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ALTRUISTIC EDUCATION - GANDHIAN PERSPECTIVE

V.AMBEDKAR

Associate Professor Education Wing of Directorate of Distance Education,
Annamalai university, Annamalai Nagar, Tamil Nadu, South India.

Abstract:

The well-being of the individuals, and the social groups, and not the welfare of the society as such, is always the ultimate end of morality. The welfare of society as a whole is a means to the welfare of the units. In the early stages of social evolution, egoism is strong and altruism weak. The moral code prohibits acts of aggression and imposes restraints on the individual in the interest of co-operation. Altruism is essential to the development of life and the increase of happiness, and self-sacrifice is no less primordial than self-preservation. The egoistic satisfactions of each individual in a society depend on such altruistic actions as being just, seeing justice done, upholding and improving the agencies for the administration of justice and improving others physically, intellectually, and morally, pure egoism and pure altruism are equally illegitimate. In the words of Auguste Comte Altruism is the opposite of Egoism. This paper discusses Gandhiji's view about Altruistic Education. The present educational system has to be such that every boy and girl is able to know, love and do good and promote a culture of acceptance, tolerance and love for social justice.

INTRODUCTION

The last hundred years were years of great events and episodes. Inventions and Discoveries, achievements and progress, development and growth, destruction and construction, violence and peace, wars and agreements, cruelty and empathy and the list could be extended manifold. This is the best of the creative outputs of human brain and ingenuity.

ROLE OF EDUCATION

Every nation has to ensure that its system of education is dynamic in nature and responsive in changes taking place all around the periphery of education. A rational awareness that the Indian heritage at all its sublime aspects of diversities would definitely help children to develop a feeling of belonging to the Indian nation and prepare them to do all that a human being needs to do for the family, the community, the society and the country as a great nation. Education must promote social cohesion by ensuring understanding of the socio-cultural, economic and religious diversities that lead to unity in the country.

GANDHIJIAN EDUCATION

Gandhiji made an important statement on national education: Almost from the commencement, the textbooks deal, not with things boys and girls have always to deal with in their homes, but things to which they are perfect strangers. It is not through the text books that a lad learns what is right and what is wrong in the human life. He is never taught to have any pride in his surroundings. Gandhiji's speeches and

writings were known to people even in his times but not many cared to understand the implication of his views. For ages, the Indian psyche has pleaded for devoting one's life for the welfare of "all", 'Sarvabhuta Hite Ratha'. It has also prayed for ages not for the individual self but for the entire globe: 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' was always the objective to be achieved.

The entire focus of education, both inside and outside the classroom needs to be on preparing the individual to understand one's duties and responsibilities, on the one hand, and the need for every individual to equip oneself with necessary competence, skills and attitudes to perform the same, on the other. Education for the future needs to be an education for the culture of peace in which the diversities, pluralities and multiplicities will be treated as positive assets that contribute to the national unity. Only a culture of peace and understanding can lead to effective acceptance of the principle of universal brotherhood.

EDUCATION AND HARMONY

"The destiny of India is now being shaped in her classrooms. This, we believe, is no more rhetoric, in a world based on science and technology; it is education that determines the level of prosperity, welfare and security of people." The entire realizes that education is a major vehicle to create a human society which will value the lives of human beings and provide opportunities to live in harmony with fellow beings. Toynbee was very much assented in his mind that the only way for salvation of mankind is the Indian way, the one propounded by Ashoka, Mahatma Gandhi, Ramakrishna and the whole lot of our saints and seers, with a common attitude and spirit amongst them towards making the whole human race and live as a single united family as embodied in Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. In Indian tradition right to happiness of every human being is laid down as an ideal to be achieved by all. "Let all be happy: Let all be free from diseases: Let all see auspicious things; and Let no body suffer from grief.

SINS TO BE DISCARDED

Gandhiji has identified certain sins that have to be necessarily discarded: "Politics without principle; (morality); knowledge without character; science without humanity; wealth without work; and worship without sacrifice." It would appear that all of these have now more become more relevant. These appear to be timeless and universal. We have not been able to even reduce these sins! Is it not the right time for the entire humanity to search a possible solution for fighting the wars that begin in the minds of men and lead to unimaginable cruelty on other men, women and children, in fact, on the entire humanity?

GANDHIJI AND NON-VIOLENCE

It should be possible for the world to realize that Gandhi talked of non-violence, self-suffering, considerations for others; he had only such apprehensions in mind and wanted to save the humanities from avoidable cruelties. To him, the Vaishnav Jana, an ideal human being is the one who is concerned about others, their needs, desires, miseries in which one could help and be of assistance. There is indeed a global need to project the Gandhian way and putting it before the whole world that there is no other way than to survive together for social cohesion and acquire the prime skills of learning to live together and to develop the sense of concern for others.

CONCLUSION

The entire educational process to be such that every boy and girl is able to know, love and do 'good' and promote a culture of acceptance and tolerance. The educational system, be designed to promote qualities that make a man socially effective and compassionate, self-discipline, self-criticism, humour, courage, love for social justice, self-control etc. Gandhiji retreat that anything that takes us out of ourselves, and inspires us to sacrifice for the good of others or for a great cause, is of spiritual value. Any system of education, that does not teach these, is not worth the name.

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V.AMBEDKAR,

Associate Professor, Education Wing-DDE, Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar, Tamil Nadu, South India. Methods of Teaching English Educational Technology, Teacher Education, Educational Research

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