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## **Gandhian Peace Education for the Existence of Human Civilization**

The development of human civilization is not measured through the buildings he has fabricated, the roads it has laid down, bridges which has constructed by the human resources; rather it is measured through a well-defined system of education. In the absence of proper education, the civilization can develop too much little. Education is, therefore, more decisive factor not only to embellish the new descendants with efficiency, so essential for realization of a subsistence, but also to generate a sensation among them to social and global realities and engraft a scientific disposition, solitude of mind and spirit which are of foremost importance for them to became responsible citizens (Mehta & Poonga, 1997, p. 1).

The entire world, particularly the developing countries like India, are passing through a period of transition in which the rate of changes are very swift, leading to massive uncertainty and insecurity in the minds of people. In twentieth century, man has conquered space and has also put his feet on the moon. Today is 21st century. The progress of scientific activities is going on so fast in this century also. Everyday life is mostly dominated by big or small appliances of science. But at the same time, this progression also brings so many curses for the human life.

Today, human civilization has reached the peak of material development due to technological and scientific progress. But at the same time, the society has become victim of outrageous wars, weapons of mass deterioration, terrorism, population exploitation, illiteracy, poverty, food and hunger, environmental destruction, over politicization of civil society, globalization, moral degeneration of human being and consequent psycho-physical diseases. With the growth of population and increased urbanization, the life style of people in the modern civil society has undergone lots of changes throughout the verse.

Even after more than half a century of the demise of the great thinker-saint and father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi, his ideas and thoughts are being continuously debated over in various forums, symposia, seminars and conferences at national as well as international levels. The very fact that his ideas still kindle the spirits of thought and debate is a clear testimony to their relevance even in today's society. Mahatma Gandhi's ideas, ideals and the action programme proposed by him, for a total social transformation, can never lose their relevance. The greatness of Mahatma Gandhi's idea is as beyond question, as his own self. While acknowledging this fact, the researcher honestly feel that his ideas need certain modifications to meet the demands of the present day social system, so that the ideas will become more practicable and beneficial, as the modifications become easier for adaptation. The need of the hour is that one should understand the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi with the inevitability of modifying them to be adapted in keeping with the present day social circumstances.

The greatness of Indian wisdom can be dissipated effectively through introducing Gandhian thoughts on peace education in our curriculum through meticulous planning. But unfortunately it does not happen. Moreover, the researcher has treated with deep attention that there is no research work on this particular area. So the researcher wants to track down the doctrine of Gandhiji on peace education. The researcher also wants to unfold the relevance of Gandhian thoughts & ideas on peace in present systems of education.

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## **Review of Literature:**

Patel (2017) in a paper tries to discuss the role of education in fostering a culture of peace. The researcher argued that a culture of peace cannot be fostered through theories only, rather involvement in activities that are designed to instill values and goals will equip children with skills.

Ohakamika and Agwu (2016) examined education for peace and development, and explored the issues of education against violence. The researchers recommended that schools should organize voluntary programmes with different stake holders in community on the need for non-violent conflict resolution.

Sing and Sing (2016) tried to make an attempt to find the role of teachers to blend the peace education and education for the establishment of global peace through Gandhian ideology on education. The researcher concluded that the Gandhian philosophy of education is very urgent at present. The education system is required to inculcate the values of truth, justice, honesty, peace, non-violence and harmony in the students. So the Gandhian philosophy is the need of the time.

Gill (2016) In his article, the researcher discussed the concept and philosophy of peace education, different methods of teaching for peace education and the role UNESCO in this regard. He concluded that no education system is complete without some forms of components similar to peace education.

Anand (2014) highlights the importance of peace education at present time. The researcher concluded that peace is the conceptual truth and universal need for everyone and each individual should try for this by formal and informal ways.

Brantmeier (2013) proposes the need for peace education as a field towards social and environmental sustainability. The inherent rights of people, plants and ecosystem to live with dignity and to prosper are proposed. The article offer perspectives curriculum unit as vehicles for transformative education.

Sharma and Jain (2012) discuss the ideas through which awareness about peace education and human rights can be created. This article motivates teachers to be thinking broadly when planning to teach for peace.

## **Significance of the Study:**

We are living in a global village, moving towards the challenges posted by intolerance and fundamentalism. Education has a leading role to prevent terrorism and maintain peace in the global world. Peace education is a basic obligation in the inculcation of the values of national integration, international understanding and the concept of world citizenship in fostering & keeping peace. Valuable conscientious programmes at all levels of education should offer which in turn develop desirable changes in the mind set to think and work against violence and terrorism. Education should develop inner peace in the minds of citizens to inculcate virtues of tolerance and love.

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Peace education helps to avoid physical violence, political violence, cultural violence and structural violence. It can also help to understand the nature and origins of violence and its effects on both victim & convict and equip with problem solving skills.

However, with the witness of the horrors of the two world wars, there is a re-awakening to the need of developing the humanistic side of education, at least among a few great thinkers. Mahatma Gandhi is one of them. His loud and tireless endeavor for nonviolence makes anxious our mind deeply for peace. Gandhiji's concept will generate a more calm society where all serve as agents for change by creating proper values and attitudes.

## **Statement of the Problem:**

One of the great problems the human society faces today is the violations. Human being is threatened by various types of violent activities both at the individual level as well as the global level.. In this context, there is an urgent need to create a culture of Gandhian non-violence and tolerance in all segments of life, which may helpful in creating a peaceful and affectionate human civilization. So the title of the present research work has been taken as- "Gandhian Peace Education for the Existence of Human Civilization".

## **Objectives of the Study:**

1. To find out the sources of peace education in Gandhian thoughts.
2. To justify the relevance of Gandhian concepts on Peace Education for the human civilization at present.

## **Research Questions:**

1. Is there any source of peace education in Gandhian thoughts?
2. Is Gandhian concept of Peace Education relevant for the present human civilization?

## **Methodology:**

This paper is fundamentally narrative and analytical in nature. In this paper an endeavor has been taken to examine the concept of peace propounded by Mahatma Gandhi. Different texts and written documents are analyzed following the qualitative approach to research. There are so many books, reviews, articles, etc, which were deeply scrutinized during the study period.

## **Relevance of Gandhian Peace Education:**

The relevance of Gandhi might be debatable but it is hardly questionable. Gandhiji's several techniques and thoughts actually led to several debates and some of them turned out to be bitter controversies. Even over half a century after his death in 1948, his thoughts and ideas continue inspiring the young. About the continuing tradition of Gandhi a veteran Gandhian Nirmala Deshpande says:

"All over the world there are small groups and Communities who are practising Gandhi's ideology silently. It is gradually growing into a force which could bring a positive change not only

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in our country but in the entire world” (Deshpande, 2002).

In the course of the Indian Nationalist Movement he readily conceded, what the great critics of Gandhi never denied in his lifetime was the authentic validity of his fundamental principles in his milieu. If the question of relevance of Gandhi is to be renewed in the present circumstances it is worthwhile to examine it in the specific context of the contemporary relevance of Gandhi's life and works. Gandhism does not mean in any sense a narrow cult or a rigid doctrine. When we deal with the central message of Gandhi and its significance to our times we take recourse to the term 'Gandhism' for the sake of greater clarity and coherence. Whether Gandhism as is known to us as system of thought or it was the implication of such a system is again a different question.

The source of this Gandhism is essentially the extensive literature that Gandhi has left in his life time. Ever since the assassination of Gandhi, his literature has steadily grown in unparalleled manner. While all this source material on the thought of Gandhi is now easily accessible, it is indeed ironical that there is but scant attention to Gandhi's work in our public life. Gandhi's views are generally taken for granted. This is especially deplorable as we are in possession today of a most formidable collection of Gandhi's writing (Parikh, 1998). It is interesting to note that Gandhi does not put a premium on consistency under all conditions. He did admit of inconsistency in his numerous writings as he says at one place:

“I would like to say to the diligent reader of my writings and to others who are interested in them that I am not at all concerned with appearing to be consistent. In my search after truth, I have discarded many ideas and learnt many new things. Old as I am in age, I have no feeling that I have ceased to grow inwardly or that my growth will stop. What I am concerned with is my readiness to obey the call of truth, my God, from moment to moment, and therefore, when anybody finds my inconsistency between any two writings of mine, if he has still faith in my sanity, he would do well to choose the later of the two on the same subject”(CWMG, Vol. 17).

Perhaps Gandhiji's place in the history is appropriately expressed by the last Viceroy to India, Lord Mount Batten who wrote:

'Mahatma Gandhi will go down in history

On a par with Buddha and Jesus Christ'

(Shirer William L., 1993)

Gandhism could have grown out of Gandhiji's teachings, had he not persuaded his followers to desist from mystifying his life and work. Following the footsteps of ancient seers, the seers for whom knowledge was experiential jnana (not vijñana), who had lived renunciation and philosophical resignation transforming ego, and naturally going beyond names and fames; Gandhiji never wanted his name to survive in association with any religion. Therefore, Gandhiji repeatedly used to say to his followers that there is nothing like 'Gandhism'. Yet his ideas and ideals survived and gained strength with the passage of time. This was because Gandhiji taught and showed us that in this harsh, violent and materialistic world, Truth and Non-violence could be a tremendous force, greater sometimes than guns and bombs, in achieving justice, decency, peace and freedom for the vast masses of suffering, downtrodden men and women. At a time when India was reeling under foreign rule, and when its leaders were groping in the dark,

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Gandhiji appeared to save the country.

William L. Shirer, a long-time Gandhi observer noted:

“Then came Gandhi, chasing out of his country, almost single-handedly, the greatest military power on earth. He taught the world that there are higher things than force, higher even than life itself”.

To his contemporaries, Gandhiji remained an enigma; but it was Sarojini Naidu, a long-time close associate of Gandhiji who tried to shed some light on him. Thus she writes:

“With Christ he shares the great Gospel that love is the fulfilling of the law. With the great Muhammad he shares the gospel of the brotherhood of man, equality of man and oneness of man. With Lord Buddha he shares the great evangel that the duty of life is not self-seeking but to seek the truth, no matter at what sacrifice. With the great poets of the world, he shares the ecstasy of the vision that the future of man is great, that the future of man can never be destroyed, that all sin will destroy itself; but that love and humanity must endure, grow and reach the star. Therefore, today, a broken world ruined by wars and hatred, a broken world seeking for a new civilization honours the name of Mahatma Gandhi (Tendulkar, 1993).

Mrs. Naidu continues- 'In himself, he is nothing. There are men of learning, greater than his, and there are men of wealth and power, and men of fame, but who is there that combines in one frail body the supreme qualities of virtue enshrined in him, courage indomitable, faith invincible, and compassion that embraces the entire world ? This transcendental love of humanity that recognizes no limitation of race, or barriers of country but gives to all, like a shining sun, the sane abundance of love, understanding and service. Everyday - today and yesterday and tomorrow - every day is the same story of the miracle of Gandhi in our own age" (Ibid).

Gandhi was a great humanist almost unparalleled in modern times. He was one of a handful of men in human history, who deeply felt for the welfare and prosperity of entire humanity. Hence he can be put in the company of celebrities like Lord Buddha, Jesus Christ and Prophet Mohammad.

Romain Rolland, a long time Gandhi friend and a historian, on different occasions described Gandhiji as the 'Christ who only lacked the cross'; and 'St. Paul of our own days'. In fact, he wrote in his 1924 biography of Mahatma: 'Gandhi is too much of a saint; he is too pure, too free from the animal passions that lie dormant in man' (Fisher, 1983).

## **Findings and Discussion:**

Mahatma Gandhi reserves an important place in the history of social thoughts. Though he is not considered as a theorist in the keen sense, yet his writings on the relationship between individual and the society, state and democracy, moral and ethical values in education and manifolds other writings on social issues have made him an unconquerable part of scholastic contention across political science, history, sociology, economics and among other subjects. This is very well reflected in Bilgrami's argument that “the social scientist's and historian's interest in him has sought out a nationalist leader with a strikingly effective method of non-violent political action” (Bilgrami, 2003). Additively, “he was basically a man of action whose

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major contribution consisted in leading his country's struggle for independence" (Parekh, 1997).

Today terrorism is passing through an extremely critical and controversial phase everywhere. It is practiced either with enthusiasm or with fear. Whether it is in an advanced country or a developing nation, terrorist violence is affecting almost all countries. Two fundamental causes for this global phenomenon are said to be the tremendous advancement in science and technology and the lack of human relations. One must clearly understand that the development of science and technology cannot make it possible to unite the world through technological globalizations. The technological globalization does not influence in any way the mental makeup of the individual. Man cannot live in isolation. He belongs to a particular group, community, religion, region and nation. Unfortunately, the present day politics has failed to reconstruct socio-economic life and has added confusion and despair in the lives of people.

The escape of universal issues and problems infesting humankind in general underlines the fact that we need a new dimension of philosophy not only of thinking but also of practicing which is epitomized by Gandhian philosophy of peace education. For Gandhi, religious and moral education in the overarching framework of non-violence is complimentary in nature and form the core of peace education. Gandhi's thoughts and ideas on inequalities, social progression, education and peace non-violence if implement in proper way, can go a long way to negotiate and overcome not only the socio-economic and political challenges but also the ethical dilemmas of present times.

To Gandhiji value education is necessary for moral development of individual whereas peace education is vital for humankind as a whole. Only the moral citizens can play an important role in this regard. For that, there is need for restructuring the social system on the basis of love, non-violence, truth, equality and freedom. Without these moral principles, no society can exists in the long run.