

**A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI AND  
JYOTIRAO PHULE ON WOMEN EDUCATION**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study is aimed to assess the contributions of both Mahatma Gandhi and Jyotirao Phule in Indian context with special reference to women education. Mahatma Gandhi and Phule were fully conscious about the importance of education as a tool of social justice and equality. In fact he saw education as the harbinger of a social revolution. The essence of the educational philosophy of Mahatma Phule was that 'education is a human right'. He was indeed the protagonist of the ideas of Universalisation of educational opportunities. Universalization of education basically means accepting and extending facilities of education to all irrespective of caste, creed, religion, sex and physical or moral disability.

Keywords: Thoughts, Mahatma Gandhi, Jyotirao Phule, Women Education

**INTRODUCTION**

Education is significant for the growth of each and every country. Without educational development one cannot hope for the people to participate in any way to the national advancement whether economically, socially or politically. Hence education being the imperative it becomes quite rational to study the educational advancement of our own country which for many centuries had seen no significant change in the educational pattern. Let us have a look into the educational development of our country India. Early education in India was primarily conducted under the guru or the master who would frame strict rules for the pupils to abide by. Gradually Indian society was divided into four castes on the basis of the work they were supposed to do and hence the system of education also changed accordingly. Brahmins got themselves drilled into the Vedas; Kshatriyas educated into warfare, Vishays got themselves educated in trade and commerce. However Sudras were deprived of any education. Under the Gupta Empire educational centres increased in India. Nalanda, Taxila and Varanasi came to be

known as famous centres of education.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

**Rao (2012)** studied and analyzed various definitions of education and the aims prescribed by different thinkers over different periods of time. After that it focuses its attention on Gandhian educational system. The aims of education, medium of instruction, curriculum and basic education by Gandhi are dwelled at length.

**Desh Raj Sirswal (2013)** studied that Jyotiba believed in the equality of men and women. He stressed on women's education, emancipation of women. He brought women in public life. He said equality and oneness is necessary for the development of the country.

**Malik (2013)** Studied Gandhi and focused on Gandhi's role in educational philosophy. Gandhi's concepts related to aims of education and whether his concepts are valid in the modern era is explored and analyzed in the present paper. Aims of education being making an individual capable of earning his bread and butter, developing the all round personality and transforming character into more sublime and moral one which he termed as character-formation. Besides the paper also explores two more concepts of Gandhi which earlier papers fail to do. It takes into consideration Gandhi's ideal of sex education and women education. Gandhi was strongly of the opinion that both sex education and women education are important if we have to see India progressing by leaps and bounds as women are part and parcel of every society. Without educating women India will ever be backward and there is no hope of its progress as he believed and as far as sex education is concerned he advocated that it should be incorporated in the course curriculum in school in order to equip students regarding their sexual roles in society

**Gour (2014):** explored an enlarged and comprehensive study of the educational philosophies of two great educationists and thinkers of India hailed as great intellectual men of 20<sup>th</sup> century namely Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi. As far as Tagore is concerned, the aim of education and the educator is to create an environment of freedom for the child so that perfection in the child can be achieved. Other ideas of Tagore related to education like self realisation, intellectual development, physical development, love for the mankind, freedom, mother-tongue as medium are dealt with. Mahatma Gandhi on the other hand believed in basic education. His ideas concerning the role and aims of basic education are discussed at length in the paper.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Women education is very important for the country to fully develop. It is like an effective medicine to cure a patient completely and provide health back. Women education is a big opportunity for India to be developed socially and economically. Educated women are the weapon who yields positive impact on the Indian society through their contribution at home and professional fields. They are the reason of improved economy in the country as well as society. An educated woman has capability to handle her home and professional life. They can effectively contribute in controlling the population of India as they would like to marry at a later age in Women should be given equal opportunity in education like men and they should not be isolated from any development activities. Women covers almost half population of the country means if women are uneducated the half country is uneducated which bring poor socio-economic condition. Through the women education the social and economic development will be faster in India. To spread the importance and improve the level of women education all over the country, countrywide national propaganda and awareness programmes are very necessary. An educated woman can educate her whole family and thus whole country. The present study aims to explore the ideas and thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi and Jyotirao Phule on Women Education.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To make an analytical study of the educational philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and Jyotirao Phule.
2. To assess the contributions of both Mahatma Gandhi and Jyotirao Phule in Indian context with special reference to women education.
3. To identify the areas where both the philosophers view points on education found relevant in present educational scenario.

## **DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Due to paucity of time and resources, it was not be possible to go through all the literature available. It would had been much better to have contracted those persons who had an actual contact with Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi but it is not possible. So, the study will depended mainly upon the literature available related to the study undertaken.

## **METHODS AND PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY**

The study included the analysis of the Philosophical Ideas of Mahatma Gandhi and Jyotirao Phule and their implication for Education. The study is philosophical in nature. For historical research, the researcher collected the data from primary & secondary sources.

**Primary Sources:** Mahatma Gandhi and Jyotirao Phule own writing and speeches. This is especially true of primary sources relating to historical events in which the principal witnesses are deceased or otherwise inaccessible. For historical events in which the principal witnesses are deceased or otherwise inaccessible. For historical events that have occurred in the recent past, the historical researcher may contact witnesses on an individual basis in order to study documents in their possession or to interview them. There are many repositories of primary sources relating to American history. A guide to manuscript and archives in the United States, edited by Philip M. Hammer (National Historical Publications Commission, 1961), describes the holdings of 1300 repositories. Another guide to historical repositories is the national union catalogs of manuscript collections, published by the Library of Congress. Most of these repositories contain handwritten or printed documents. In recent years some oral history repositories have been instituted.

## **RECORDING INFORMATION FROM HISTORICAL SOURCES**

In examining a particular primary or secondary source, the historical researcher does not know what information is useful to her at a later time. It is quite possible that the interpretative phase of a study involved searching for new facts that the historian had not viewed as relevant earlier in the study. The problem of deciding what information to abstract from historical sources becomes critical when the source is not easily accessible. The researcher may need to visit repositories where historical sources are stored. Unlike libraries, repositories usually do not allow their materials to leave the premises.

## **SECONDARY SOURCES**

Journals, reports, theses and books etc. In fact, it is an extensive library work. The first step in a search plan is to identify and consult relevant secondary sources of historical information. There are a number of published aids also known as preliminary sources for identifying the secondary source literature in history. An important requirement for using these aids effectively is to list key descriptors for one's problem or topic.

The selection of method and procedure for the research study depends upon the type of scope of the problem. The investigator has to study the nature of problem before finalizing the research methodology for it. After selection and formulation of hypotheses, there is a need to give practical shape to the research i.e. conducting the research work for that research needs proper planning and utilization of applications of appropriate research design. Research design is the blue print of what is to be done and how it is to be done? It is the path which is followed by the researcher to reach the target. In simple language as a research design is stated as a plan of action, a plan of collecting and analysing data in an efficient manner. The ultimate success of a research work greatly depends upon the design of the study. It avoids aimless wandering, saves times and economized the effort of researcher.

Keeping in view the scope of the present study, this chapter deals with description of:

Procedure of the study (method of the study)

1. Philosophical method
2. Historical method
3. Survey method

**Philosophical methods:** The use of philosophical method is the field of education thought and ideas of great thinkers. The rationale of philosophical method is the fundamental principles and thoughts of great minds can be analyzed and synthesized a view to make them relevant to the study of contemporary practice and procedure this study philosophical method has been largely adopted because it is a these research in which the educational philosophies of Mahatma Gandhi and Jyotirao Phule have been examined, analyzed synthesized. The philosophical method lays star:-

1. The logical analysis of educational concepts.
2. Adequacy of the methodology of educational research.
3. Integration of concept into a system.

It also studies the application of an educational practice.

The theoretical model is at the highest conceptual level in the sense that in this model only the theoretical aspect of the problem is studied. In this model, rigid philosophical method research is employed. The analysis of the theory must be done with utmost objectivity. The investigator,

whatever may be his own ideology should not involve it is, while putting the theory, to a logical analysis. Research of this type is of the highest academic importance as it inquiries into the fundamental issues involved in the problems of education.

**Historical methods:** Historical research attempts to establish facts to arrive at conclusion. Concerning the past events. This is usually accompanied by an interpretation of these events and of their relevance to the present circumstance and what might happen in the future. This study is historical in the sense that the educational philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and JyotiraoPhule has traced from various primary and secondary Sources. The primary sources of data include the original works of Mahatma Gandhi and JyotiraoPhule. The secondary sources include the books and journals written on Mahatma Gandhi and JyotiraoPhule and the interpretation and synthesis developed by recent scholars in the field.

As John W. Best says, “Historical research is the application of scientific methods to the description and analysis of past events and they must use logical inferences to supplement what is probably an incomplete account.”

**Survey method:** Survey method was employed by the investigator in order to make an assessment and evaluation of the practical shape given by Mahatma Gandhi and JyotiraoPhule to his philosophies of education.

John, W. Best (1963) point out “The survey method gathers data from a relatively large number of cases at a particular time. It is not concerned with the generalized statistics that results when data are abstracted from a number of individual cases. It is essentially cross -sectional.”

The purpose of the study is to collect information to find out how much the Educational Thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi and JyotiraoPhule Educational Philosophy impact on the modern education society. So the present study is philosophical in nature.

### **Educational Thoughts of Gandhiji and Jyotirao Phule on Women Education**

Mahatma Gandhi- Hailed as the father of nation; he played a very important part in freedom movement of India. He was a great reformer social as well as political. He was a great educationist. He gave certain concepts which revolutionized the thinking of the educational reformers too. He stressed on the need of vocational education so that each and every one can find his own livelihood. According to him, education is drawing out the best in child; developing the child into a wholesome personality.

Undoubtedly, Gandhi was a karma yogi who conscientiously sought to translate what he knew into the concrete discipline of moral conduct. Gandhi wanted to build a society based on cardinal virtues of justice, peace and equality. He stood as a great political and social reformer and felt that India has to be strengthened from its very roots. He paid special attention to the position of untouchables. The wretched position of women in Indian society also drew his attention. Gandhi always included woman in his discussion of 'human being'. He held that woman is a companion of man gifted with equal mental and moral potential. Gandhi brought Indian women out of their homes and made them participate in social and political activities. Gandhi, however, remained mostly within the traditional patriarchal framework. Women, Gandhi felt, have the primary task of a homemaker. She may take up other work only as a subsidiary.

Thus to conclude, we can say that each and every aspect of Mahatma Gandhi Education is relevant to extent. Even today the educational theory and practice reflects his ideals on Education in great measure. Mahatma Gandhi said that all divine knowledge is filled in the Vedas. It is the duty of all people to read it. Whatever he preached was for the benefit of human kind and upliftment of the nation. It was for man and the society. The D.A.V. and other Education institutions of the Arya Samaj have a glorious record of almost a century old national service.

Jyotirao 'Jyotiba' Govindrao Phule was a prominent social reformer and thinker of the nineteenth century India. He led the movement against the prevailing caste-restrictions in India. He revolted against the domination of the Brahmins and struggled for the rights of peasants and other low-caste people. Mahatma Jyotiba Phule was also a pioneer for women education in India and fought for education of girls throughout his life. He is believed to be the first Hindu to start an orphanage for the unfortunate children.

Jyotiba's quest for providing women and girls with right to education was supported by his wife Savitribai Phule. One of the few literate women of the time, Savitribai was taught to read and write by her husband Jyotirao. In 1851, Jyotiba established a girls' school and asked his wife to teach the girls in the school. Later, he opened two more schools for the girls and an indigenous school for the lower castes, especially for the Mahars and Mangs. Jyotiba realised the pathetic conditions of widows and established an ashram for young widows and eventually became advocate of the idea of Widow Remarriage.

## **PRESENT POSITION OF WOMEN IN INDIA**

- A 1997 report claimed that at least 5,000 women die each year because of dowry deaths, and at least a dozen die each day in 'kitchen fires' thought to be intentional.
- According to UNICEF's "State of the World's Children-2009" report, 47% of India's women aged 20–24 were married before the legal age of 18, with 56% in rural areas. The report also showed that 40% of the world's child marriages occur in India.
- The National Crime Records Bureau reported in 1998 that the growth rate of crimes against women would be higher than the population growth rate by 2010. Earlier, many cases were not registered with the police due to the social stigma attached to rape and molestation cases.

Through the Panchayat Raj institutions, over a million women have actively entered political life in India. As per the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts, all local elected bodies reserve one-third of their seats for women. Although the percentage of women in various levels of political activity has risen considerably, women are still under-represented in governance and decision making positions.

## **MAJOR WORKS**

He was a pioneer in the field of women's education. At a time when women were among the most downtrodden sections of the society, Jyotiba's endeavor to educate them came as a shock to everyone. But he persisted and built many schools for girls from different backgrounds.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

1. In depth study of present investigation can be conducted to gain more knowledge and ideas.
2. A comparative study can be conducted amongst Mahatma Gandhi and Jyotirao Phule present Indian and Western Philosophers.
3. A further comparison can be done amongst the Educational Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and Jyotirao Phule.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The modern education system should be based on self expression, creativity and activity as recommended by Mahatma Gandhi.



2. The most important element which is missing in our modern education is that we are moving away from active communication with nature. We learn Jyotirao Phule from philosophy to be near which teaches us patience, quietness and peace.
3. Modern education system should be free from evils, which are still prevailing in society. Hence modern education system should be based on Mahatma Gandhi's concept of social experience and social utility.
4. Modern education system should be developed according to the changing needs of society and thinking process should be developed and based on experimentation so that child's experience is enriched.

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