and Seven Power Beams***

Mahatma Gandhi believed in the strategy of non-violence, truth, love and respect. The strategy of Mahatma Gandhi is comprised of following human values-

- (a) Non-violence
- (b) Truth
- (c) Satyagraha
- (d) Peaceful co-existence
- (e) Co-operation
- (f) Love and respect
- (g) Honesty

### ***Non-Violence***

The non-violence may be defined as the tendency of not to hurt any living being by our utterances, actions or thoughts, not taking the life of any living being through our actions or impure tendencies and also treating the feelings and emotions of each individual with love and respect. As per Mahatma Gandhi non-violence is the most powerful weapon in the present world. This contains tolerance, creativity and peaceful resistance against injustice and violent opponent. This human value originates in the heart of human beings and then comes out to spread in family, community, country and then overall world.

The most important bases of Gandhian life were the honesty, truth and non-violence. These are the values which make an individual morally courageous. Mahatma Gandhi gave the Indians the weapon of truth and non-violence. He did not believe in violent manners to win the opponent but taught the lesson of love and respect to influence the enemy in a favourable way. Gandhiji never liked wars due to violent nature of war. According to him the violence always consists of selfishness, bloodshed, hatred, enmity and anger for mankind. The violence in any form is always harmful for mankind. The strategy to stop the violence and terrorism in present world as per Mahatma Gandhi is to use non-violent means which might be forceful. The most important weapon to stop the terrorism is to make effort to promote communal

brotherhood through love and respect to each other. Mahatma Gandhi did not believe in any form of injustice and exploitation. He argued that evils must be opposed but with the weapons of non-violence and morally justified actions. By adopting a non-violent and peaceful strategy to defeat the enemy makes us superior against our opponent and our enemy is put at a disadvantage. But in any condition, our enemy must be treated with love and respect. Through these values we can win our enemy permanently.

### **Truth**

The life of Mahatma Gandhi was an eternal conquest for discovering the truth. The foundation of Gandhian teachings is truth. Satya or truth is the sovereign principle of Gandhian philosophy of life. According to Mahatma Gandhi truth is more powerful and forceful than any weapon of mass destruction of life and property. In his own autobiography "My Experiments with Truth" Gandhiji maintained that the concept of satya is above all other considerations. Satyagraha, a term pioneered by Mahatma Gandhi means 'Satyakeliyeagraha i.e. an endeavor for truth'. The weapon of satyagraha was used by Gandhiji to motivate Indians to resist the British oppression non-violently.

### **Satyagraha**

This term as pioneered by Mahatma Gandhi to resist the oppressive measures of British Government is a holistic approach towards the life which is based on the ideals of truth, honesty and moral courage. According to Mahatma Gandhi, the final goal of satyagraha is to win over the hearts of people and it can be achieved only through tremendous patience. The satyagraha of Gandhiji was based on non-cooperation, non-violence, honesty and truth. During Indian freedom struggle, this satyagraha was used by Mahatma Gandhi as a most powerful weapon to oppose the Britishers. Satyagraha succeeded for championing the secularism and helped in eradicating the untouchability from society. It also glorified the role of women in the development of Indian society.

### **Peaceful Co-Existence**

Gandhiji believed that wars always result in the destruction of life and property. He believed in the good of each and every individual as well as the society as a whole. The world at present has been put on the verge of intolerance and hatred which results into violence and disharmony. Human values like love and respect are very important tools for peaceful coexistence of man. Non-violence and truth are the means to achieve universal peace in present age. This can ensure the peaceful existence of mankind in the world.

### **Co-Operation**

Mahatma Gandhi always favoured non-violence and truth. Therefore he opposed any kind of co-operation for war efforts. According to Gandhiji a war consists of the feelings of hatred, anger, selfishness and enmity for mankind. He favoured co-operation among individuals for the establishment of non-violence and truth. Mutual respect and love are important human values to establish mutual co-operation.

### **Love and Respect**

Gandhian strategy was based on the principle of universal peace. Therefore, he believed in non-violence and truth. The basis of global peace is mutual respect for the feelings and emotions of each other and love. These are the human values which act as founding stones for universal peace. An opponent can be permanently won by using the weapon of love and respect against the opponent.

### **Honesty**

According to Mahatma Gandhi honesty decides our ways to proceed to achieve the goals of life. To achieve success in our efforts, we should become honest enough in our thoughts, deeds and efforts. Satyagraha started by Mahatma Gandhi to make India free for bondage of slavery was based on the principles of truth, honesty and non-violence. Honesty and truth make a way to develop our moral courage.

### **Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development Through Gandhian Ideology**

According to Gandhian strategy the scientific development which does not concern for nature's requirements and development cannot serve for human development and will surely threaten human existence in future. In the writings of Mahatma Gandhi, the views of nature and environment are given emphasis. His strategy based on non-violence and truth, honesty, simple living and development of nature laid emphasis on sustainable development. According to Mahatma Gandhi, "There are sufficient resources for fulfilling the basic needs of every human being on this earth but not for fulfilling their greeds". He considered earth as a living and vital organism. He believed in the unity of man and nature. In his view the cooperation and sacrifice of both living and non-living beings is essential for evolution on the earth. Being human beings, we should protect all other creatures and should respect their living rights and also cherish the biodiversity. We should utilize the natural resources only as per our basic needs. Wastage and unplanned exploitation of the natural resources creates imbalance in nature. Thus the Gandhian principles of non-violence, truth and honesty are helpful in the protection of environment and ensuring the sustainable development.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The crisis both at national as well as global level has made mankind to consider the relevance and importance of philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. The educational ideas of Mahatma Gandhi emphasise on the needs of present generations. Incidences of violence and terrorism have become universal phenomenon. The Gandhian philosophy of education is needed at present. The educational system is required to inculcate the values of truth, justice, honesty, peace, non-violence and harmony in the students. The feelings of mutual respect and love are needed everywhere. The disharmony of any form has its roots in the desires for accumulating wealth. This has also resulted into the degradation of natural environment. Thus Gandhian principles of aparigraha i.e. non-possession and Astaya i.e. non-stealing the thing of others are the need of time. The human values of exploiting the natural resources on sustainable basis can save our environment from degradation.

The Gandhian vision of a peaceful and prosperous society based on the principles of non-violence, truth and honesty is not meant only for individual alone but this strategy can also be applied for whole of the world. The main points of worry today are the intolerance and hatred which many time leads to violent incidences and struggles can be handled by using the strategy of love and respect against the opponent. Being human beings, we should protect all other creatures and should respect their living rights and also cherish the biodiversity. We should utilize the natural resources only as per our basic needs. Unplanned exploitation of the natural resources threatens the nature. The Gandhian principles of non-violence, truth and honesty may be applied for the protection of environment and ensuring the sustainable development. The teachers are the key that are able to inculcate these values among the future generation.

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