

“RELEVANCE OF LOKMANYA TILAK’S CALL FOR EDUCATION IN TODAY’S TIMES”

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Abstract

‘The maker of Modern India’

Mahatma Gandhi

One of the most inspiring leaders at the forefront of India’s struggle against colonial rule was Bal Gangadhar Tilak, a visionary and a versatile personality. Among his myriad contributions to the birth of modern India was as educationist and academician who dedicated himself to the spread of knowledge among the masses. Various known as the “Lion of Maharashtra” and “Lokmanya”, Tilak was feared by the British as the ‘father of Indian unrest’ and admired by his compatriots across the spectrum.

The foundational concepts of Tilak and other eminent revolutionaries of that landmark era in Indian history eventually led to the ‘Idea’ of a unified Indian nationhood and manifested in the principles enshrined in our Constitution, which aimed to put Indian society on a path of democracy, progress and the pursuit of knowledge.

This paper critically analyses the achievements and problems of the ‘educated’ young generation of today and studies if and how far the ideas propounded by Tilak and his generation of leaders are still relevant.

Emerging from the first generation of Indians to receive a college education, Tilak’s choice of Mathematics as the primary subject for his Bachelor of Arts degree, which he finished in first class from Deccan College of Pune in 1877, speaks volumes. We know that Mathematics improves the power of reasoning, creativity, abstract or spatial thinking, and scientific temper and disciplined problem-solving ability. In fact, after completing his LLB course in 1879 from the Government Law College, Tilak started teaching mathematics at the Fergusson College in Pune from which he later withdrew to become a journalist and plunge headlong into the freedom movement.

To be able to read and write alone is no education.

Lokmanya Tilak

These ideas later found their logical expression in the Constitution of India which aims to, “develop scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform” as one of the fundamental duties of the people of the Republic of India. Article 51 A encourage us “to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavor and achievement.”

Against this perspective, we have tried to critically evaluate the issues pertaining to the education of youth in today's India and identify gaps that need to be bridged to give India a place of pride in the field of knowledge development and social advancement in the world.

India has a rich convention of learning and education from ancient times. There are Shastra's and Sutra's which detail the obligation of an educator and his student. Education in ancient India focused on the holistic development of Man and not just his survival. How an individual developed as a human being was viewed as an aesthetic and genuine determinant of education and the acquisition of knowledge.

Tilak's pioneering vision in the field of national education included the foundation of schools all through the country to impart genuinely national education. In our view, his idea of synthesizing scientific education with ancient cultural traditions of religion was at the heart of his philosophy. He sketched out the four components which were key for comprising an arrangement of national education. Tilak stressed on religious education for building character as well as to inculcate cultural pride among Indians. He stated, mainstream education just isn't sufficient to develop character. Religious education is important because the investigation of high standards restrains us from malicious quests. However, he laid equal importance on the need for bringing in industrial and political education. Political education ought to be conferred in instructive establishments to teach citizens to be aware of their rights and duties.

Learning to read and write is an elementary skill that regrettably not every person secures adequately in India even now. There is too much emphasis on quantity and less on quality. As we transition through rapid social change as part of the larger global fervent, and encounter bigger political and social strife our educated youth must be prepared for the evolving and complex environment.

If our education system lacks the ability to mould knowledgeable individuals with a high moral compass, we will fail to develop the kind of progressive, strong and successful India that leaders like Tilak dreamt of and fought for. If this system fails to build a strong moral fibre among people who power the engine of our democracy -- politicians, lawmakers, bureaucrats, business people, professionals, farmers, workers et al, how can we overcome the challenges that stare us in the face – poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, malnutrition, illness, social marginalization, violence, war, environmental degradation and many more?

If our education does not elevate our youth above narrow biases, nepotism, corruption and social injustice that result is that communal, regional and caste conflicts and unhealthy struggle between various areas for power and pelf, what is the worth of such an endeavor? Influential lobbies want to have a restrictive grip on the rare resource of the country. Barely any people and groups, who have the power in their grasp and who control nearly every walk of national life are attempting to deny equity to the common man. Unfortunately, the imprint of these social shades of malice has crept in to the educational framework too.

A pattern of education that promotes mindless competition based on rote learning and ensues in a rat race bereft of creative thinking, scientific query and a thirst for research-based discovery, impedes the fulfilment of our true potential as individuals and as a nation. As Tilak's clarion call for 'Swarajya' as an inherent right of every Indian inspired the generations before us, now is the time to heed his call, "Religion and practical life are not different. To take 'Sanyas' (renunciation) is not to abandon life. The real spirit is to

make the country your family, and work together instead of working only on your own. The step beyond is to serve humanity and the next step is to serve God."

Let us put our minds and resources together and look deeper as to how – and how soon -- this can be achieved.

Introduction

To educate a man in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society.

Theodore Roosevelt

What is education? This ostensibly rudimentary question has very deep implications for social scientists and planners. The history of education in India began at the ancient Hindu and Buddhist centres of learning such as Takshashila and Nalanda, and gradually developed a well-balanced curriculum that would impress even the educationists of today. The Archeological Survey of India (ASI) has found that subjects taught at Nalanda included theology, grammar, logic, astronomy, metaphysics, medicine, philosophy and mathematics. Alongside, India also developed a rich ‘Gurukul’ tradition -- a residential schooling system originating long before the onset of the common-era. It is well-known that in the Vedic age, Gurukul students were taught various academic subjects as well as character-enhancing qualities, aimed at preparing them for a cultured and disciplined life.

This elevated education system later amalgamated influences from Europe, Persia, and the Middle East etc. through the centuries. Gurukulas and Patashalas were the seats of learning of the caste Hindus and Madarasas and Makhtabs promoted the education of the Muslim community in India.

By the time Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak started his educational journey in the later part of the 19th century, the Western education system was already taking root in India. Tilak was born in an Indian Marathi Hindu Chitpavan Brahmin family in Ratnagiri as Keshav Gangadhar Tilak on 23 July 1856. His father, Gangadhar Tilak was a school teacher and a Sanskrit scholar so he grew up in an erudite environment. A major step in the transformation of the India education system to the one brought forth by the colonial rules was in 1813 when the British Parliament granted to the Governor-General-in-Council less than one lakh rupees for education and allowed the Christian Missionaries to spread their religious ideas in India. Of course, prior to this, Jonathan Duncan had founded the Banaras Sanskrit College in 1791 and William James, founded The Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784 but the new clause in the 1813 Charter from the British Parliament added momentum to the process.

Simultaneously, India society was imbibing new thoughts and modern ideas as encapsulated in the Bengal Renaissance, a cultural, social, intellectual and artistic movement in Bengal but resonated through many parts of the Indian subcontinent. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, one of the founders of the Brahmo Samaj and often known as the "Father of the Indian Renaissance" brought reforms in the field of education. He established The Hindu College, the City College, Vedanta College, and English Schools were established in Calcutta through his efforts and contributed a lot for the development of Bengali, Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Urdu and English language and wrote books in these languages. By the time of the First War of Independence in 1857, three universities had been established at Madras, Bombay and Calcutta,

So Bal Gangadhar Tilak belonged to the first generation of Indians to have received a college education, Tilak obtained his Bachelor of Arts in first class in Mathematics from Deccan College of Pune in 1877. Thereafter he enrolled for the MA course but changed course midway to join the LLB course instead, in 1879 he successfully obtained his LLB degree from Government Law College. Meanwhile, Tilak had started teaching mathematics at a private school in Pune from which he withdrew later due to ideological differences with colleagues and became a journalist.

Tilak actively participated in public affairs. He stated: "Religion and practical life are not different. To take Sanyas (renunciation) is not to abandon life. The real spirit is to make the country your family work together instead of working only on your own. The step beyond is to serve humanity and the next step is to serve God."

Tilak soon emerged as one of the most inspiring leaders at the forefront of India's struggle against colonial rule. A visionary and a versatile personality, he was variously known as the "Lion of Maharashtra" and "Lokmanya", Tilak was feared by the British as the 'father of Indian unrest' and admired by his compatriots across the spectrum.

Among his myriad contributions to the birth of modern India was as educationist and academician who dedicated himself to the spread of knowledge among the masses.

The foundational concepts of Tilak and other eminent revolutionaries of that landmark era in Indian history eventually led to the 'Idea' of a unified Indian nationhood and manifested in the principles enshrined in our Constitution, which aimed to put Indian society on a path of democracy, progress and the pursuit of knowledge. He organized the Deccan Education Society in the 1880s with a few of his college friends, including Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, Mahadev Ballal Namjoshi and Vishnushastri Chiplunkar. Their goal was to improve the quality of education for India's youth. The Deccan Education Society was set up to create a new system that taught young Indians nationalist ideas through an emphasis on Indian culture. The Society established the New English School for secondary education and Fergusson College in 1885 for post-secondary studies. The Society aimed at educating the masses, especially in the English language; because Tilak and his associates considered English to be a powerful force for the dissemination of liberal and democratic ideals. He himself taught mathematics at Fergusson College. The Deccan Education Society (1884), which

The life members of the society were expected to follow an ideal of selfless service. Later Tilak was disappointed to note that some members were keeping outside earnings for themselves and so he resigned. He then turned to the task of awakening the political consciousness of the people through two weekly newspapers that he owned and edited: Kesari ("The Lion"), published in Marathi, and The Mahratta, published in English. Through those newspapers Tilak became widely known for his bitter criticisms of British rule and of those moderate nationalists who advocated social reforms along Western lines and political reforms along constitutional lines. He thought that social reform would only divert energy away from the political struggle for independence.

Historical accounts of the late 19th and early 20th century – the time when the idea of Indian nationhood was taking shape and struggle for independence from colonial rule gathered pace in India – portray a people steeped in negativity, backwardness and low self-esteem after centuries of oppression and servitude.

Leaders like Tilak and other freedom fighters inspired the masses to rise above these sentiments and take pride in India's own great cultural and intellectual achievements through the millennia, while at the same time, build a future based on modern scientific thinking and the concepts of liberty, equality and human dignity. His powerful assertion that "Swarajya is my birthright and I will have it," stems from this assimilation of ideas from the East and the West.

To create that appreciation and pride, Tilak wrote extensively, interpreting ancient Indian philosophy and mythology to spread awareness, especially among the young, western educated generation of Indians. While in the Mandalay jail, Tilak authored his magnum opus, the Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā Rahasya ("Secret of the Bhagavadgita") — an original exposition of the most-sacred book of the Hindus. Moving away from the orthodox interpretation that the Bhagavadgita taught the ideal of renunciation; in his view it taught selfless service to humanity. Earlier, in 1893, he had published *The Orion; or, Researches into the Antiquity of the Vedas*, and, a decade later, *The Arctic Home in the Vedas*. Both works were intended to promote Hindu culture as the successor to the Vedic religion and his belief that its roots were in the so-called Aryans from the north.

All through his life, Lokmanya Tilak remained steadfast and dedicated to the growth and spread of education – not just a superficial formal degree-oriented education, but one that inculcates real knowledge through deep research and analysis as well as creates awareness of and pride in one's own culture and history. His vision of a modern education system was not to blindly imitate everything western, but to evolve a synergistic value-based thought process among the youth of India.

This paper aims to examine the relevance of Tilak's vision in the context to our times because there is still considerable debate on the kind of education system that will enable India to emerge as a developed nation and overcome the multiple and critical challenges she faces.

Education in the true sense is not just about building careers and making people employable (which of course it has to do to help survival in this resource-diminishing world). Like Tilak, our pioneering educationists believed in building youth with character and empowered to take on the colonial oppressors. They knew that in order for India to break the shackles of ignorance, poverty and captivity, the fundamental need was to develop self-confidence, self-assertion and optimism among the masses, equipped with deep knowledge, rational thinking and pride in their past.

Education in India today:

Currently India's education system is riddled with contradictions. Some say it is overly job-centric and theoretical without enough emphasis on critical thinking, research, innovation and personality development. Some say that education is essential to gain knowledge about the past and the present to make our future better. It should not only include the readable information present in the books used in schools and colleges, which are consigned to memory for the next examination and the discarded, Although academic achievements play an important part in building careers and providing financial sustenance; they fall short in providing a strong moral compass and character that is required for individual success as well as the greater good of humanity. As Tilak said, "To be able to read and write alone is no education", And, "The real spirit is to make the country, your family, work together instead of working only for your own. The step beyond is to serve humanity and the next step is to serve God,

The goal of true education is more than the cerebral aspect of understanding the various modes of critical, abstract, visual, and creative thought processes. It is also about addressing the corporeal aspect of a person making a holistic individual. Simply put, it can be said that education is a platform that can break all barriers allowing us to discover and explore our limits.

Moral Challenges faced by the young generation

As Indian society transitions from a deeply conservative, patriarchal, inward-looking and hierarchical structure to a contemporary, technology-driven, democratic, free and egalitarian globally-aligned ethos, the foundational concepts of education are also under scrutiny and metamorphosis.

Authority-based morality, which emphasizes respect for hierarchy and tradition and was grounded in the old caste and class division, is slowly being replaced. There are consistent tendencies for moral language to become more individualistic and less grounded in concern for social order and cohesion, as the rise of the professional and managerial middle classes delineates the emergence of the 'modern' India society, the remit of education is rapidly transforming.

Influential thinkers such as C. Wright Mills, David Riesman, David Lockwood, Anthony Giddens, John Goldthorpe and Pierre Bourdieu have all contemplated the significance of middle-class expansion for the social order of the later 20th century. More broadly, the dramatic expansion of science and technology studies, and the interest in expertise, culture, creativity, self-discipline can be seen as reflecting on our themes. Indian education system would be at its critical best if it innovates energetically to uncover emerging social trends thereby associating with the emergence of fundamental principles of intellectual vibrance and individual responsibility,

Role of ethics in Education

Some of the most significant deficiencies that impede the progress of our country -- and even the world -- are embedded in human frailties which our education system must be equipped to address. Issues such as corruption, duplicity, lack of mutual respect, tendency for violence and unscrupulousness, plague our society and thwart overall progress. If the education system fails to inculcate ethical values among the young generation it is hardly fulfilling its role in building the moral fibre of the nation and a better future for all.

Ethics has been derived from Greek word ethos which means character; it is an inherent element of an edified society. It is a psychological measuring stick which focuses the mind to recognize between good or bad conduct, character and works on going around our general public, nation or world.

Value is a term utilized in practical and philosophical setting where economy relates its value an incentive among the product, while theory bargains its helpful commitment for humankind. The minutest unit of society is home, a spot where learning of human qualities, moral obligations and moral qualities are supported by seniors to Youngers since ages.

The present arrangement of primary and higher education isn't exclusively liable for decrease of morals and qualities. Globalization is likewise an underlying driver for the decrease since individuals become materialistic instead of moral. Higher education also emphasizes on skill development part as opposed to

humanity part of students just to make their tags on global standards. The principle point of granting virtues and morals during Gurukul framework was to construct a positive character among students that lead to make a genuine resident and at last prompts gear up country building process.

Nowadays' youth invest more energy in their telephone, talking, operating Facebook and WhatsApp than with their older folks, who used to impart them good values. They talk about large issues like corruption, legislative issues; however they themselves lack the capacity to deal with the companions, for celebrating the festival in genuine sense, for valuing their older forerunners.

The organizations of training like school, family and society and so on assumes a significant job to in calculate moral values among the group of people yet to come. In any case, shockingly, because of a few social and economic factors, numerous families are perplexed, disarranged and befuddled and accordingly have flopped woefully to assume this crucial job.

Objectives:

- To know the reasons for moral degradation among young people
- To examine the need of ethics in individual.
- To study the necessity of education.
- To study the methodology of ancient Indian Education System with importance to Tilak and his age of pioneers.

Research Methodology:

The study is based on qualitative methods. Here, as researcher I have gathered the information from various research journals, websites and so forth.

Findings:

On the basis of the objectives, the findings are discussed below:

1: To know the reasons for moral degradation among young people

Values are the moralities, standards convictions and philosophies that individuals implement as their rules in their day-to-day happenings. They are a lot of predictable measures and practices that people decide to rehearse in the quest for making the wisest decision or what is anticipated from them by society. The present youths need to confront a great deal of issues. There is corruption in public life, violence, terrorism, exploitation, political corruption is expanding step by step. Man has been changed to a mechanical machine because of utilization of logical and innovative creations which adds solaces to their life, bringing about degradation of the moral value framework. Untrustworthy practices are quickly expanding and their effect is additionally turning out to be extensive. A portion of different reasons which are liable for ethical and moral values among youths are referenced beneath:

- a) Parental behaviors: In the present society the job of guardians is a lot of significant in building up the character of the kid. Guardians are significantly more worried about training of their youngsters instead of teaching good moral values to them. Working guardian's neglects to develop good discipline and manners among the youngsters. The greater parts of them are uninformed about what their youngsters do when they are not in home. Some of the time overabundance opportunity to the young people draw

in them to include in numerous unwanted exercises like visiting night club, betting, trafficking and so on. Guardians of today are neglected to control the exercises of their youngsters, a few guardians can't adapt to requests of their kids which constrained them to seek after in shameless exercises.

- b) Effect of mass media- Without a doubt TV, print media, web journals and sites, films, good examples (motion picture entertainers/on-screen character) assume a significant job in sharpening and forming the character of the youth. Numerous Medias, pictures, films and games that kill brutality as well as frequently extol it. There is so a lot of brutality, foulness in all these diversion roads and if a majority of youth watches these, the effect of the equivalent on the next generation can't be constructive.
- c) Lack of academic curriculum linked to human values: Now daily, kids are taught yet they don't know about the methods of its practical application. Current education system is making our students such type that they can effortlessly fulfil their basic wants and earn money however they don't discover any significance of qualities in their lives. On the off chance that they land position as per their will they are cheerful and in the case of failure they feel broken and stay disappointed
- d) Dirty politics- The present youth are apprehended by political parties which are utilizing them for serving their own advantages. There are student's associations in schools and colleges which make the students connected more in unethical exercises, for example, hitting instructors on the off chance that they failed in assessments, making strikes for satisfying their superfluous requests bringing about disintegration of moral and good principles of the general public.

2: To examine the need of ethics in individual.

Ethics is a mental yardstick which focuses the mind to distinguish between good or bad behaviour, character and practices running around our society, country or world to save humanity on earth man have to possess ethical values, otherwise man and animals are same, the greediness of human can only be satisfied by attaining the true knowledge (Almond, 1999).

Ethics in education might bring the modification in human mind. According to Rushmore Kidders research, ethics in education are: Ethics of justice, Ethics of Critique, Ethics of Care, and Ethics of profession).

3: To study the necessity of education.

Etymologically, "Education" is derived from the Latin word *educatio* ("A breeding, a bringing up, a rearing") in general terms education communicates a person to get comprehends the theory and practical yet additionally too think sensibly to reach or tackle any issue.

In philosophical terms education literal meaning is to bring desirable changes in human being, it is not simply imparting knowledge in a particular faculty or subject, but at the same time is also training in logical thinking which helps the coming generations adjust to the ever changing environment. It also means opening the doors of the mind, cleansing the soul and realization of the self (Pabla, 2011).

Its main aim is to make human life better not only through economic upliftment of individual but also through social, moral and spiritual strengthening. This will not only improve human life but also realize the

“higher truth” i.e. “Tamaso Ma Jyotirgamaya” from darkness to light. Thus education is not only a way of earning but it also helps to develop human personality with skills, values, morals and enhancement of different attributes of man. So education is a vital means for the potentialities of a human being to emerge in a positive direction so that a man can live in society with full of dignity (Bordoloi, 2011).

Education possibly finished when it prompts all round improvement of the person, which incorporates mental as well as moral development. Moral education impacts the social thinking about the individual and makes him/her recognize what is correct and what is wrong. Moral education is an essential requirement for present day times where one is quick seeing a degeneration of moral values. Moral education is significant as it shows assorted variety, resistance, common regard and pluralistic qualities.

4: To study the methodology of ancient Indian Education System with importance to Tilak and his age of pioneers.

Ancient Education system was an expressive education system; the idea of education has been fabulous, honorable and high in ancient India. Its point was "preparing for culmination of life" and the embellishment of character of men and women for the battle of life. In ancient times in India Gurukul system of education was the only system of education (Gupta Pallavi, 2016). In ancient India education system was mind-enriching, value-based, skills oriented and thoroughly connected to nature and life.

The ancient education system was shaped on four Vedas that is Rigveda, samveda, yajurveda and atharveda. Rigveda explains phases of life like family life, forest life and renunciation. Yajurveda imparts how to perform sacrifices in life. Samaveda communicates study of music. Atharvaveda explains medical sciences. Vedas play a significant part in ancient education system. Vedas demonstrate our culture, the significance of life, how we should live, what is right and wrong.

Tilak's pioneering vision in the field of national education included the foundation of schools all through the country to impart genuinely national education. In our view, his idea of synthesizing scientific education with ancient cultural traditions of religion was at the heart of his philosophy. He sketched out the four components which were key for comprising an arrangement of national education. Tilak stressed on religious education for building character as well as to inculcate cultural pride among Indians. He stated, mainstream education just isn't sufficient to develop character. Religious education is important because the investigation of high standards restrains us from malicious quests. However, he laid equal importance on the need for bringing in industrial and political education. Political education ought to be conferred in instructive establishments to teach citizens to be aware of their rights and duties.

In India today a large portion of the unsocial exercises are being dedicated by knowledgeable new age individuals. The connection among teacher and student need certainty towards one another. Students need compassionate frame of mind towards different people, family, society and the country. We have set up organizations of greatness, still question of corrupting human higher education is the most burning issue of the nation. The primary disappointment of our education system is to instilling human qualities. Each individual is answerable for this in light of the fact that as opposed to instilling great qualities we have trained our kid's wrong values. The kids are educated to earn money in any way without deduction profound

quality. Prior societies even without training had these qualities and saved them. The values lectured by Mahatma Gandhi and all our old incredible pioneers have wrecked on the purpose of casteism and communalism.

Conclusion:

Youth are significant determinants of the degree of improvement in any society. If the young generation is dynamic, ambitious, optimistic and moral, it can catapult our society to live up to its full potential, Unlike the times of Tilak and other freedom fighters yearning for the country, 'Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high, where knowledge is free. Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls.... Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever widening thought and action', today's youth have the privilege of living and breathing in a land of liberty, equality, democracy and free speech. Nurtured and empowered by an education system that truly mirrors the aspirations of our times and inspired by the rich and noble traditions of our motherland (as evoked repeatedly by the indomitable Lokmanya Tilak) they should imbibe the best of the world and make India shine as the land of knowledge, excellence, progress and morality.

As Willaim Wordsworth said, 'The Child is the father of the Man', so, the future of humanity rests on the shoulders of the young students of today. It takes dedication, discipline, innovation, critical thinking, empathy, mutual respect and a strong moral compass to build a nation.

That is what education truly means not just a collection of degrees or grades. And, there lies the relevance of the path laid down by Lokmanya Tilak.

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