CHAPTER-VI
RELEVANCE OF EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF
MAHATMA GANDHI

INTRODUCTION:

There is no doubt that India has made considerable progress in elementary education since independence with reference to overall literacy, infrastructure, universal access and enrolment in schools, but inspite of all these efforts the goal of universal access to qualitative elementary education has yet not been achieved. In this context, we need to consider our continued failure to universalize elementary education, to improve its quality and to transform the Indian educational system so that it is able to realize the vision of society enshrined in the Constitution of India.

In India, there are wide disparities in access to elementary education between states, rural and urban areas, gender as well as different economic classes. In addition, issues of quality such as teacher training, curriculum, pedagogy, school infrastructure and learning outcomes are also the major hurdles in achieving the goals of elementary education.

Gandhiji made a key contribution to Indian education by formulating such a scheme of education, which still has an immense educational implication in the contemporary educational scenario. Regarding aims of education, he was in favour of providing education for the harmonious development of the individual and betterment of the society as a whole. To him, character formation should be the main aim of education and he was in favour of providing value education to all. He profess to inculcate among children the desirable qualities of character, such as self-help, self-reliance, spirit of cooperation, service to humanity, sense of responsibility, respect for surroundings and the like. Regarding the vocational aspect of education, he was of the view that education ought to be an insurance against unemployment.

Gandhiji in his scheme of education throw light on the different aspects of education and his ideas on these aspects can play an effective role in the solution of different problems confronting elementary education. His views on child centred and life related curriculum, activity based and joyful methods of teaching and mother
tongue as medium of instruction have their unique importance and utility in the context of the current educational problems. Further his ideas on conducive school environment, continuous and comprehensive evaluation, self-discipline, teacher as a role model and stress on women and adult education are in no way of lesser importance in present time. His emphasis on free and compulsory education, promotion of pre-primary education, effective community participation, education for peace and insistence on health, hygiene and nutrition has their own relevance with regard to better educational outcomes.

6.1 RELEVANCE WITH REGARD TO AIMS OF EDUCATION:

Gandhiji gave a very broad-based concept of education, describing it as all round development of human personality. An all round development means development of the head, heart and hand-nothing less, nothing more. Acc. to him, “Man is neither mere intellect, nor the gross animal body, nor the heart or soul alone. A proper and harmonious combination of all the three is required for making of the whole man and constitutes the true economics of education.” He further states, “True education is that which draws out and stimulates the spiritual, intellectual and physical faculties of the children.” Thus to him, education must not ignore any aspect of human development. His concept of education stands for the balanced and harmonious development of all the aspects of human personality-physical, intellectual, social, spiritual etc. to enable the individual to achieve the ultimate aim i.e., Truth.

Gandhiji believes that unless the development of the mind and body goes hand in hand, with a corresponding awakening of the soul, the former alone would prove to be a lopsided affair. Gandhiji has no doubt in his mind that what goes ‘by the name of education is in reality “only intellectual dissipation”. The energies of students are largely frittered away in the accumulation of the knowledge of mere facts. Intellectual training has become the be-all and end-all of education. In his opinion, “Culture of the mind must be subservient to the culture of the heart.” Education of the heart consists in the refinement of our emotions and impulses, awakening of our deepest feelings of love, sympathy, fellowship and aesthetic sense through drawing, music and handicrafts. Gandhiji provides for such education of the heart, for in its absence
human life degenerates to the level of mere animal existence. Just as Gandhiji does not minimize the importance of developing a sound vigorous intellect side by side with the heart, he does not underestimate either the need for developing a fine, healthy body.

Modern education mostly deals with the mental development of children and it becomes a lopsided affair. It does not take into consideration the physical, emotional, spiritual and other aspects of the personality of the child. Affective and psychomotor domains are not given due weightage in the whole scheme of education. In the background of such circumstances the views of Gandhiji regarding the aims of education are quite relevant as it takes into consideration all round development of the personality of children which helps him to become a useful member of the society and the nation. Gandhiji emphasizes on the education for physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual development whom he called the education for Head, Hand and Heart rather than just 3R’s. The training of the soul as well as the heart is necessary because it can lead to the refinement of emotions and impulses; it can awaken our deepest feelings of love, sympathy and fellowship-the qualities that constitute Ahimsa. Gandhiji claims that it is only a harmoniously developed person that can adjust to his life and environment.

In consonance with Gandhiji’s ideas, RTE Act 2009, stressed on conformity with the values enshrined in the Constitution, all round development of the child, building up child’s knowledge, potentiality and talent and development of physical and mental abilities to the fullest extent as the chief aims of education which should be cherished.

Gandhiji regarded character formation as the suitable foundation of education. In comparison to literary aspect of education, he laid more stress on the character development aim of education. Hence, in his opinion the end of all knowledge must be building up of character. He regarded character as the expression of the whole personality including its ethical and spiritual aspect. Character building implies cultivation of such moral values as courage, strength of conviction, righteousness, and purity in personal life, self-restraint and service of humanity. Acc. to Gandhiji, education without character and character devoid of purity would be no good. He was
of the view that if we succeed in building the character of the individual, society will take care of itself.

The prevalent system of education is not character oriented, but information oriented. It is consumerist and makes one selfish, self-centered and cynical. It sharpens reason, but hardens the heart. It lays little or no emphasis on such basic values as truth, love, honesty, humility, compassion, forbearance and justice. It makes one conscious about one’s rights, not duties. It promotes materialistic outlook, and generates unhealthy competition. While the primary task of education is to draw out the best in a person, students overburdened with lengthy and abstruse syllabi and fearful of the spectre of examination find little time to acquire moral virtues or explore their creative potential.

Gandhiji’s views regarding character building can play a significant role in solving the current problems in the field of elementary education like selfishness, self-centered and cynical behaviour, untruth, hatred, dishonesty, injustice, materialistic outlook, unhealthy competition and use of unfair means. Gandhiji emphasized that for the development of the character in children, the school environment has to be made healthy and conducive and for this the teachers has to play an exemplary role and to be a role model for the students.

In the opinion of Gandhiji, ‘Culture’ means refinement of feelings and ‘education’ means knowledge of literature. Education is a means and culture is the end. He further says culture refines personality. Mere acquisition of knowledge is not enough for a man. He should have the quality of mind, which may be reflected in his daily conduct. Gandhiji said, “I attach more importance to cultural factor of education than its literacy factor. Culture is primary and basic thing….. It should show itself in the smallest detail of your conduct and personal behaviour, how you sit, how you walk, how you dress, etc., so that anybody might be able to see at a glance that you are the products of this institution. Inner culture must be reflected in your speech, the way in which you treat visitors and guests, and behave towards one another and your teachers and elders.”
In the present scenario, there is loss of cultural values in our society and schools. The general conduct and behavior of the children is not in tune with qualities of an ideal student. The materialistic outlook of life is dominating the life style of our students. There is drastic change in their way of living, dressing sense, talking, respecting elders and they have less regard for moral and spiritual values, which paves the way towards cultural development. So in order to overcome the cultural degradation, there is a dire need to adopt the educational ideas of Gandhiji regarding culture only then the dream of an ideal and cultured society can be realized. Since Elementary, stage is the beginning of formal education for the child, so cultural values should be implanted here onwards.

Mahatma Gandhi has visualized education as a means of awakening the nation’s conscience to injustice, violence and inequality in the social order. He was anxious to establish a spiritual society based on the principle of love, non-violence, truth, justice and equitable distribution of wealth. Such a society will be free from any kind of exploitation-social, political, economic or religious. This society will be free from all types of conflicts and struggles. Moral force and moral sanction would be the guiding factors of such a society. Service of all should be the first fundamental of every human being. Service to God and humanity was the greatest creed of Mahatma Gandhi. We love and serve God when we love and serve his creatures. It should be noted that Gandhiji tried his best to transfer his philosophy into actual practice.

In the present time, men have become self-centred, egoistic, and unsympathetic and have no fellow feelings towards others. Relations are becoming more contractual and cold with the element of warmth and sense of belongingness missing. Social cohesiveness is getting diluted. The members of the society have become individualistic in their approach and there is complete loss of feelings of brotherhood, compassion, co-operation and service unto mankind. This individualistic approach of man is creating problems of exploitation, inequality, injustice, violence, non-cooperation and disharmony in the society. Therefore, there is a need to seek a balance between individual and social aims and only then both the individual and society will develop to the maximum possible extent and get benefited from each other. Gandhiji also advocated both individual and social aims of education at
different times. He did not find any conflict between the two. In fact, he believed in the synthesis of the two. He thought that if individuals are good, the whole society shall be good. Acc. to him, if we succeed in building the character of the individual, the society will take care of itself. On the other hand, he also said that the state or the society should also be good and try to save the individuals. He always loved individual freedom but he regarded individual as a social creature. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, “A nation cannot advance without the units of which it is composed and conversely, an individual cannot advance without the nation of which he a part.”

Therefore, Gandhiji was quiet realistic in his approach regarding the synthesis of individual and social aims. He said; the aim of education should be to develop the full potentialities of every child at school, always in accordance with the general good of the community, which he is a member. The school is a miniature form of society, which fulfills its need and aspirations and leads it towards the path of progress. He was of the opinion that education must touch every aspect of daily living and help every man and woman to be a better citizen of their village, and therefore a better citizen of India and the world. Gandhi’s philosophy of education is a complete programme of social reconstruction which appropriately addresses the needs of the individuals and society in the context of social problems of Indian society.

To realize the aim of such a society, which is free from every kind of exploitation, injustice and hatred, the role of students is of utmost importance as they are future citizens of the country. For this, there is need to nurture the qualities like love, brotherhood, fellow feeling, sympathy, co-operation, humility and service towards others. In order to develop these qualities the teachers, parents and community has to play an important role. They have to develop democratic and social qualities among their children from the very beginning by self-example.

Religion was an essential element in Gandhiji’s life. Religion means one’s own personal experience, and not a set of creed and dogmas. Gandhiji regarded religion as an abiding faith in the absolute values of truth, love and justice. The fundamental basis of religious education is to impart instruction in the universal essentials of religion and training in the fundamental virtues of Truth and Non-violence. To Gandhiji, all the great religions of the world agree in fundamentals.
Gandhiji said, “Without dharma, learning is barren. Religion is not a matter for reflection but of conduct. Religious education is indispensable and the child should get it by watching the teacher’s conduct and by hearing him talk about it. By way instruction in religion, pupils will be taught general ethical principles and we are hopeful the teachers will demonstrate by their conduct that the essence of religion is good character. Fundamental universal ethics will have full scope but no place for giving sectional religious training.”

Gandhiji was not in favour of a state religion. So he did not want that religious education should form a part of the school curriculum approved by the state. By this, he did not mean that state schools should give no ethical education. All religions advocate the same fundamental ethics. Hence, the teaching of such ethics should be a function of the state.

It was the dream of Gandhiji that the narrowness and bigotry, which have for long poisoned the relationship between the people of different faiths, should end. He, therefore, embodied in his philosophy of education the kind of religious education which is best suited to the people of different denominations. It is to be correlated with the teaching of history and literature in such a way as to ensure that every child is given a working knowledge of the life and teachings of the founders of all the major religions, an introduction to the world’s great religious books, a sympathetic appreciation of religious traditions and practices other than their own and a sense of common citizenship with all other Indian through common worship of one God though by various names and through various rites.

In the present circumstances, India is facing incidents of violence, hatred and clashes due to various diversities in terms of religion, region, caste etc. So in order to overcome the prevailing disharmony and mistrust among the people, there is a dire need of proper religious education in consonance with Gandhiji’s ideas on religious education. For this, the feeling of respect for all religions must be inculcated in the students’ right from the very beginning. Only then, we will be able to establish a society free from ill-will, hatred and disharmony. Thus, it can be concluded that Gandhiji’s views on religion and its place in education are in line with the modern trends in educational thought. His approach to the vexed question of religious
education is remarkable for freshness and vitality and quite in accordance with our cultural heritage.

Despite its several thousands years old value-based cultural traditions, India is also subject to massive erosion of values. That is why political and economic corruption, scandals, scams, anti-social and anti-national activities are on the rise in the present national scenario. The rapid degradation of values in the Indian context has posed a heavy challenge before the country. The overall crisis of values in the society has left a negative impact upon the mindset of the student community as well. The youngsters have fallen in the clasp of eroding values such as dishonesty, insincerity, lack of punctuality, disrespect for elders, disregard for work-culture and entrepreneurial activities resulting in gun-culture, greed for earning money and wealth by easy and foul means, lack of patience resulting in students unrest, absence of the value of true leadership, loss of compassion, lack of concern for the rural background from which they come, absence of sensitivity towards women and so on. The present system of education has ignored instructions in morals. It depends upon western education system, which deals more with concepts and conjectures. Education is based only on material or objective fields of knowledge. Education is soaked in textual scholarships forgetting the values. The age-old culture is ignored and materialism is prevailing in the society. Today’s students are the citizens and nation-builders of tomorrow and the values they cherish or their transgression will certainly affect the nation, either positively or negatively. It is only the value-oriented education that can minimize such problems by bringing about a change in the nature, vision, thought, character and conduct of students. So not only in India, but also worldwide, there is cry for going ‘back to basic values’, so that the strength to deal with the complexity of modern living is developed.

Different Committees and Commissions constituted over the years, also underline the importance of value education. The Education Commission (1964-66) points out that attempts should be made to inculcate moral values through the various religions as all religions stress fundamental qualities of character, such as honesty and truthfulness, consideration of others, reverence for old age, kindness to animals, and compassion for the needy and the sufferings.
The National Policy on Education 1986) stated that “education in India stands at crossroads today”, that “neither normal linear expansion nor the existing pace and nature of improvement can meet the needs of students”, it also recommended “conscious internalization of a healthy work ethos and of values of humane and composite culture”. The Ramamurthy Committee (1990) also observed that education must nurture a set of values like love and compassion, build and prepare the ground for integration between science (truth), spirituality (unity of life) and democracy (non-violence) which is the link between the two. It may be gathered from the preceding discussion that the five basic human values, which have been emphasized repeatedly, are: truth, righteous, peace, love and non-violence and these are the core of Gandhiji’s philosophy of life.

Acc. to NCF (2005), if value education must be a part of the education system, values or virtues must be integral to the whole process of education. Value education cannot be imparted as a separate bit of education; the whole of education has to be value education. Here, we need powerful reminders, in a variety of ways, of the Gandhian ideas of ahimsa, peace, and harmony.

In the present environment of erosion of value, Gandhiji’s views on value education have much relevance than ever before. He stressed more on the need of value-oriented education in comparison to its literary aspect. Therefore, he advocated that values should be inculcated among the children from the very beginning only then; we will be able to succeed in transmitting these values in their later course of life which are quite essential not only for the betterment of the individual but also for the society at large.

Since values are better transmitted than taught, these must be adequately imbibed by parents and teachers; so that they can be passed on without much effort among children. A teacher should become a role model of discipline, honesty and punctuality for his students.

Democracy demands that education should be useful rather than ornamental. It should prepare the pupil for vocation. Therefore, in the present time of globalization and information technology, education should prepare the students to be self-
sufficient and self-dependent. But, in the mad race of achieving Govt. jobs they look
down upon their ancestral work as of menial nature. In such circumstances of rising
unemployment, child labour and disregard for manual work Gandhiji’s ideas on
vocational education can help to fulfill the ‘bread and butter’ aim of education. In his
views, education must aim at enabling every individual to earn his livelihood. It must
enable him to stand on one’s own feet. In the words of Gandhiji, “Education ought to
be for them (children) a kind of insurance against unemployment.”

In order to achieve this aim there should be some kind of mingling of general
and vocational education, general education containing some elements of pre-
vocational and technical education and vocational education in turn, having an
element of general education right from the elementary stage as it will prove to be a
solid foundation for vocational education at secondary stage.

6.2 RELEVANCE WITH REGARD TO CURRICULUM:

Gandhiji suggested a very practical and broad-based curriculum. It was indeed
an integrated curriculum. It is psychologically, sociologically and biologically sound.
He recommended those activities which are creative and productive. Curriculum
according to Gandhiji should be dynamic, flexible and diversified. It should be
according to the local conditions of the child, craft-centred and rather vocationalised.
Gandhiji was dissatisfied with what was taught to students in the name of education.
He was of the opinion that the curriculum is bookish, theoretical and overcrowded,
without providing rich and significant contents. It is dominated too much by
examination and it should include vocational and technical subjects, which are quite
necessary for making student self-sufficient in later course of life. He was of the view
that real education consists not in packing the brain with so many facts and figures,
not in passing examinations by reading numerous books but in developing character.
He further mentioned, “Real education has to draw out the best from the boys and
girls to be educated. This can never be done by packing ill-assorted and unwanted
information into the heads of the pupils. It becomes a dead weight crushing all
originality in them and turning them into mere automata.”
In the present time, one of the fundamental problems of elementary education is the faulty curriculum having little or no relation with the physical and social environment of the children. Further, it does not fulfill their life needs. The curriculum is bookish, theoretical and overcrowded with facts and informations, without providing rich and significant contents. It is dominated too much by examinations and devoid of vocational and technical subjects, which are quite necessary for making students self-sufficient in later course of life.

Acc. to Kothari Commission (1964-66), “The curriculum is bookish, outdated, examination oriented, lacking in practical activities and isolated from life and no reform is more urgent than to transform education, to endeavour to relate it to the life, needs and aspirations of the people and, thereby, make it a powerful instrument of social, economic and cultural transformation necessary for the realization of our national goals.”

Acc. to ‘Learning without Burden’ Report (1993), the problem of curriculum load is a major flaw of our education system that can be briefly identified by saying that “a lot is taught, but little is learnt or understood”. The problem of curriculum load leads to joyless learning and the reason for this curriculum load is that, knowledge is often confused with information and similarly, understanding is taken to mean the acquisition of facts.

Most of the researches conducted so far revealed that children are not interested in studies. This is due to various factors, the prominent among are the curriculum that is prescribed being unattractive and irrelevant and the pedagogy adopted by the teachers to deliver this content is more or less boring and unattractive. The lack of infrastructural facilities adds to the dislike of school by the children, which finally results in their dropout from schools. The poor quality of education and its irrelevance to the child’s immediate environment can lead to irregular attendance and eventually, dropping out. Acc. to PROBE (1996), the main reason for school dropouts is disinterest or a feeling of irrelevance in the child about what she/he is learning.
Acc. to Taylor and Mulhall (1997), it is observed that the curriculum is designed for children from the urban context thus intimidating the rural child, especially at the primary stage, resulting in low participation, high dropout rates, and under education of pupils in many cases.

In order to overcome the problems related to curriculum and to make teaching learning less burdensome, joyful and relevant to the life and needs of the children, Gandhiji views on curriculum are of greater significance even today. In order to acquire the essential modicum of social and civic training, Gandhiji propounds a syllabus which should enable the child to adjust himself intelligently and actively to his physical and social environment and to craft work which is their natural meeting point since it utilizes the resources of the former (physical) for the purpose of the latter (social). His attempt, therefore, is to plan an activity curriculum, which should transform the schools into places of work, experimentation and discovery.

Various reports and policy documents from time to time testify his views and suggested to incorporate his ideas on curriculum. The National Curriculum for Elementary and Secondary Education: A Framework (1988) recommended that school curriculum on the whole, should aim at enabling the learners to acquire knowledge, develop concepts, and inculcate skills, attitudes, values and habits conducive to the all-round development of their personality and commensurate with the social, cultural, economic and environmental realities at national and international levels.

Acc. to NCF (2005), the curriculum of elementary education should have a close link to life of the learner. It is extremely necessary that the education provided be relevant and related to the life of the learner, rather than becoming a ritual in his or her own environment. This principle marks a departure from the legacy of bookish learning, which continues to shape our system, and causes a gap between the school, home and community.

Acc. to National Knowledge Commission’s ‘School Education: Report to the Nation (2006-2009)’, curriculum reform remains a critically important issue in almost all schools. There is need to move away from rote-learning to understanding concepts,
developing good comprehension and communication skills and learning how to access knowledge independently and developing basic skills and the ability of students to apply their knowledge to ‘non-textbook’ situations.

6.3 RELEVANCE WITH REGARD TO METHODS OF TEACHING:

Gandhiji advocated practical methods of teaching. He emphasized on learning by doing and appreciated the methods of correlation in teaching, where different subjects should be taught in the form of correlated knowledge and not in the form of separate subjects. He was not in favour of bookish knowledge and suggested crafts to be the medium of instruction. Gandhiji further says, “It is pathetic sight to see boys and girls going to school loaded with books which they are unable to carry. The whole system requires to be thoroughly examined.”

Gandhiji criticizes the traditional education for its literary and theoretical nature. There is no close relation between the teacher and the taught and methods of teaching followed are generally passive and verbal. Acc. to him, education should be child-centred. He advocated that the teacher should take into consideration the psychology of the child and nothing should be taught to a child by force. He should be interested in everything taught to him. Education should appear to the child like a play and it should be made an essential part of education. The means of doing so, he said, “are work, observation, experience, experiment, service and love. Without these, learning through books acts as a hindrance to the development of the spiritual and rational powers of the student and also impairs his physique.” Gandhiji advocated that stress should be laid on the principle of co-operative activity, planning, accuracy, initiative and individual responsibility in learning.

Basic craft were introduced by Gandhiji for coordinating practical training with understanding basic concepts of various subject at the same time he want to develop the idea of dignity of labour among the people of which the people start looking at as menial work. According to him, a system of education in which a craft is the centre, can lead to the highest developments of the mind and the soul. His scheme of Basic Education combines in it the ideas of experimentation, project method of teaching, and learning through participation. He was of the view that students should
be given adequate opportunity to work in groups and to carry out-group projects to develop in them the qualities necessary for group life and cooperative work. He further said, "The subject can be made interesting by adopting the technique of questions and answers by the teacher and due to this the power of understanding becomes firm." All subjects like history, geography, arithmetic, science, language, music, painting etc. should be correlated with craft and the craft should be chosen keeping in view the local needs and in harmony with the local environment. The Education Commission (1964-66), also stressed that work experience should be introduced as an integral part of all education general or vocational.

Acc. to NCF (2005), the strangeness of the school environment can be mitigated by imaginatively linking the experience of school with the child’s experience outside it in the community. While school might have many new and exciting experiences for the child, it must not appear as rejecting or even ignoring the child’s experiences in the community. Pedagogy will gain by incorporating children’s experience but it is something that sadly does not happen in most of our schools.

In the present time, the teaching methods adopted in elementary schools are traditional and mechanical, encourage cramming, and excessively dominated by verbalism, which blocks comprehensive learning. They fail to develop good work habits and skills in the students and lack the necessary motivation for learning. No creativity is fostered, and activities are provided outside the classroom. They fail to foster the development of multiple interests in the students. They make the class room instruction a dull and dreary experience for the students.

Teaching learning process is teacher-centred rather than child-centred. The entire teaching-learning process revolves around the teacher where the teacher depends wholly on the textbooks and learning becomes confined only to books. In such conditions with little initiative on the part of students, learning becomes dry and cumbersome activity. Spoon-feeding method of teaching and readymade answers for the exams has propelled the scores of the students sans the subjects’ understanding.

Dull and monotonous, lecture method is adopted, with very less scope for activity based learning which creates uninterested among learners with less scope of
joyful leaning. The child’s innate nature and capacities have no opportunity to find expression in a daily routine which permits no time to play, to enjoy simple pleasures, and to explore the world, rightly said the Report ‘Learning without Burden’ chaired by Prof. Yashpal. Further, the current method of teaching wherein teachers only teach by rote and usually do not go beyond what is written in the books is not very attractive for the children.

Various studies analyzes the concerns in universalization of elementary education and as per the researches one of the main reasons of the Government Schools being unable to attract children is the inadequate attention paid by teacher on joyful and activity based learning.

In order to overcome the above problems Gandhiji’s views on the methods of teaching are quite pertinent even today. He was not in favour of bookish knowledge and suggested crafts to be the medium of instruction. He emphasized on learning by doing and appreciated the methods of correlation in teaching, where different subjects should be taught in the form of correlated knowledge and not in the form of separate subjects. Gandhi advocated that stress should be laid on the principle of co-operative activity, planning, accuracy, initiative and individual responsibility in learning. Adoption of these techniques in pedagogy, results into generating interest among students, in-depth understanding, better learning outcomes, which results into lesser dropouts. In line with Gandhiji’s ideas on methods of teaching, various educational policies, reports and Five Year Plan documents also stressed on the modification and adoption of new teaching methodology. According to NPE (1986), a child centred and activity based process of learning should be adopted at primary stage. As the child grows, the components of cognitive learning will be increased and skills organized through practice. The National Curriculum for Elementary and Secondary Education: A Framework (1988) also emphasized on child-centred and activity based processes rather than the teacher-centred approach during the transaction of curriculum.

The Yashpal Committee Report (1993) emphasized that there should be no academic burden on schoolchildren and suggested for adopting child-centered approach for teaching.
The NCF (2005) brought out by the NCERT has made one strong recommendation on creative teaching-learning process to provide overall development of children rather than remaining textbook centric. Teaching should be in the conversational mode rather than in the mode of authoritarian monologue. It is in the conversational mode that the child is likely to grow in self-confidence and self-awareness and will more easily establish connections between the teachings and his own experience.

The Tenth (2002-07) and Eleventh Five Years (2007-12) Plans also stressed the need to focus on pedagogic improvement and adoption of child-centered methods to improve the children enrolment, retention and quality of education, particularly in rural primary schools and in the unreached segments.

6.4 RELEVANCE WITH REGARD TO ROLE OF TEACHERS:

The quality of elementary education depends mainly on the quality of teachers imparting it as they play an important role in maintaining and improving the standards of elementary education. The centrality of the role of the teacher in universalisation of elementary education is undeniable.

Gandhiji gave special importance to role of teachers in his scheme of education. He asserted that only right type of teachers can help in achieving the objectives of education. He should possess knowledge, skill, enthusiasm, patriotism, strong character and special training. He should be friend, philosopher and guide and should be inspired with the social attitudes and ideals of Ahimsa and Truth. He should be well equipped and fully alive to the objectives of life and education. He must practice these virtues himself and should be able to establish a heart to heart contact with the students. He has to fashion the hearts of the students rather than their brains.

Gandhiji believed that the task of the teacher is to present the most congenial environment for the fulfillment of the inner potentialities of the child. A good teacher must have some capacity to assume leadership and some vision so that he may be able to assess the impact of education on the child’s total personality. The teacher is the key person who can inculcate all the required values in small children in spite of
many odds. This task would become easier if the teacher through his personality, character and actions sets an example before his students.

In the opinion of Gandhiji, the true textbook for the pupils is his teacher and his work lies more outside than inside the lecture room. About Ideal Teacher, Gandhiji said that a teacher has to be both father and mother to his pupils. A teacher who establishes rapport with the taught, becomes one with them, learns more from them than he teaches them. In this way, a true teacher regards himself as a student of his students. He said that for becoming a real teacher, the hearts of the pupils should be touched, their joys and sorrows be shared and they must be helped to solve their own problems. It is the teacher who experiences first hand the difficulties children encounter while negotiating social, cultural and linguistic barriers. Every single child out of school must be transformed into a student. Teachers must accept this as a professional challenge. The universality of education cannot be achieved unless we have teachers whose commitment is beyond question; in whom we can trust entirely.

Acc. to Gandhiji, for inculcating values among children the teachers have to be careful about their own conduct and behaviour. Purity of personal life is the one indispensable condition for building a sound education. If they impart all the knowledge in the world to their students but inculcate not truth and purity among them, they will have betrayed them and instead of raising them set them on the downward road to perdition. In the opinion of Gandhiji, the training of the spirit was possible only through the exercise of the spirit and the exercise of the spirit entirely depended on the life and character of the teacher. In order to develop values among the teachers, the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (2009) recommended that Value education should be made a part of curriculum for teacher training programme.

In the present time there are various problems confronting elementary education with regard to teachers. Teacher absenteeism, shortage of teachers, lack of trained teachers, high pupil-teacher ratio, shortage of female teachers, unfriendly attitude of teachers towards students and declining of moral values among teachers are some of the emerging problems which has been identified as major impediments in improving the quality of elementary education in India. In the background of these
problems, Gandhiji’s views regarding teachers can prove quite fruitful in improving the teaching-learning process and enhancing learning outcomes. In his scheme of education, Gandhiji stressed highly on the qualitative aspects of teachers. He assigned a unique and significant role to the teacher in the all round development of the students. Therefore, utmost care should be taken while selecting teachers especially for the children at primary level. Acc. to him, teachers should be inspired by a spirit of service and it is a despicable thing to take any Tom, Dick or Harry as a teacher in primary stage. All teachers should be men of character. On the issue of need of quality teachers he said, “We must procure the best teacher for our children whatever it may cost.” Gandhiji was also very pertinent on the issue of sufficient number of teachers in schools. In his view, the pupil-teacher ratio should not exceed more than thirty in any case if we want to create a conducive teaching-learning environment.

In order to realize the aim of providing quality elementary education to all, there is need of creation and nurturing of a professional cadre of teachers governed by well-designed norms and standards as agreed by the state and teachers. It is also required to reorganize the methods of recruiting teachers to ensure merit, objectivity, and conformity with spatial and functional requirements. A transparent process of recruitment, posting and promotion of teachers is therefore urgently required.

The need for a ‘well qualified, trained, and motivated’ teacher has been reiterated in several policy documents on education. The more recent policy documents talk about teacher empowerment from a more fundamental point of view, that is, his autonomy in taking decisions relating to curricular, pedagogic, and assessment matters. All the important reports on education emphasize the significance of appointing adequate number of teachers, ensuring the minimum standards in entry-level qualifications, providing academic support through regular pre-service and in-service training, and boosting the morale and motivation of teachers.

The National Commission on Teachers (1983-85) recommended measures to enhance the role of teachers in facilitating, motivating and inspiring students in the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values by promoting them through the spread of the scientific temper, secular outlook, civic responsibilities. The Learning without Burden Report (1993) also stressed that the teaching community should be innovative in
imparting lessons of capacity building of the students. Teacher is something of a
guide who will show students the way into realm of knowledge.

National Curriculum Framework (2005) stressed that teacher education must
become more sensitive to the emerging demands from the school system and it must
prepare the teacher for various roles and responsibilities, as the teacher is the key
person who can inculcate all the required values in small children in spite of many
odds. This task would become easier if the teacher through his personality, character
and actions sets an example before his students. It further recommended that value
education should be a part of curriculum for teacher training programme.
Emphasizing on teaching for construction of knowledge, it redefines the teacher’s role
as a facilitator, a co-learner and overseer of learning.

Acc. to National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (2009)
teachers need to be prepared to care for children, enjoy to be with them, seek
knowledge, own responsibility towards society and work to build a better world,
develop sensitivity to the problems of the learners, commitment to justice and zeal for
social reconstruction. Teachers need to view learners as active participants in their
own learning and not as mere recipients of knowledge; need to encourage their
capacity to construct knowledge; ensure that learning shifts away from rote methods.
Learning is to be viewed as a search for meaning out of personal experiences and
knowledge generation as a continuously evolving process of reflective learning.

6.5 RELEVANCE WITH REGARD TO METHODS OF EVALUATION:

Evaluation is goal directed, and educational outcomes are judged in terms of
goal attainment. Every educational programme should aim for the all round
development of the personality of the child. Therefore, the learning experiences
provided in the school should contribute towards the achievement of the desired
goals. The scope of evaluation in schools extends to almost all the areas of learners’
personality development. It should include both scholastic and co-scholastic areas, i.e.
it should be comprehensive in nature. This is in line with the goals of education.
Evaluation is continuous and reveals the strengths and weaknesses of learners more
frequently, so that the learners have better opportunity to understand and improve
themselves. It also provides feedback to the teachers for modifying their teaching strategies.

Acc. to Gandhiji, no external examination needs to be held. At the end of the basic school course, a school leaving certificate based on internal examination should be given. Promotion from one class to another should be determined by the schools on the basis of internal examinations. He was of the view that the learners should be continuously assessed by taking in to consideration his or her performance in different scholastic and non-scholastic areas.

In India, the evaluation system at the elementary level is not in tune with the aims and objectives of education. The evaluation system does not take into consideration the scholastic and non-scholastic aspects of student’s personality and thus it becomes a lopsided affair. The evaluation system is mainly examination oriented, more stress is laid on rote learning from textbooks, and thus other important dimensions of child personality are totally ignored. Acc. to Learning without Burden Report (1993), much has been written by various official committees on the ills of our examination system. The major, well-understood defect of the examination system is that it focuses on children’s ability to reproduce information to the exclusion of the ability to apply concepts and information on unfamiliar, new problems, or simply to think. So in the present circumstances if we really want to evaluate the performance of the students in line with the aims of education then there is a dire need to adopt Gandhiji’s ideas on evaluation. Therefore, evaluation should be done on continuous and comprehensive basis and there is a need to shift focus from rote learning from textbooks to developing basic skills and the ability of students to apply their learning to real situations. In addition, creativity, problem-solving ability and encouragement for construction of knowledge based on students’ own experiences needs to be promoted.

The reports of various committees, commissions and other policy documents from time to time also fall in line with Gandhiji’s views on evaluation and suggested drastic changes in the evaluation system. The National Policy on Education (1986) postulated that the examination system should be recast so as to ensure a method of assessment that is a valid and reliable measure of student development and a powerful
instrument for improving teaching and learning be developed. The National Curriculum for Elementary and Secondary Education: A Framework, 1988 also emphasizes recasting of examination system and introduction of continuous and comprehensive evaluation that incorporates both scholastic and specific objectives for each stage of education.

Regarding the examination, the NCF (2005) suggested that they should be made more flexible and integral into classroom life. The reforms suggested in the examination system would bring the much-awaited changes to de-stress children from the shackles of examination, which aim to test the memory, thus encouraging rote learning.

In view of NCFPP (2006), intelligence is diverse, and pedagogy and evaluation should aim at making it possible for this diversity to bloom. Excellence in diverse areas should be recognized and rewarded. And it is children’s responsiveness to what is taught rather than just their capacity to retain it that should be the focus of evaluation. Such responsiveness includes their ability to connect their learning to various other experiences in their life.

RTE Act 2009 also favours Gandhiji’s views and stressed on the comprehensive and continuous evaluation of child’s understanding of knowledge and his or her ability to the apply the same. Further, it laid that no child will be detained till the completion of elementary education and shall be required to pass any Board examination. Every child completing his elementary education shall be awarded a certificate, in such form and in such manner, as may be prescribed.

6.6 RELEVANCE WITH REGARD TO FREEDOM AND DISCIPLINE:

Gandhiji believes that discipline is an important aspect of a sound system of education. Discipline is a quality which comes from within one’s self leading to the regulation of one’s intellectual, moral and social behaviour. Regarding the importance of discipline he says, “If boys and girls do not learn discipline in their school days, money and time spent on their education is a natural loss.”
Gandhiji was in favour of self-discipline and voluntary discipline. Self-discipline arises from a pure life of self-restraint, fearlessness, usefulness and self-sacrifice. It may be achieved through non-violent conduct of life. It is synthesis of freedom and external control. Gandhiji believed that highest form of discipline comes through self-control and not by being free to follow stray impulses. He advocated self-discipline and not on an imposed discipline through punishment and rod. He was strictly opposed to inflicting corporal punishment for maintaining discipline in students. He was of the view that children are innocent, loving and benevolent by nature. They are innocent even in their mischief. In his opinion, the power based on love is a thousand times more effective and permanent than the one derived from fear of punishment. In order to promote discipline personal contact between the teacher and pupil should be strengthened. The teacher must prepare the environment in which the child may best blossom and make himself most fruitful. Only then the incidences of indiscipline may be avoided.

Acc. to him, the worst thing that can happen to boys in a school is to have to render blind obedience to everything that the teacher says. The pupils must have initiative and must cease to be mere imitators. They must learn to think and act for themselves and yet be thoroughly obedient and disciplined. The highest form of freedom carries with it the greatest measure of discipline and humility. Freedom that comes from discipline and humility cannot be denied.

Gandhiji emphatically says, “I value individual freedom, but you must not forget man is essentially a social being. We have learnt to strike the mean between individual freedom and social restraint. Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of well-being of the whole society enriches both the individual and the society of which one is a member.” By synthesizing individual and social discipline, he wants to prepare the students to become successful and responsible future citizens of the country.

Regarding the concept of disciple, the views of Radhakrishnan Commission are in consonance with Gandhiji’s philosophy. It said, “Good discipline be looked upon not as student conformity to arbitrary standards of conduct, but rather as
individual responsibility for behaviour. Peace and order, maintained by rigidly executed rules is totalitarian, not educative, in method.”

In the present time, authoritarian parents and teachers apply various punishment modes to discipline. Harsh discipline leads to anti-social behaviour, which contributes to academic failure and social rejection, which further affects self-esteem and create depressed mood increasingly the likelihood of delinquency in adolescents. Most teachers claim to be indulging in the practice of punishment behind the mask of disciplining and direct punishment has been found to be the most dominant method of control used by the teachers. The consequences of punishment are; hazards in the child’s development deteriorating his/her performance, which is the main cause of school dropouts. The child who regularly receives corporal punishment develops mental, physical and psychological weakness and remains scared and mentally disturbed due to fear of punishment. The child feel ashamed, disgusted, insulted, becomes shy and frightened and experiences nightmares, loss of appetite or develops inferiority complex and finally a dropout.

The fact that children continue to be pushed out of schools has also to do a lot with the way children are treated. Large numbers of students dropout from schools due to fear of corporal punishment being inflicted or meted to them by their teachers. Since these children do not perform well or they may have some behavioral problems so due to the unaffectionate & uncooperative attitude of the teachers they find little charm in school and in due course of time, they lag behind not only academically but loose interest in other activities also.

In this way, corporal punishment has become so much a part of teaching for maintaining discipline and children are routinely subjected to violence and fear of schools. But, inspite of continuous adherence to corporal punishment schools are facing problems in maintaining cordial environment in the schools. In such type of circumstances, Gandhiji idea of self-discipline can avert incidence of indiscipline. Self-discipline arises from a pure life of self-restraint, fearlessness, usefulness and self-sacrifice. It may be achieved through non-violent conduct of life. It is synthesis of freedom and external control. Gandhiji believed that highest form of discipline comes through self-control and not by being free to follow stray impulses. He advocated self-
discipline and not on an imposed discipline through punishment and rod. He was strictly opposed to inflicting corporal punishment for maintaining discipline in students.

In line with Gandhiji’s views regarding discipline, the National Policy on Education (1986) prohibits corporal punishment and proposed its abolition in schools and the Janardhan Reddy Committee (1992) further reemphasized this recommendation.

Similarly, NCF Position Paper on Aims of Education (2005) also enumerated that while learning discipline is an important part of education, externally imposed discipline should merge into the orderliness that children perceive as an essential part of their well-being. Enforced accountability should also therefore gradually give way to a sense of responsibility, which means that there should be more emphasis on self-assessment and shared accountability.

Acc. to RTE Act, 2009 no child shall be subjected to physical punishment or mental harassment and whoever contravenes the provisions shall be liable to disciplinary action under the service rules.

Thus, we see that his idea of self-discipline and voluntary discipline can solve the various problems of modern education. So in order to promote discipline, corporal punishment should be discarded and first of all teachers themselves have to be quite disciplined in their own life only then they will be able to inculcate discipline among their children. For maintaining discipline, personal contact between the teacher and pupil should be strengthened. The teacher must prepare the environment in which the child may best blossom and make himself most fruitful.

**6.7 RELEVANCE WITH REGARD TO WOMEN EDUCATION:**

Women constitute about 48.4% of population of India as per 2011 census, but they are not well represented in social, political, economic and religious life as per their numerical strength. There is a gender gap in education where women are lagging behind men. The female literacy rate is woefully lower than that of male. Compared to boys, far fewer girls are enrolled in schools and many of them are drop out. Though
the literacy level of women according to Census report 2011 has risen from a low level of 8.86 in 1951 to 65.46 but the gender gap between male and female literacy has not still decreased much.

Despite the principles of gender equality being enshrined in our constitution and despite the state being empowered to adopt measures of positive discrimination in their favour, women of India continue to bear the brunt of societal discrimination. Whether it is health, education, mortality rate or any other development parameter, women of India are on very weak footing. Despite efforts to raise the social status of women for more than a century, India still ranks 118 among 177 nations on gender equity according to the Human Development Index for 2008. Studies confirm that female literacy has a significant influence in improving social and economic status of women. A comprehensive study conducted by Usha Nayar of the NCERT has established that a strong correlation exists between rural underdevelopment and high dropout and low enrollment among girls. Also, enrollment of girls is strongly and positively correlated with women’s education showing that an educated mother wants to educate her daughter also. The ASER study (2007), found a strong correlation between parental education, particularly the mother’s education, and children’s education. It states that, ‘educated mothers are more likely to send their children to school and to have healthier and better educated children’. An educated mother serves as a multiplier when it comes to educating her children.

Gandhiji said that India is very backward in the education of women is a fact that cannot be denied. He was strongly of the opinion that women should have the same facilities as men and even special facilities where necessary. According to him, “Man should learn to give place to woman. A country or community in which women are not honoured cannot be considered as civilized.”

Gandhiji felt strongly for the emancipation of women. He said, “My greatest hope is in women. They want a helping hand to lift them out of the hell in which they have been kept.” He says that so long as Indian women do not get proper education, the condition of India is not likely to improve. Education should be given to them according to their particular aptitudes and life demands. Gandhiji believed that
women by means of their equipment and nature are best fitted to take up the work of educating small children.

Gandhiji was of the opinion that the question of the education of children cannot be solved unless efforts are made simultaneously to solve the women’s education. And I have no hesitation in saying that as long as we do not have real mother teachers who can successfully impart true education to our children they will remain uneducated even though they may be going to schools. It is the belief of Gandhiji that education of little boys and girls could be more effectively handled by women than by men and by mother than by maidsens. To fulfill this, a mother should have special knowledge of the management of the home, care of children, their education, etc. The National Curriculum Framework for School Education (2000) also stressed on the need of women education and said that education of women is an important key to improving health, nutrition and education in the family, and also empowering them to participate in decision-making. Investment, both in formal and non-formal education of young children in general, and of the girl child in particular is expected to yield exceptionally high social and developmental returns.

On the question of co-education, he was of the view that young boys and girls should have co-education up to class eighth. Further, he was of the view that if the parents demand for separate schools for girls then efforts should be made by state governments to open separate schools for girls.

Although Gandhiji was married to Kasturba at an early age of 13 but later in his life, he was not in favour of child marriages, however, and made a campaign against them on the ground that they weakened the race. He said, “The custom of child marriage is a moral as well as a physical evil. For it undermines our morals and induces physical degeneration.” Women cannot make any progress so long as there are child marriages.

In the present time, due to lack of sufficient number of schools for girls and non availability of female teachers especially in rural areas proves to be a major hurdle in the education of girls, as the orthodox parents hesitate in sending their daughters in co-education schools. Another impediment in the way of education of
girls is unhealthy practice of child marriages which is still in practice in various part of the country. According to recent UNDP report, India ranked first in terms of child marriages. In the background of such conditions Gandhiji’s views on women education can prove to be quite relevant. Gandhiji felt strongly for the emancipation of women through education he was of the view that women should have the same educational facilities as men and even special facilities where necessary. Education should be given to them according to their particular aptitudes and life demands. Gandhiji believed that women by means of their equipment and nature are best fitted to take up the work of educating small children. He was of the opinion that the question of the education of children cannot be solved unless efforts are made simultaneously to solve the women’s education.

The Govt. has initiated various programmes for the upliftment of the women through education especially at the elementary level. The Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidalaya (KGBV) and the National Programme for the Education of Girls at the Elementary Level (NPEGEL) were started having focus on educationally backward areas in girls’ education, especially for girls belonging to the disadvantaged sections like those belonging to SC/ST, minorities, etc, for tackling gender-specific issues that prevent girls and women from having access to education. And recently a National Mission for Female Literacy, Sakshar Bharat, a renewed effort to make people- 60 million of them women- functionally literate by 2012. So in order to have better results mere planning and initiation of different programmes are not sufficient but what is actually desired is their proper execution and monitoring.

6.8 RELEVANCE WITH REGARD TO ADULT EDUCATION:

As per India Census Provisional Repot 2011, about 74.04* percent of the people in India are literate. This also comprises the people who are able to write their name and put in their signature. They do not have any functional education. Education carries a tremendous impact in modernizing the behaviour and the character of the people. Nearly 26.6 per cent of the people in India are still illiterate and as such, they do not fully realize the importance of education for their children. They are indifferent towards education. The prevalence of illiteracy is one of the factors that have stood in the way of universalization of elementary education.
The Adult Education Policy Statement (1978) very rightly observed, “Exclusion of a vast majority of the people from the process of education is the most disturbing aspect of educational and social planning. This has been uppermost in the consideration of the Government. While determined efforts must be made to universalize elementary education up to the age of 14 years, educational facilities must be extended to adult population to remedy their educational deprivation and to enable them to develop their potentiality. Indeed, universalization of elementary education and adult literacy are mutually interdependent.” Therefore, another area, which requires urgent attention, is removal of illiteracy among adults.

Acc. to a study conducted by (Jha and Jhingran 2002) the high level of parental illiteracy among families and the consequent poor learning environment at home, also constrains the education of children. Lacking an educational background, such children are often first generation learners. The absence of academic support at home forces them to grapple with tasks of mastering language and cognitive skills alone. The fact that the formal schooling system is unsympathetic to their needs often leads to wastage and stagnation amongst them. An analysis of determinants of children’s participation in school (Dreze and Kingdon 1999) finds that the situation in the child’s household and the decision of the parents are the most influential factors. If parents are educated, it is seldom that the children are not in schools. However, if parents are illiterate, there is a risk to children’s participation in schools. They even find it difficult to compel their children to pursue education, if there is variance of their decision with that of the children to attend school.

Gandhiji was a great champion for the cause of adult education in India. He taught his wife, the inmates of his ashrams in South Africa and India. He knew that illiteracy constitutes a heavy drag on freedom and progress and limits the mental horizon not merely of people but also their posterity. He said, “I would have adult education, not as we ordinarily understand it, but the education of parents so that they can undertake adequately the moulding of their children.” He clearly saw that it was by an awakening and re-orientation of the adult mind that society could be organized materially, morally and spiritually. In his view, mass illiteracy is India’s sin and shame and must be liquidated. He was of the opinion that the literacy campaign must
not begin and end with knowledge of the alphabet. It must go hand in hand with the
spread of useful knowledge. The dry knowledge of the three R’s is not even now, it
can never be, a permanent part of the villagers’ life. They must have knowledge given
to them, which they must use daily. It must not be thrust upon them and they should
have the appetite for it.

In the words of Gandhiji, “The age of Basic Education includes the education
of the whole of society beginning with the children and going up to adults and old
men and women. It has to be imparted through the practice of handicrafts, village
sanitation and medical relief, preventive and curative.” Regarding the crucial role of
students in adult education, he advised them to spend their vacations in the service of
village people by conducting classes for them and teaching them rules of sanitation
and healthy living.

Gandhiji advocated the education of the parents of children and other adults as
the first concern of the nation. He regarded the education of the adult as a necessary
prelude to the growth of the primary education for new generation. Therefore, a
massive programme for removing adult illiteracy should be taken and education of the
parents is to be looked after for the success of the programme. He said, “In my
opinion what we have reason to deplore and be ashamed of is not so much illiteracy as
ignorance. Therefore, adult education, too, should have an intensive programme of
driving out ignorance through carefully selected teachers with an equally carefully
selected syllabus according to which they would educate the adult villagers’ mind.
This is not to say that I would not give them knowledge of the alphabet. I value it too
much to despise or even belittle its merit as a vehicle of education.”

Various studies conducted on the role of parents in the education of the
children highlight that the educational status of both parents is known to have a
positive impact on the schooling of children both boys as well as girls. Parental
education leads to an increase in enrolments, but the percentage of dropouts also falls
as parental education levels rise.

The govt. initiated various programmes to educate the teeming millions who
are still in the clutches of illiteracy. The National Literacy Mission set up in May
1988 aims to attain a sustainable threshold level of 75 per cent literacy by 2007 by imparting functional literacy to non-literate in the age group of 15-35 years, which is the productive and reproductive age group and constitutes a major segment of the work force. Government of India has launched ‘Saakshar Bharat’ the new variant of the National Literacy Mission on 8th Sep. 2009 for implementation during the 11th Plan with an objective to make 70 million non-literate adults literate by the end of the 11th Plan. The scheme has special focus on women. Saakshar Bharat has been implemented in 365 districts where female literacy is less than 50%.

After going through the reports of various commissions and educational programmes, it is realized that the problem of education of the children cannot be tackled unless and until desired steps are simultaneously taken in the field of adult education and this is what Gandhiji has stressed time and again.

The National Policy on Education (1986) and the revised NPE (1992) have set out the scope of adult education in providing elementary education. It is to be so planned and implemented that it is “geared to the national goals such as alleviation of poverty, national integration, environmental conservation, observation of the small family norms, promotion of women’s equality, universalization of primary education, basic health care, etc.” SSA announced on August 15, 2000 also emphasized the role of adult education in the age group of 15-35 with special focus on promotion of literacy among women, Scheduled Castes/Tribes and Backward Classes in realizing the goal of universalization of elementary education. And this is what Gandhiji wanted as the outcome of adult education.

6.9 RELEVANCE WITH REGARD TO MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION:

The proper teaching of the mother tongue is the foundation of all education. Without the capacity to speak effectively, to read, and to write correctly and lucidly, no one can develop precision of thought or clarity of ideas. Moreover, it is a means of introducing the child to the rich heritage of his people’s ideas, emotions and aspirations and can therefore, be made a valuable means of social education whilst also instilling right ethical and moral values. Also, it is a natural outlet for the
expression of the child’s aesthetic sense and appreciation and if the proper approach is adopted, the study of literature becomes a source of joy and creative appreciation.

Gandhiji is a great champion of mother tongue. He stressed that mother tongue should be the medium of instruction. This is the most natural thing, as it is being the first medium of education at home. It enlarges the capacity to understand and to express effectively and to read and write correctly. It develops clarity of thinking and receptivity to new ideas. Gandhiji was of the view that true national education should be imparted through the language of each province. He believes that no real education is possible through a foreign medium. The foreign language causes brain fag, stifles all originality, puts undue strain on the nerves of our children and makes them only crammers. On the other hand, the mother tongue will help the child to think quickly, to express easily, develops originality, it enables us to be creative, and overall it lays the solid foundation of our many-sided development. It will also introduce the child to the rich heritage of his ancient culture.

In a multilingual country like India, the medium of instruction from primary to higher education has always been an issue. The magnitude of the problem is evident at different stages of education. Out of total of 1652 languages and dialects, only 67 are used as medium of instruction in schools. English as a medium of instruction continues to dominate over vernacular media in many schools and colleges. And this has often been a subject of discussion among academicians in spite of certain policy decisions undertaken at the national level. Language has been found to be a highly alienating factor in the education of many schoolchildren, particularly amongst minorities, tribal communities with languages without a script, as well as linguistic minorities in most states. Many children resent the imposition of the state language as the medium of instruction, or a second language in school. For the children of scheduled tribes, the main factor for non participation is cultural discontinuity and alien language of instruction in schools. It is true that several children drop out of school due to lack of proficiency in the language they are exposed to in the school. Acc. to recent estimates, about 25% children are not getting education in their mother tongue.
In the context of the various problems related with the medium of instruction Gandhiji’s views have their unique importance because if the child learns through his or her mother tongue then this will enhance better learning and good results. Further, this will develop the interest of the learners in study and leads to fewer dropouts. Thus, two key issues, which need to be recognized, are the language used by children at home and with their peer group and the essential multilingualism of the school classroom.

The report of various commissions and policy documents also favours Gandhiji’s views on mother tongue as the best medium of instruction. The importance of the medium of instruction in the educative process has been highlighted by the Education Commission (1964-66) in these words, “The medium selected should enable students to acquire knowledge with facility to express them with clarity and to think with precision and vigour.” It further observed, “As a matter of sound education policy, the medium of education in school and higher education should generally be the same.” The NCF (2005) clearly articulates the need for teaching in the child’s mother tongue at the elementary stage. There is enough evidence around the world to show that children learn better when they begin their education in their first language. Acquiring reading and writing skills at the beginning of school is best done in a language familiar to the child. The SSA programme has also emphasized a lot on this aspect.

SSA has therefore encouraged States and UTs to address the problems faced by children who begin school studying in a completely unknown language, especially in tribal areas. Acc. to RTE Act 2009, medium of instructions shall, as far as practicable, be in child’s mother tongue.

6.10 RELEVANCE WITH REGARD TO ROLE OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION:

Community participation is one of the crucial indicators of the success of social sector programmes and an increasingly empowered role in demystifying educational administration, financing and management. Increased role of non-organizations would also ensure that elementary education becomes available to all
and is of satisfactory quality that would equip the elementary learner to face the challenges of life in the context of the world as a global village. It is necessary to insist on the genuine participation of such institutions with a sense of ownership. In this context, decentralization means bringing schools close to the community rather than building.

The involvement of parents and the community in the issues of learning outcomes of their children would help to increase transparency and accountability of the system and also promote the ‘right of learn’ perspective. An approach of ‘mobilising parents for understanding and demanding quality would be necessary on the lines of the mobilization strategies implemented in the past decade to secure enrolment and regular attendance of children.

An active involvement of parents and communities as a whole in children’s schooling is seen as being important for two major reasons: first to encourage and help their own children in the process of learning; and second, to put pressure on the government to improve the school environment.

Parental education and community involvement towards achieving the goals of UEE would be a matter of concern for curricular makers, planners and administrators and for all those concerned with the quality of education at the elementary stage. Since the involvement of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in elementary education has been ensured through a constitutional amendment, but the results are not on desired lines.

Various studies conducted in this field highlighted that the local bodies or PRI’s do not participate in decisions regarding attendance and regularity of teachers and children, or the problems encountered by children in school. They are not concerned with the problems faced by teachers, the day-to-day issues that may arise; they do not liase with authorities or elected bodies to bring to their notice the difficulties children or teachers face such as lack of textbooks, physical infrastructure, public transport and so on. In such circumstances Gandhiji’s views on role of parents and community participation in the education of the children is of unique importance in order to bring both of them close to each other to secure quality education for
children. Gandhiji was of the opinion that the community has to render an important role in the education of children. According to him, “Important radical changes cannot be brought about by the rulers. It is for the leaders of the people to undertake such pioneering ventures. If we think that the Government alone should do these things, our object may not be achieved for a long while. It is difficult task to put our education on a sound foundation and it calls for Herculean effort. We will have to devote to it our all- the body, the mind, and the soul, and but not least, money!” There should be a close contact and effective collaboration between school and community. Regarding the role of parents in child’s education Gandhiji said, “The education of children is primarily a duty to be discharged by the parents Therefore, the creation of a vital educational atmosphere is more important than the foundation of innumerable schools. When once this atmosphere has been established on a firm footing, the schools will come in due course. There is no school equal to decent home and no teachers equal to honest virtuous parents The real property that a parent can transmit to all equally is his or her character and educational facilities.”

In consonance with Gandhiji’s views on community participation in education, the government through the 73rd/74th Constitutional amendments emphasized the need for local bodies to play a greater role in the development of education. The GoI, Working Group Report 2001 also said that there should be ‘continued efforts to improve the quality of education and for this community participation in education must be ensured.’ Similarly, NCF (2005) put emphasis on decentralization and the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) as major steps towards systemic reforms. PRIs offer an opportunity to make the system less bureaucratic, teachers more accountable, and the schools more autonomous and responsive to the needs of children. The RTE Act, 2009 also made a provision regarding the active participation of community in the proper functioning and monitoring of school through the formation of School Management Committee consisting of the elected representatives of the local authority, parents or guardians of children.

Thus we find that Gandhiji’s views on the role of active participation of community in the education of children is quite relevant in the present conditions as decentralization of the management of schools, combined with community
participation, is the most effective instrument for ensuring accountability, improving the
day-to-day functioning of schools and allowing for flexible responses to local
requirements. Therefore, there should be devolution of authority to local levels,
whether to panchayats, school management committees or municipalities.

6.11 RELEVANCE WITH REGARD TO SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURAL FACILITIES:

Learning takes place in a web of social relationships of formal and informal
interaction between teachers and children. Schools are institutional spaces for such
community of learners. The planning and preparation undertaken by the teachers and
headmasters behind the scenes give the school its character. Physical and social
environment of the school significantly influences the teachers’ activities and the
children’s learning. The enhancement of physical space can bring about not only
cosmetic improvement but also transform the curriculum and pedagogy that the child
experiences. The physical building and grounds around the school is its most
expensive physical asset; creative and practical solutions can help to maximize their
educational value. Sufficient number of well qualified, trained, dedicated teachers
and well lit, ventilated, clean classrooms organized with adequate shelf spaces or
storages, comfortable and well maintained furniture have a positive impact on the
whole teaching-learning environment and on the other hand, unqualified, untrained
teachers and dilapidated dingy buildings, with small or no play grounds and located in
unhygienic settings presents a dull, un-stimulating and de-motivating environment
for children and teachers.

The phenomenon of dropping out from school can be seen as a reflection of
the failure of the school system to retain children in the school until they complete the
given level of education. The mere provision of a school facility is not adequate. The
school should not only have reasonably good physical infrastructure and committed
teachers, but should also provide an attractive learning environment. After all, there is
a strong positive correlation between the availability of adequate school infrastructure
and infrastructure surrounding the school and enrolments in school, especially of
girls’ children. As mentioned earlier, all these factors are inter-related; for instance,
interest in education can be created by providing a good schooling facility and/or by
enabling the children or parents to demand education by improving their economic conditions and by reducing the need for household expenditure on schooling.

It is commonly known that schools exert considerable influence on the attendance, continuation and performance of the children. Some of the studies have tried to estimate the school influence after controlling for the individual characteristics of students. The children belonging to poorer sections of society are primarily going to the government schools, school quality indicators such as the kind of infrastructure, availability of ancillary facilities like drinking water and toilet, female teachers, regularity, motivation and attitude of the teacher adversely influence the continuation of children in the schools.

The present conditions in elementary schools shows that there are inadequacies even with regard to basic facilities in schools and these are adversely affecting the teaching-learning process. So, Gandhiji views on physical and human resources in schools can help to overcome these problems. Although Gandhiji was of the view that big and expensive buildings are not necessary for educational institutions however he was quite aware about the basic necessities which make the school environment conducive for learning. Acc. to Gandhiji, the school should be located at a place where students would get clean drinking water, pure air and a peaceful atmosphere. The surroundings must be perfectly healthy. Regarding school building, he said that open spaces should be provided for teaching and physical training in form of playgrounds. The optimum number of boys to be admitted to any class should be 30 and the maximum should not in any case exceed 40, the optimum number in the whole school should be 500 while the maximum should not exceed 750. Further, regarding quality education he was of the view that there should be proper provision of sufficient number of teachers who are of high moral character, well trained, well equipped and dedicated to the teaching profession. In tune with Gandhiji’s views on availability of human and physical resources, the NCF-2005 states that it is very important that school teaching and learning take place in an environment that is aesthetically pleasing. It is also essential that children take an active part in creating such an environment for themselves. Similarly, RTE Act, 2009 recommended that special provisions be made with regard to basic facilities in schools
for better teaching-learning environment in terms of availability of teachers and other such required infrastructure.

6.12 RELEVANCE WITH REGARD TO PROVISION OF FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION:

As per the Indian Constitution, the country is committed to provide free and compulsory education to all children up the age of 14. This commitment has been reiterated in all the official documents for more than six decades. NPE (1986) and revised NPE (1992) laid stress on universal access and enrolment, universal retention of children up to 14 years of age; and a substantial improvement in the quality of education to enable all children to achieve essential levels of learning. Efforts have been made to universalize elementary education by initiating several programmes, in order to arrest the dropout of children from schools. However, in spite of all these efforts, the country has not been able to succeed in achieving the desired goals as millions of children are still far away from the ambit of universal elementary education. In such circumstances, Gandhiji views regarding free and compulsory education can prove quite beneficial in providing elementary education to all. He was of the view that this minimum universal education was indispensable to the successful working of democracy in the country. In his opinion, we can postpone the question of higher education for sometime; but the problem of primary education cannot be postponed even for a minute. In his opinion, education is a birthright of every person and therefore, it should be provided to all boys and girls in an organized way on a free and compulsory basis during the formative period of their life. In this matter, no distinction should be allowed in respect of caste, colour, religion or sex. He was of the view that education should be free and it should not be made to depend on money, just as the sun gives light to all equally and rain pours down for all. He was of the view that conditions must be created to enable the poorest Indians to receive the best possible education. Efforts have been made to universalize elementary education by initiating several programmes, in order to arrest the dropout of children from schools. However, in spite of all these efforts, the country has not been able to succeed in achieving the desired goals as millions of children are still far away from the ambit of universal elementary education. In such circumstances, Gandhiji views regarding free
and compulsory education can prove quite beneficial in providing elementary education to all. He was of opinion that this minimum universal education was indispensable to the successful working of democracy in the country. In his opinion, we can postpone the question of higher education for sometime; but the problem of primary education cannot be postponed even for a minute. In his opinion, education is a birth right of every person and therefore, it should be provided to all boys and girls in an organized way on a free and compulsory basis during the formative period of their life. In this matter, no distinction should be allowed in respect of caste, colour, religion or sex. He was of the view that education should be free and it should not be made to depend on money, just as the sun gives light to all equally and rain pours down for all. He was of the view that conditions must be created to enable the poorest Indians to receive the best possible education. But in the present time, one of the emerging problem is degradation of quality education in Government schools. That is the reason that even a poor parent, inspite of finding oneself unable to pay the hefty amount charged by private schools, is interested to get their children admitted in so called public schools. In the light of the importance of the qualitative elementary education in the whole educational pyramid, Gandhiji’s views on free and compulsory education seems to be more pertinent today, as the country is still struggling to achieve its long cherished goal of quality elementary education from the time, he first expressed them in the educational conference in Wardha in 1937.

Realizing the importance of elementary education in line with Gandhiji’s thought, the Tenth-Five Plan (2002-2007) pleaded for the enrolment of all children in all schools until a child completes five years of primary schooling by 2007. Gandhiji’s long felt dream of free and compulsory education materialized when the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act on 13th December 2002 made elementary education a fundamental right for all children in the age group of 6-14 years by inserting of a new Article 21-A in Part III of the Constitution that made Free and Compulsory Education to all children of 6 to 14 years of age a Fundamental Right and this Act came in force from 1st April, 2010 after being passed by Parliament.
6.13 RELEVANCE WITH REGARD TO EQUITY IN EDUCATION:

‘Equal Education for all’ is an essential component for human and sustainable development. A shift from education exclusion of the deprived sections of the society to education inclusion is necessary and need of the hour for socio-cultural and politico-development of the society in all spheres. Equal diffusion of education is essential for the development of an egalitarian society.

Considerable improvements in the number of schools and enrolments have been observed in the last few years. Yet a large number of children are still remained out of school education. The glaring disparities in access and participation in certain section of the population is another problem. The main categories of population that have generally been left out of mainstream education are Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe, Girls, Minorities and Children with disabilities. Therefore, there is a tremendous need in the present context to rectify inequities through their equitour addressal in the policy framework on education.

In context of the above-mentioned problems Gandhiji’s ideas regarding education for all can prove fruitful as he laid stress on the education of all section of society irrespective of caste, colour, creed, sex, region, religion, language etc. He was of the opinion that in order to realize the dream of ‘Ram-Rajya’ there is a need to establish a just social order free from any kind of exploitation and injustice and right kind of education can play an effective role.

Gandhiji tries to synthesize the individual and social aims of education for the betterment of the individual and society as a whole. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, “A nation cannot advance without the units of which it is composed and conversely, an individual cannot advance without the nation of which he a part.” In order to provide education to everyone he was of the view that the gates of knowledge should be open to all without any discrimination. In his opinion, Education should be made available to all. Just as the sun gives light to all equally and rain pours down for all, even so learning must be made available to all.
Giving value to Gandhian ideas on equity in education the NPE (1986), revised NPE (1992) envisaged greater attention to the education of the educationally backward minorities in the interest of equity and social justice. Further, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan initiated in 2002 also stressed a lot on the education of these marginalized sections of society and made many provisions for their inclusion. Similarly, RTE Act, 2009 also laid emphasis that the appropriate Government shall ensure that the child belonging to weaker section and the child belonging to disadvantaged group are not discriminated against and prevented from pursuing and completing elementary education on any grounds. It also ensures and monitors admission, attendance and completion of elementary education by every child and further ensures good quality elementary education conforming to the standards.

6.14 RELEVANCE WITH REGARD TO PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION:

Research in the field of neuroscience found out that early phase of child are globally acknowledged to be the most critical years for lifelong development since the pace of development in these years is extremely rapid. This stage in life is also important as a foundation for the inculcation of social values and personal habits, which are known to last a life time. So, it is of crucial importance to give special attention on the education of early childhood with suitable environment.

The educational significance of this stage is being increasingly realized. Modern researches have shown that the years between three and ten are of the greatest importance in the child’s physical, emotional and intellectual development. It has also been found that children who have been to a pre-primary school show better progress at the primary stage and help in reducing wastage and stagnation. The modern trend in educational policy, therefore, is to emphasize pre-primary education, especially for children with unsatisfactory home backgrounds. Pre school learning is vital component of education, which can go a long way in improving school preparedness of such children, and in bridging the absence of a learning environment at home.

The absence of early childhood care among pre school education among the 3-6 years olds also has implications for primary education. Absence of pre-school learning often tends to lead to poor school participation by the children. Very often,
the first generation learners from very poor families have an inadequate home environment, which cannot provide them with supportive experiences. Household observations in various studies have found little monitoring by parents of children’s activities.

Gandhiji concept of early childhood and care is comprehensive in nature and he was of the opinion that the real education of children begins from conception as the mother begins to take up the responsibility of the child. If a mother is correctly instructed and prepared for the coming responsibility, then that will be the education of the child as well. Acc. to him Pre-Primary Education is essential for compulsory primary education. Adequate and satisfactory provision of pre-primary education is conducive to the effective enforcement of compulsory education. It contributes to its success and will minimize the ‘wastage’ in primary education. Very little attempt was made to develop pre-primary education in India before independence so the Second Wardha Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education (1939) pointed out the necessity of providing model infant and nursery schools at suitable centres.

Gandhiji’s views on pre-primary education are quite relevant in the present circumstances as more than forty percent of children in the relevant age group are out of the reach of ICDS programmes such as Aaganwadis, Balwadis and pre-primary schools. If such a large chunk of children population remained out of mainstream of pre-primary education then this will hinder the progress of first generation of learners as the age about 3 to 6 is the most impressionable period of children’s growth and the foundation of future adult personality are laid down in these impressionable years. Therefore, it is quite necessary to provide pre-primary education in a country like India where more than thirty-seven percent of population is living below the poverty line according to the latest figures of the Planning Commission. The point, that pre-primary education helps in effective transition of children to elementary level also highlight the importance of education at this stage. In line with Gandhiji’s ideas regarding pre-primary education, the Education Commission (1964-66) also stressed the importance of pre-primary education in these words, “Pre-primary education is of great significance to the physical, emotion and intellectual development of the
children, especially those with unsatisfactory home backgrounds.” Similarly, the NPE (1986) by recognizing the holistic nature of child, viz., nutrition, health and social, mental, physical, moral and emotional development also emphasized the importance of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and investment in the development of young child, particularly children from sections of the populations in which first generation learners predominate. Realizing the importance of pre-primary education, NCF-2005 also advocated that greater attention needs to be paid to the development of pre-primary education and there should be expansion of early childhood care and development activities especially for poor disadvantaged and disabled children, through a multi-pronged effort involving families, communities and appropriate institutions. In line with Gandhiji’s ideas on pre-primary education, the RTE Act, 2009 also advocated the need of early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years and recommended that the appropriate Government may make necessary arrangement for providing free pre-school education. Similarly, the National Advisory council has HRD ministry to examine bringing pre-school learning under the purview of ‘Right to Education Act’ to “ensure continuity in the child’s education”.

6.15 RELEVANCE WITH REGARD TO HEALTH, HYGIENE AND NUTRITION:

The problem of malnutrition is a matter of national shame. Despite impressive growth in our GDP, the level of under-nutrition in the country is unacceptably high. We have also not succeeded in reducing this rate fast enough. Hunger and deprivation affect about 260 million people in the country. India is home to 40% of the world’s underweight children and ranks 126 out of 177 countries in the UNDP Human Development Index. The HUNGAMA Survey reports revealed high levels of malnutrition among children and also observed that 42% of our children are still underweight.

The country is also the home to the largest number of poor and malnourished people in the world and it is quite difficult to reduce to half by the year 2015 as expected under U.N. MDGs. Pinpointing the dismal state of health and nutrition in Indian children, a UNICEF report says that the country has a whopping 61 million
stunted children, the largest in any country. In other words, 3 out of 10 stunted children are from India distantly followed by China that has 12 million children.

Recent evidence has shown that most poor children are malnourished and have no access to safe water, sanitation and health care, leading to frequent bouts of illness like infections, stubborn coughs and cold and other chronic illnesses. An overwhelming proportion of children in government schools are from poor situations; poor nutrition and frequent bouts of illnesses affect the ability of children to attend school regularly.

Various studies show that the nutritional status of children affects their school participation. Many children were reported coming hungry to school and hunger is seen to be major limiting factor responsible for children remaining out of school and also being responsible for low levels of learning within the school. It is clear that a major cause of child absenteeism is health related problems and illness, not to forget the mental and emotional health issues of a child.

Gandhiji was also quite aware to the fact that for education to explore, health is a prerequisite. Therefore, in his scheme of education he gave special emphasis on different aspects like health, hygiene, nutrition and physical exercises. He was of the view that proper nutritional diet be provided to children for their proper growth, which results into their proper education. He himself started serving of mid-day meals in his ashram schools. Gandhiji reminded that everyone should remember that his conception of primary education included the elementary principles of sanitation, hygiene, nutrition, of doing their own work, helping parents at home etc. as the present generation of boys knew no cleanliness, no self-help, and physically unfit. In his views, holistic or integrated health is supreme consideration. Consequently, health of body, mind, and soul should be promoted whenever and wherever possible. But the stimulation should take place in a natural way. Regarding the health of children Gandhiji said, “An important feature of the hygiene and health concern is the free school lunch we offer our children. It is through the school lunch that nutritious food was provided on and it was planned with the active participation of the parents and for this the parents make the most of whatever the environment offers in the way of greens, fats, proteins, etc.
Keeping in mind the ill-health of children especially in Government schools Gandhi’s views on this particular aspect are of utmost importance as poor health leads to less enrolment, retention and low level of learning and this adversely affect the goal of elementary education for all. For maintaining health, he not only advocated on a healthy and nutritious diet and also emphasized the role of exercise in it. According to him, “Exercise is just as essential to mankind as are air, water and food. As food is necessary for the mind as much as for bones and flesh, so also is exercise necessary both for body and mind. If the body has no exercise, it is sickly and, if the mind has none, it is dull.”

In line with Gandhi’s ideas to enhance enrolment, retention and attendance and simultaneously improving nutritional levels among children, the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE) was launched as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on 15th August 1995 and in 2007-08, it was extended to cover children in Upper Primary Classes also. This programme of NP-NSPE clearly falls in line with Gandhi’s ideas on nutritional support to children. Though the Govt. now provides Mid-Day-Meal to all children studying in Govt. and Govt. aided schools up to elementary level but this scheme should be strengthened through proper administration, accountability and transparency and in this the help of local community can be taken. Similarly, the Tenth and Eleventh Five Year Plan schemes of achieving UEE include linkage with poverty alleviation programmes in rural and urban areas, adequate support of the Union Ministry of Health and the state Health Departments for a school health programmes and support from the Department of Women and Child Development for nutrition education.

6.16 RELEVANCE IN TERMS OF EDUCATION FOR PEACE:

Education for peace seeks to nurture ethical development, inculcating the values, attitudes and skills required for living in harmony with oneself and with others, including nature. It embodies the joy of living and personality development with the qualities of love, hope and courage with respect for human rights, justice, tolerance, cooperation, social responsibility, and respect for cultural diversity, in addition to a firm commitment to democracy and non-violent conflict resolution. Equality, Social justice and a concern for non-exploitative relations with the
underprivileged are important aspects of peace education. Education for peace is holistic and it embraces the physical, emotional, intellectual, and social growth of children within a framework of human values. Every culture regards peace as a noble ideal to attain. The need for peace education is compellingly clear in the light of the escalating trends of, and taste for, violence globally, nationally and locally. Education can significantly contribute to the long-term process of building up peace- tolerance, justice, intercultural understanding and civic responsibility. It is a long-term proactive strategy to nurture peaceful persons, who resolve conflicts non-violently. It is a concern cutting across the curriculum and is the concern of all teachers.

Regarding the importance of education for Peace, Gandhiji said, “If we are to teach real peace in this world and if we are to carry on real war against war, we shall have to begin with children; and if they will grow up in their natural innocence, we won’t have to struggle; we won’t have to pass fruitless idle resolutions, but we shall go from love to love and peace to peace, until at last all the corners of the world are covered with that peace and love for which consciously or unconsciously the whole world is hungering.” Schools, while imparting education to all the children, should serve as nurseries of peace to enable children contribute themselves to building a peaceful society. Gandhiji not only advocated for peace-education but also education for peace. The modern society is based on faulty education system. Education has become, “a vested interest and an instrument of exploitation” which is the expression of violence. If we want to promote non-violent culture in society, we must adopt a non-violent educational system. He was of the view that if we want to eliminate communal strife, and international strife, we must start with foundations pure and strong by rearing our younger generation on the education I have adumbrated. That plan springs out of non-violence. Peace is often equated with the absence of violence. To Gandhiji, exploitation was the most familiar and practical form of violence or an individual by the state, a group, another individual, or by machines; on women by men; and on one nation by another. Peace mandates the practice of values such as love, truth, justice, equality, tolerance, harmony, humility, togetherness, and self-control.
Education for peace contextualizes learning. We live in an age of unprecedented violence: locally, nationally, and globally. It is a serious matter that schools, which are meant to be the nurseries of peace, become transmission points for violence. Acc. to study on schools stated that there is a quantum leap in violence in school setting. The words children use are violent. Their tastes and games are violent. Their relationships are violent. The increasing intolerance among the school going students, as manifested in various forms of violence and also the deterioration of many other human values have necessitated us to engage ourselves to promoting peace. The peace among the students is felt more today when children are exposed to the violence born out of human intolerance. The competitive, highly individualistic and nationalistic education given today is a threat to peace at all levels-personal, social and global. Peace may be an important pre-condition for the reform of education.

In the present time, education now has become a vested interest and an instrument of exploitation, which is the expression of violence. If we want to promote non-violent culture in society, we must adopt a non-violent educational system. If we want to eliminate communal strife, and international strife, we must start with foundations pure and strong by rearing our younger generation on the education that springs out of non-violence. To achieve this objective, schools while imparting education to all the children, should serve as nurseries of peace to enable children contribute themselves to building a peaceful society. In the background of such conditions, Gandhiji’s views on peace education as well as education for peace have their own utility and significance in order to establish a non-violent and peaceful global society and for this, we have to start education for peace right from the childhood stage. Various research studies conducted on education for peace, are in tune with Gandhiji’s ideas expressed that education for peace, cutting across diverse curricular areas, should be the primary concern of the teachers and be made the culture of the school. The importance and the relevance of inculcating the value of peace among the students is felt more today in which children are exposed to the violence born out of human intolerance. NCF (2005) also endorses that there is a dire need for education for peace in the fast changing society. The discipline of peace must shape our way of life. For this to happen education has to go beyond the warehousing
of information to a celebration of awareness, which is best facilitated through education for peace.

On the basis of above discussion, it can be said that Gandhiji not only set himself as role model but also influenced the masses with his ideals and approaches to various issues. He followed a realistic approach to education. His educational experiments have been one of the instruments for the realization of his ideal in life. Gandhiji’s philosophy of education is a complete programme of social reconstruction, which appropriately addresses to the needs of the individual and society in the context of social problems of Indian society. The educational system prevalent in present India especially at elementary level bears its roots deep in the educational philosophy of Gandhiji. Gandhiji made a key contribution to Indian education by formulating such a scheme of education, which still has an immense educational implication on the contemporary educational scenario. His thoughts and philosophies especially on education are still pertinent and continue to shape the direction and the future course of many of the new policy formulations.