



PROBLEMS IN INDIAN EDUCATION: IN THE VIEW OF J. P. NAIK REGARDING GANDHI

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Abstract

The present education system is dependent upon the capitalist ideology of individual competition. Today's examination has created undesirable competition between the students. The students of similar age learning together and because of this there arises competitive spirit which destroys the spirit of cooperation. But there is a proved in other educational experiments that students gathered for learning in different ages are involved in better learning. The mechanical bracketing of students in age groups is a product of industrial culture where schools are reduced to the factory system. A radical decolonization of education had to be done right at the time of independence. Alas, this was never done. Students, who have reached the maximum level of knowledge in 6 months, should be provided with another curriculum for remaining 6 months. But there is unfortunately no provision for this. Students who are not able to complete the curriculum in on academic year are declared failed. Examinations are not student friendly, but abstract systems that do not inspire the student community. There is unbearable compulsion for him. He is supposed to complete all curriculums in next academic year. But for this he has to spend two years of his life. So, we raise the question here, why do not arrange the exam in every next month for these students? Whenever students wish to give exams, they should have freedom for this.



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Without doubts J. P. Naik was one of them greatest educationist from India, unfortunately forgotten and buried in the rubble. Though many thinkers have contemplated on the error in Indian education system, it was Naik who had the pulse on the Indian educational system. We should have thought about the same before the go to create something new in our education system. Right now we are going to know about how is today's education system.

Besides Naik it is also J. Krishnamurti whose name is of important. Contemporary education system is based on hyper-individualism, competition, mere oral proficiency or language fidelity and information collection. The persona of this kind of system of education is individual centered where the element of the "social" is totally alienated. It means this hyper-individualist system has doesn't care about the development of the ethical and social mind. The main objective is 'Over all development of student' is not implicated from this

system and this is the main lacuna of said system. This kind of education is not able to create awareness about values like equality and love of Truth.

In contrast to the ideology of hyper-individualism, we should know the significance of social objectives, co-operative attitude, group feeling and mutual supplementation of intellectual and physical labor, growth of skills and character formation in new concept of education. Similarly, we should be emphasized on to development of life-long scientific approach, true compliance, equality, liberty, justice and self honor.

J. P. Naik had seen the concept of human development in 1930 from the philosophical spectacles of Mahatma Gandhi. Because of this Naik has seen at the domains of education and health as investment in human resources. Instead of lashing out at the western model of development, he stressed on special characteristics of Indian society, thus integrating traditional knowledge and modern science. He rewarded decentralized public participation and people's wisdom based on formal, informal and intensive education.

J. P. Naik counted on the national movement under the leadership of Gandhi and for him (Naik) the freedom movement was the biggest school of people's education. Because he was inspired by the philosophy of Gandhi, and because Gandhi was one of the first and last ideal behind the life philosophy of J. P. Naik, he tried to see at the problems of Indian society in the Gandhian approach. He knew that the Gandhi in his *Hind Swaraj* called western culture as satanic culture. And it was this satanic form of hedonistic culture that Naik understood which would be the albatross that would halt the development of India as a nation.

With the influence of Gandhi's ideas, Naik's life had changed such that it knew that it was possible for India to achieve egalitarian and sustainable development. For Naik (as was for Gandhi) education had to be freed from the clutches of colonialism and the colonial mind developed thereon. Because of this he has raised some fundamental questions regarding the Indian Education system.

1. The government and public representative are not indifferent, but neutral about education, neutral in the sense that they would neither oppose the scheme nor would they support it. It is here that we can see here the relevance of J. P. Naik about the present situation of education. For Naik today's neutral situation is created because of the attitude of our teachers. Naik and the legendary socialist J. P. Narayan (Jayprakash) had done active grassroots work, along with basic thinking, experiments and efforts for the educational, social and economical development of

Indian society. The educational process and socio-economic changes are going to be a parallel, was the assumption of both of them.

After Naik non-aided schools emerged and this led to the business model in the educational sector. Private educational institutions are big business houses that merely collect money thus forgetting the goals of the Indian freedom movement. Because of this education has created inequality instead of making equality-based society.

2. For Naik (as was for Gandhi) mother tongue should have to be a powerful tool and medium of instruction. Instead what we have seen is that the government has given the permission to English medium schools. So, we have forgotten the social reference of education. And for this there is absence of political will to do something good and creative for education. The base of our present education is to create an unrestricted and unbearable tension between rich class and poor class of people. While the government included the Right to Education as a fundamental right, the government has not been successful in implementing the Right to Education to all in contemporary Indian society.

Policy makers have not decided till today what type of society we want in India. While the old idea of socialism which Naik stressed and which appears as a core idea in the *Report of the Education Commission, 1964-66* this idea is totally forgotten. Yet policy makers have not yet chalked out an alternative. This is very painful to Indian society. Consequently as one cannot determine the method of “development” of Indian society, one cannot decide the objectives of the Indian education system. Parents also don’t know about the difference between marketized education (i.e. education that goes through the process of mere marketing that leaves out the substance and content of education) and quality education. Because policy makers are not aware about the real meaning of education, parents are confused as what kind education should have for their children.

J. Krishnmkurti suggested that there ought to be one teacher for the seven students in school. But this method is not followed in any type of school. Further education of the Krishnmkurti method may prove to be costly. While the Krishnmkurti method has proved successful in certain schools that have produced great scholars, the implementation of the same throughout India has never happened. The problem lies in the political economy of the Indian education system. Further it seems that there could be many economical problems going on in this new method of schooling, like a payment of salaries teachers, fees of tuition and quality of teaching, student strength and number of teachers, medium of instructions and

understanding of students, the time of schools and weighted curriculum and syllabus, trained teachers and their knowledge of teaching, knowledge of student psychology and their relation with students, payment and responsibility, payment and satisfaction of teachers, school fees and knowledge gained by students, information reflected by the curriculum and usefulness of that information, information and wisdom of the students, the duration of the school and its utility, etc.

Nowadays, education is aimed at acquiring minimum knowledge. Whoever gets getting 35 percent of marks, is qualified, and if students do not get the remaining 65 percent yet students is deemed successful. There is no provision in this education system for *true learning*. It is only through true and authentic learning that students get maximum level of knowledge. Naik had foreseen these long time back.

Students, who have reached the maximum level of knowledge in 6 months, should be provided with another curriculum for remaining 6 months. But there is unfortunately no provision for this. Students who are not able to complete the curriculum in on academic year are declared failed. Examinations are not student friendly, but abstract systems that do not inspire the student community. There is unbearable compulsion for him. He is supposed to complete all curriculums in next academic year. But for this he has to spend two years of his life. So, we raise the question here, why do not arrange the exam in every next month for these students? Whenever students wish to give exams, they should have freedom for this.

The present education system is dependent upon the capitalist ideology of individual competition. Today's examination has created undesirable competition between the students. The students of similar age learning together and because of this there arises competitive spirit which destroys the spirit of cooperation. But there is a proved in other educational experiments that students gathered for learning in different ages are involved in better learning. The mechanical bracketing of students in age groups is a product of industrial culture where schools are reduced to the factory system. A radical decolonization of education had to be done right at the time of independence. Alas, this was never done.

Gandhian Ideas of Education in the view of J. P. Naik:

Gandhi believed on the possibility of creating eternal humanistic culture. Therefore, Gandhi's educational thoughts have fundamental and eternal values. Gandhi expected the creation of a New Culture which depends on the limitation of needs and though the development of the culture of non-violence. Because we can complete the needs of all through the education, not demands and wants.

Gandhi was the first leader in the world, who opposed to industrial culture. Because he knew that the worlds of industrial society must exist behind political supremacy and economic exploitation. For Gandhi as would be for the political economists studying underdevelopment, the world is divided between the industrialized west and the agrarian east. Industrialization created monopolist business houses oriented towards the augment of wealth only for few individuals. This kind of system created by western powers and allied developed countries has created a political mastership and economic exploitation on the countries which are undeveloped in terms of industrialization. Therefore, Gandhi thus posed the question: Britishers have to leave India, but India if it tool went to the western way would not only lose its liberty, but also its soul. Thus there would be no meaning to the very idea of liberty. We should have to think on this, when we create the policy of education for our country.

Gandhi expected the new social system which has to be based on *needs* of Indian masses, and not the elite classes. Or him one had to create a culture that was totally apart from industrial modernization. He told that the industrial culture, which is based on exploitation of each other, is the enemy of whole world. The values of industrial culture and its main symptoms are very different from the social values and social organization expected by Gandhi. For example, *simple living and high thinking*, awareness about human needs, control on mind and body, balance in life, etc were the main points on which an alternative economic, educational and cultural system had to be erected.

Gandhi believed on these all things because he thinks that the above stated ideas are the basis of human culture. He opposed industrialism, opposed mechanism, but did not oppose machines. Because he had knew about the need and significance of machines in human life. He said that humans have to have live with the law of nature. A balance between the humanity and nature should not be a spoilt. But the exploitation of nature will be the basis of industrial culture. Gandhi was thus not only a humanist, but also an ecologist. For him '*Nature loves balance*'. So we should honor the law of nature. Because without any kind of equilibrium all life—human and natural—was being spoilt. Gandhi's alternative was much more than one ever imagined.

Imperfection of Modern Indian Education-

The problem is that modern India had necessarily to forget Gandhi. Defects in the education system thus naturally followed. There are many defects in our modern education system which is created by western imagination. These are:

1. The modern education system has condemned Indian culture, civilization and traditions. This system has spreading western science, literature and philosophy, which are totally destructive to both humanity and nature at large. And because of this the national pride of Indians has been broken.
2. The overuse of English language as a medium of instruction which tragically has ignored *all* Indian languages. India, without its languages is India without its head, heart and soul.
3. There is an unnecessary compulsion of English language as medium of instruction. Because of this the time and energy are wasted.
4. The elites only have benefited from this education system. These elites have grown from the English language system. Our traditions and culture now remain as alien cultures and traditions. *We Indians have become truly aliens*. And this alien culture has addicted us to the consumption of ceremonial culture. Culture and politics of the elites have now created a deadly combination. .
5. Macaulay's colonial theory which falsely said that western culture was inherently superior to Indian culture has now become convenient for the domination of the elites. Because of this colonial culture, this system gives emphasis only school to and higher education, when the country dire needs primary education. The Radhakrishnan Commission was established for the purpose of higher education, while the real need was for basic education of the masses.
6. This system has consequently ignored universal primary education, when there are so many people who are poor; who need primary education.
7. Not only has English as the language of the elites overpowered the entire educational system, but also the western and false medical system has been forced onto India. This is because the western markets need merchandise for medicine business. This system has ignored the Indian medical method, has also ignored the village and cottage industries and consequently destroyed both the Indian economy and the scientific system which emerged thousands of years from the Indian agricultural economy. This system has also ignored agricultural education which is as the basis of our country.
8. The modern educational system gives emphasis on only information gathering and book-oriented education.

9. This system has ignored the skill education, training of productive work, awareness of values and character formation.
10. This system created false emphasis on curriculum, note-based learning and over emphasis on external examination, reference-less teaching tools and ignorance of physical education.
11. There is no commitment to the knowledge of this system. Education has to be a tool of getting knowledge, instead of this education has become a tool of eligibility to getting a degree and job.

This was the very serious charge sheet on modern education system claimed by Gandhi. Our national education system has ironically gone against the very spirit of Indian nationalism itself. If this kind of antinational education system going in our country, the social, cultural, economical and political system will be perpetually be demolished and Indian would be forever be a dependent country. India would never be free. Swaraj would become a joke. And because of that Gandhi propagated about the philosophy of cooperation to oppose the British government school system in 1930.

Gandhi insisted for the establishment of nationalistic government schools. The aim was to prepare freedom fighters and nationalists to create a counter-hegemony to British imperialism. Regarding this Gandhi established 'Gujrat Vidyapeeth'. The motto of this university was *^lk fo|k ;k foeqDr;sA** It means education for freedom, freedom from the British education system for the freedom. 'Moksha' now takes a different and deeper meaning.

Gandhian Ideas of Education-

Gandhi's concept of education was dependent on real Indian social structure, economical life, political method, ethics and the all factors related human existence. In the view of Gandhi, education is the mostly significant part of life and life is literally the prayer and exercise of truth and non-violence.

He says that industrial culture has developed a commercial culture in the mortal world, but this education system has failed about the freedom from the emptiness in the heart of humanity. Our civilization has thus become an empty civilization.

Industrial culture is dependent on mere consumption and because of this industrial culture has given secondary location to ethics and morality. It has promoted violence. So the main task of real education is to change the concepts which have been propagated by

industrial culture. Education has to be dependent on the “experiment with truth”. But more than that education has to be based on non-violence.

In the moral world what people are going to do for others, or how they do the same is not important, instead what is important is *‘How they are’*. Basically education needs the ethical, fearless, self-governing and self control, respecting truth, living simple life, no longer looking for more wealth than minimum needs and complete removal of all exploitation.

Gandhi insisted for the character formation through the education. He did not agree to the inequality that gave intellectual labor a higher position than physical labor. He explored his opinion as if everyone gets their food out of labor; they will all have equal share in the national wealth.

B. N. Ganguli told that, *‘If exploitation is a sign of a well balanced society, then Gandhiji has discovered the rational and non-violent choices of society’*. This was the core of Gandhi’s basic education idea. He had to add education to handicraft, physical labor or professional and technical education. Acharya Vinoba Bhave says, *‘I ignore the dual concepts of work and education where both are considered different. Education has to be a based on work with truth and non-violence together.’* Because of this thought we have attempted to solve all questions regarding curriculum formation and teaching methods. But it’s not to be done by modern India.

Gandhi suggested self-supporting education economically. This was to be the base of basic education system. Because of self-supporting education system the dependencies of government were automatically eliminated. From henceforth the government could not say that there is no money to make a universalization of primary education. Gandhi’s alternative was truly a radical alternative.

India tradition was never one dimensional and thus did not have a one dimensional education system. For India poverty is the most powerful barriers in education of poor people. For Gandhi (and he was right) poverty began with the coming of modern colonial system. If education cannot remove poverty then there can be no compulsion to mass education. Education and the removal of poverty are inexorably linked.

Gandhi has gives importance to adult education. He insisted about the illiteracy of India. He insisted also about mass education regarding their social, economical and traditional problems through adult education. He stressed on cultural, ethical and the development of economical capabilities of rural people through adult education.

Gandhi told about the higher education: ‘*Government should not have control over higher education*’. This is the revolutionary thought of Gandhi regarding independency of higher education. Because he says dependent higher education is created by industrial culture to satisfy its needs. Gandhi here brings in the idea of ‘autonomy’ (which has become fundamental to Indian policy makers). However unlike present policy makers, for Gandhi autonomy meant Swaraj, the Swaraj of ideas to be precise and the freeing of the Indian mind from all control whatsoever. *Autonomy means essential human freedom*. But this has necessarily to be seen in the complete perspective of Gandhian thought of humanization and naturalization, For Gandhi, it is humanity and nature that are important. Modern India unfortunately has created a violent humanity that is bent on destroying both humanity and nature. It has to be noted that modern policy makers though emphasizing on autonomy have a complete alienated idea of autonomy. Swaraj is totally absent from their ideology.

Education should have to create indigenous feeling. This means we have the education system has to be based on harmony with Indian traditions. After Gandhi, the responsibility of new education and formation of new society has come to Indian leadership and society. Although Gandhi’s novel design is appreciated, it has actually been rejected by Indian leaders, industrialists, administrators, teachers and also all related people. Modern India contra Gandhi has honored industrial culture. With this culture capitalism has been come in this place with priority of mass consumption and unrestricted greed. The tragedy is that modern India instead of creating an Indian alternative, created a British duplicate. *We alas are all British duplicates*.

