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A Comparative Study of the theme of Education in *Hind Swaraj and Ignited Minds*

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Abstract:

Education is an important aspect of our society and our nation. In English literature the aspect of education is used in different ways. Sometimes it used as essay, sometimes it used in the novel as system, sometime it used in criticism to criticize the educational system, sometimes someone used it in nonfiction also. In this paper education is the base to evaluate both the nonfictions. The first one *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule* written by Mahatma Gandhi and the second one *Ignited Minds* written by Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam. This paper aims to study comparatively the theme of education in both the selected nonfictional works. The researcher has also tried to find out how it is relevant to the contemporary society.

Key words: Comparative study, education, Nonfiction, Swaraj

Introduction:

Hind Swaraj is written by Mahatma Gandhi, is a non-fictional work. In *Hind Swaraj* Mahatma Gandhi talks about Swaraj (Indian Home Rule) and how India achieves it before nearly hundred years ago. He also talks about the Education, Nonviolence and Patriotism in it, but researcher's objective is to study the theme of education. While *Ignited Minds* is written by the great scientist Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam. It is also a nonfictional work. In *Ignited Minds* Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam shares his message and vision to the people of India and mainly the students and children. In the nonfictional work *Ignited Minds*, researcher's objective is to study the theme of education. Thus, this is an attempt to study comparatively about the theme of Education.

Non-Fiction:

Nonfiction is a broad genre of writing that encompasses all books that aren't rooted in a fictional narrative. Nonfiction writing can be based in history and biography, it can be instructional, it can offer commentary and humour, and it can ponder philosophical questions. In simple term if a book is not rooted in a made-up story, then it is nonfiction.

Literary works of fiction are the works that are not based on only facts. Typically, fiction appears as narrative. In addition to novels, fiction can appear as short stories, poetry, and in theatrical scripts for film, television, and live performance. Nonfiction covers everything else. The contents of nonfiction are rooted in true events, although many nonfiction books offer strongly opinionated commentary of those real events.

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Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule is a nonfictional work. This work is written originally in Gujarati language by M. K. Gandhi and translated into English by M. K. Gandhi himself. This work is in question answer form like interview between the reader and the editor. Reader asks questions and editor gives answers:

Reader: Do you then consider that a desire for Home Rule has been created among us?

Editor: That desire gave rise to the National Congress. The choice of the word “National” implies it.

Above discussion is the example from *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule*. With these types of conversation between Reader and Editor M. K. Gandhi tries to answer the questions related to new India after independence. He talks about many issues like nation, education, home rule, congress, the partition of Bengal, civilization, the condition of India, Railways, Lawyers, Doctors, etcetera.

On the other side Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam's *Ignited Minds* is also a nonfictional work because it talks about the true-life events from Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam. Dr. Kalam discusses contemporary Indian situations of students, teachers, scientist and education.

Above paragraph is taken from *Ignited Minds*. The narration style of Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam in *Ignited Minds* is first person narration. He talks about his life events and experiences related to major incidents took place in his life. So, the whole book is related to true life incidents that's why we can say that it is a nonfictional work.

Theme of Education in *Hind Swaraj*:

M. K. Gandhi talks about the major issues of the Indian nation before independence. *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule* is the book from colonial period. So, it talks about the pre independence issues. But in this paper researchers focuses on the issue of education. Chapter no 18 is Education in the book. In its M. K. Gandhi talks about the meaning of education. According to M. K. Gandhi education simply means a knowledge of letters. It is merely an instrument, and an instrument may be well used or abused. M. K. Gandhi further describes:

M. K. Gandhi says that education is not about the knowledge of letters but it is more than that. He gives the answer related to the question of higher and lower education with that one makes use of the education he has received. He is making good use of it. It is not necessary this use is for millions. According to him:

Saarth

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Then the reader asks the question about the necessity of English education. The editor answers that it is yes and no. According to him to give millions a knowledge of English is to enslave them. He further says the foundation that Macaulay laid of education has enslaved us. Then he says about our condition of English language:

We write to each other in faulty English, and from this even our M.A.s are not free; our best thoughts are expressed in English; the proceeding of our Congress are conducted in English; our best newspapers are printed in English.

This is the situation of English language during colonial period. Now in modern era the situation is changed English language is become more useful and worldly language. He says:

We are so much beset by the disease of civilization that we cannot altogether do without English education. ... those who have studied English will have to teach morality to their progeny through their mother-tongue and to teach them another Indian language.

Reader asks what education shall we give. The Editor replies that those English books which are valuable, we should translate into the various Indian languages.

Theme of Education in *Ignited Minds*:

Ignited Minds is a postcolonial Indian English nonfictional work. In this nonfictional work Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam deliberates contemporary educational system. He says that education and the teacher-student relationship have to be seen not in business terms but with the nation's growth in mind.

A proper education would help nurture a sense of dignity and self-respect among our youth. These are qualities no law can enforce-they have to be nurtured ourselves.

Under the sub-point 'Learning from Saints and Seers'. Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam discusses the system of spiritual education. He first discusses some of the important view points of Science and the Earth then he connects it with spiritual education. He says:

Saarth

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Most of these places were new to me and offered me the chance to learn more about certain things I had always been interested in but could not explore—such as the world of saints and seers. I saw a diverse range of activities being carried out in the spiritual centres I visited. At one, it was the value-based education being provided that impressed me. At another place, an attempt was being made to integrate ancient science with modern and Sanskrit documents were being studied to gauge the progress made in earlier times.

Abdul Kalam describes so many experiences of his scientific educational life. He relates it to the education system and management of the educational institutions. According to him:

Knowledge, though closely linked to education, comes equally from learning skills such as those possessed by our artist, craftsmen, hakims, vaidyas, philosophers and saints, as also our housewives.

In the different occasions in the book *Ignited Minds*, Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam discusses education and healthcare. He says that education would result in the creation of a large base of people who excel in various fields as well, an invaluable resource for any country. As compared to Mahatma Gandhi's education thinking we can say that Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam was the follower of Mahatma Gandhi's ideology. In his book *Ignited Minds*, Dr. Kalam uses many quotations from Mahatma Gandhi. The educational system was different during that time, but the base of the thinking process of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam were same.

Conclusion:

Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, both these personalities have played important roles in building of our nation. They both have their own areas of interest but when we talk about education, we can find the similarity in them. They both are visionary personalities. Because both of them discusses education and Indian education system with their own ideas and thoughts. Mahatma Gandhi talks about the education during colonial period with visionary thinking. One of the examples is education of English language in India. He didn't deny it but he didn't fully accept it too. This shows us how visionary he was.

Saarth

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On other side Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam put emphasis on skill-based education and connects it with our ancient education system. He discusses the health care with education so we can understand his visionary thinking in these COVID-19 pandemic situations. Both the writers connect modern education with ancient education. This is also the base of NEP-2020.

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