



LIBERTY AND EQUALITY IN EDUCATION: EXPLORING THE VISION OF TAGORE, GANDHI, NODDINGS AND WOLLSTONECRAFT

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



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Abstract

This paper analyzes the educational ideas of Tagore, Gandhi, Noddings and Wollstonecraft in context of liberty and equality in education. Each thinker has a different background and period of focus, but at the core of their philosophies, they all appreciate the role of education in improving individual freedom and social justice. This paper sets out to examine the gaps in the education system when compared to the social reality and the commonalities of these thinkers. Tagore urges to pursue self-expression, but along with that, he reminds us to be deeply curious toward nature. Gandhi, on the other hand, gives priority to the moral and spiritual development of a self-sustained community. Noddings as well argues for a caring approach towards education, as one that promotes advancement that also enables caring for others and not just oneself. Wollstonecraft fights against denial of education to women and gender-based discrimination and seeks to elevate women by granting them equal education. This paper uses the information from these readings to show how their ideas came together with liberty and equality and shed light on how they were critical of the existing systems of education. The insights shared by these thinkers can indeed help solve the issues of justice and dignity of human beings from the perspective of the changing systems of education.

Keywords: *Educational philosophy, Liberty, Equality, Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, Nel Noddings, Mary Wollstonecraft*

Introduction

Liberty and equality are the foundational principles that shape both educational philosophy and practice. In education, liberty denotes the freedom to seek knowledge, foster one's imagination, and express oneself without any undue constraints or oppressive control. This emphasizes autonomy, personal choice and the freedom for one to intellectually and creatively engage. However, with equality in education, there is an attempt to eliminate factors that impede learning and therefore, all people regardless of their gender, ethnicity, social class and any other such factors have the chance to make something of themselves and succeed (Rawls, 1971).

The ongoing debate on liberty and equality in education is very much a live debate owing to the contributions made by Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, Nel Noddings and Mary Wollstonecraft. Tagore (1917) advocated for preserving nature in educating children because of his obsession with nature and wanted a world which gives full scope to children to express themselves. Gandhi (1950) proposed an emphasis on moral and spiritual education but with a particular focus on self and community rather than on competitive individualism. Noddings (1984) in her ethics of care brought attention to caring relations as important in education and claimed this as another aspect of equality in caring, fostering and emotions. Wollstonecraft (1792), an early feminist, focused on education and posited that it should not be dictated by prejudice. He argued that women should be afforded an education that empowers them socially and politically.

Even with the diversity in culture as well as history, these thinkers managed to present important criticisms against the standard education system. Each one of them provided a different yet interrelated approach to how education could be framed in terms of liberty and equality, including the principles of freedom, justice, and human dignity.

Methodology

This research utilizes a qualitative method based on a literature review. It comprehensively analyzes literature on educational philosophers and contributors such as Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, Nel Noddings and Mary Wollstonecraft. By

detecting, evaluating, and integrating core concepts and themes from the literature, the study investigates the historical and contemporary relevance of their educational influence, both in isolation and in collaboration.

Literature Review

Bergman, R. (2004) conducted a study on “Caring for the Ethical Ideal: Nel Noddings and Moral Education”. The study focused on topics such as the ethical self, evil, and aspiration, Noddings’ approach to moral education and its peculiarities in practice. The study grasped Noddings’ texts and assessed her philosophy and development of her moral education theory through interpretive examination. The examined philosophy applied by Noddings seems to be compassionate and her approach is removed from standard, rule-based frameworks. She emphasized ethical self and moral reflection, which, in turn, produced a vision of moral education that encompassed self-knowledge, empathy, and societal problem confrontation.

Halldenus, L. (2007) explored “The Primacy of Right: On the Triad of Liberty, Equality and Virtue in Wollstonecraft’s Political Thought”, to analyse the moral and social liberty intersection in the works of Mary Wollstonecraft. The study proved that the democracy of virtue rests on the idea of duty and moral action as a right. According to Wollstonecraft, there are two interrelated types of liberty: moral liberty, or the capacity to make one’s own decisions, and social liberty, or the ability to be free from arbitrary authority. She maintained that moral liberty and virtue depend on social liberty and that virtue was a mentality based on the right to liberty and directed by universal compassion.

DeNicola, D. R. (2011) investigated the liberal education argument, specifically Nel Noddings’ critiques, in “Friends, Foes, and Nel Noddings on Liberal Education”. This study addressed the dangers of departmentalism and specialization. While defending liberal education as a dynamic and changing institution. The study used Noddings’ articles i.e. ‘Conversation as Moral Education’, for critique and analysed in order to emphasized her position on the shortcomings of conventional education. Although the study accepted Noddings’ legitimate concerns, particularly those about specialization and moral detachment. It contended that these failed to take into account how liberal education was changing. The study came to the conclusion that the argument over liberal education was nuanced and influenced by both arguments for and against it.

Karmakar, R., Balari, P., & Das, N. (2012) did a study titled “Educational Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and Its Relevance in the Present Educational Scenario”. The objective was to investigate Gandhi’s educational theory and determine its relevance today. The study, which relied on secondary data, discovered that Gandhiji’s educational concepts, notably his emphasis on craft education, holistic development, self-reliance, and moral growth, are still relevant in tackling modern educational difficulties such as unemployment and the need for pragmatic solution.

Onotani, K. (2012) carried out a study on “Considering the central ideas of the ethics of care in N. Noddings’ Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics & Moral Education”. This study examined Nel Noddings’ ethics of care, focusing on her concepts of engrossment, emotional attachment, and moral reasoning in caregiving. A conceptual analysis was used, drawing from Noddings’ works on care and related philosophical texts. Findings showed that Noddings emphasized emotional connection in caregiving, advocating for personal decisions rather than universal moral rules. However, her rejection of universal moral values led to inconsistencies, limiting objective evaluation of caregiving. The study emphasized a more balanced approach, combining subjective feelings and objective actions for a comprehensive understanding of care.

Coffee, A. (2013) did a study on “Mary Wollstonecraft, freedom and the enduring power of social domination”. This paper explored Wollstonecraft’s view of freedom as independence from arbitrary power. Specially focused on how members of previously oppressed groups like women, continue to face restrictions on their freedom even after formal exclusion ends. Critical review, historical and contemporary applications were used. The findings revealed that Mary Wollstonecraft argued domination persists even after legal exclusion, mainly when rooted in societal norms and prejudices. Wollstonecraft also emphasized the need for citizens to have both political rights and a platform to express their perspectives and ensuring true independence from arbitrary power.

Bracewell, L. (2013) conducted a study titled “How Deep is Wollstonecraft’s Democracy? Sexuality and the Political Theory of Mary Wollstonecraft”. He suggested that Wollstonecraft’s limiting views on sexuality hampered the democratic potential of her political philosophy. This paper emphasized into her works like, *Mary, A Fiction*, and *Maria or The Wrongs of Woman*, as well as *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, to see how her views on sexuality related to political, social, and economic equality. The findings highlighted that her views on private morality and procreative partnerships damaged the democratic parts of her thinking, which were frequently neglected in modern interpretations.

Devi, T. (2015) studied “Relevance of Gandhian idea of economic equality”, to examined Gandhi’s strategies for attaining economic equality and evaluated their applicability and pertinence in the twenty first century. Gandhi’s emphasis on economic equality remains significant, according to the study, which was based on secondary evidence and qualitative examination. His focused-on meeting fundamental needs as a starting point for social engagement, supporting small businesses and encouraging rural growth, which is still pertinent today. The work also provided insightful information about economic fairness and local empowerment.

Upadhyaya, A. U. (2015) explored “Tagore and Gandhi: Their noble debate”. The paper investigated the intellectual and ideological differences and similarities between Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore. The study focused on their philosophical approaches to education, independence, and social reform, emphasizing their ‘noble debate’ despite their differing views. Using a descriptive approach, it explored their disagreements on topics like the boycott of foreign cloth, non-cooperation, education, and the caste system. The findings highlighted their mutual respect with Tagore’s advocating for intellectual freedom, particularly in education. And both leaders aiming to free education from colonial influence. The debate between them exemplified mutual respect and intellectual growth.

Bernath, E. (2016) conducted a study titled “Women, Education and the Material Body Politic in Mary Wollstonecraft’s ‘Vindications’”. This study examined on Wollstonecraft’s materialism and the need of education for women’s logical development. With a focused on Wollstonecraft’s feminist position for women’s inclusion in the intellectual and economic spheres. The study adopted an analytical approach. In order to enhance women’s capacity for thinking and promote economic development, she suggested a practical education method.

Tribhuwan, M.M. (2016) did a study called “Comparative Analysis of Gender Discourses: Mary Wollstonecraft’s A Vindication of the Rights of Women and Simone de Beauvoir’s The Second Sex”. The study aimed to examine the feminist writings of de Beauvoir and Wollstonecraft, emphasizing their philosophical underpinnings, sociopolitical contexts and their views on gender, oppression, and liberation. Although both de Beauvoir’s existentialist feminism and Wollstonecraft’s liberal feminism have been critiqued for their little attention to intersectionality. The study highlighted both of their significant contributions to feminist philosophy. While acknowledging the need for more inclusive tactics, the research emphasized their ongoing significance in modern feminism.

Halldenius, L. (2017) carried out a study titled “Mary Wollstonecraft and Freedom as Independence”. He examined how Wollstonecraft integrated female concepts into her republican conception of freedom, redefining it as the capacity to act rationally. The study concludes that Wollstonecraft’s concept of freedom is relational, based on the absence of dominance, and allows individuals to act in a reasonable manner. This concept of freedom impacted her advocacy for gender equality in civil society, where she campaigned for equal rights for men and women.

Parathara, T. J., & George, J. (2018) conducted a study on “Mahatma Gandhi’s views on man and humanity”. This study looked at Mahatma Gandhi’s ideas about the inherent goodness of people, his key beliefs about non-violence, satyagraha, and sarvodaya, and how moral and immoral cultures relate to one another in order to create a sustainable, peaceful society. The study, which mostly employed qualitative methodologies, examined Mahatma Gandhi’s teachings and writings in order to analyse Gandhian philosophy. Books, journals, and articles were used as secondary sources as well. According to the results, Gandhi supported the idea that people are inherently good and that truth is the path to self-realization. Gandhis’ ideology was centred on fostering sustainability, non-violence and peace. While co-existing peacefully with the environment and other people.

Saxena, U. (2018) carried out a study on “Scripting of women: In the writing of Rabindranath Tagore”. The study focused on feminist ideas like freedom, equality and rights, while analysed how women were portrayed and empowered in Tagore’s writings. Through content analysis of works, such as Strir Patra, Kabuliwaala and Chokher Bali, the study examined Tagore’s representation of women in the setting of 19th century Bengal. This paper highlighted that Tagore’s feminist theory, which supported women’s equality and empowerment was innovative for its time. The report emphasized that despite advancements, further societal change is necessary and the media is crucial in fostering women’s active roles and breaking stereotypes.

Senti, N. (2018) conducted a study titled “Principle of social equality portrayed in Rabindranath Tagore’s short stories”. This paper looked at the pattern of social equality concept was reflected in Tagore’s short work. The study used a qualitative literacy analysis of few selected short stories to examine issues of social equality and caste-based prejudice. The findings illustrated Tagore’s critique of social justice, mainly in relation to the rigid caste system. According to inquiry, Tagore’s stories advocated for social equality and treating everyone fairly regardless of their gender, religious beliefs and colour.

Balhara, A., & Sehrawat, P. (2019) carried out a study titled “A study based on Mahatma Gandhi’s life philosophy, Educational philosophy and importance of his Aims and Ideals of Education in building the Nation”. The study focused on Gandhi’s educational theories, content analysis of his writings and the role of education in fostering national development through qualitative research. The findings emphasized Gandhi’s belief that education is crucial for character development, social and economic progress. He envisioned women’s education, adult education, rural education and primary education on a Sarvodaya society.

Bhattacharyya, N. (2019) conducted a study on “The concepts of ideal state and freedom in Gandhi’s philosophy and underlying relation”. The study focused on Gandhi’s ideas on social, political and economic harmony in order to analyse the relationship between freedom and the ideal state in his philosophy. It also assessed how Gandhi’s ideas such as Swaraj, Sarvodaya, non-violence and individual freedom, remain relevant in the modern world. The study emphasized on harmony and individual well being connected to the welfare of others, with freedom founded on obligations rather than rights.

Hirschmann, N. J., & Regier, E. F. (2019) explored “Mary Wollstonecraft, Social Constructivism, and the Idea of Freedom”, to look at how women’s identities and aspirations for subordination are shaped by patriarchal society and how Wollstonecraft dealt with these limitations. The study highlighted that Wollstonecraft found it difficult to completely imagine women’s liberation from all the limitations they faced. She sought to alter the ways that gender, family and identity were defined rather than focusing solely on changing women or male dominated systems.

Rai, N. (2019) critically examined “Rabindranath Tagore: Nation and Nationalism”, to explore Tagore’s ideas on nationalism. The study employed a qualitative, historical and comparative techniques. The findings showed that Tagore’s cosmopolitan nationalist ideology valued equality, humanism and cultural harmony over exclusive pride. He condemned colonialism and nationalism that prioritized social justice, cross cultural exchange and international collaboration. These things collectively fostered a broader understanding of national identity.

Deb, P. R. (2021) has conducted a study on “Educational philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and its present-day implications”. Examining the fundamental concepts of Gandhi’s educational philosophy and determining their applicability in the contemporary world were the objectives of this study. The findings demonstrated that Gandhi’s educational system promoted students’ overall physical, intellectual and moral growth despite its strong cultural ties to India. The study suggested that Gandhi’s educational ideas are still relevant today, mainly when it comes to their emphasis on moral principles, skills and the formation of responsible citizens.

Effendie, H. P (2021) analysed “Freedom domination of Rabindranath Tagore’s freedom poetry: A postcolonial approach”, the study focused on postcolonialism and India’s struggle for independence. The study employed a qualitative approach, analysing Tagore’s works related to freedom and nationalism through a postcolonial lens. Findings showed that Tagore’s poetry critiqued colonialism, stressing the urgency of India’s independence. His works advocated for human rights, independence, and self-determination, promoting a vision of nationalism rooted in peace, tolerance, and freedom from imperialism. Tagore’s poetry conveyed a message of national awakening and spiritual and cultural renewal, emphasizing universal human rights in a postcolonial context.

Holt, J. P. (2021) examined “Wollstonecraft’s feminist virtue ethics: Friendship and the good society”. This paper argued that Mary Wollstonecraft developed a modern feminist version of virtue ethics and analysed her works in relation to Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics. The study emphasized Wollstonecraft’s argument for women’s equality and its integration into broader political, social, and economic discussions. The findings suggested that her feminist virtue ethics differed from classical ideas by including women, asserting that a good society and the pursuit of virtue could only be achieved with equality for both men and women.

Mandal, P. (2021) conducted a study on titled “Educational Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and its Relevancy in Present Society”. Gandhi’s life philosophy, his educational approaches and cultural significance were all examined in the study through secondary sources. The findings showed that Gandhi’s educational theory is still applicable today and serves as the foundation for the development of the country. His ideas provide a timeless foundation for educational and cultural transformation.

Nanda, D., & Gandhi, D. (2021) explored “Rabindranath Tagore: Myriad interpretations of freedom”. They studied Tagore’s writings on the subject of freedom, specifically Chokher Bali, Gora, and Ghare-Baire, to understand how these works depicted freedom via character development and personal progress. The study employed textual analysis. The results highlighted that Tagore had a complex idea of freedom that included spiritual enlightenment, national emancipation, and individual liberty. His perspective on freedom was moulded by his Brahmo upbringing, which combined traditional Hindu ideals with contemporary reformist beliefs. In order to combat religious and political extremism and advance a freedom that cut across national boundaries, cultural boundaries, and religious beliefs, Tagore’s worldview combined Eastern and Western values. His philosophy of freedom placed a strong emphasis on universalism, humanism, and education as essential components of both societal and personal liberty.

Phukan, K. T. (2021) carried out a study on “The Educational Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and Its Necessity in the Present Context”. The study focused on the relevance of Gandhi’s educational philosophy in contemporary society. The applicability of Mahatma Gandhi’s educational philosophy in the modern world was examined in this study. With the use of secondary data and literature review, the researcher was able to conclude that Gandhian principles can also be utilized for nation-building that is deeply needed today. His theory, despite the criticism regarding language, physical education, and technology, explains modern issues such as unemployment and moral decline. The findings also posited that Gandhi’s educational philosophy is central to societal and educational reforms.

Singh, M. (2021) examined “A portrayal of nationalism in Rabindranath Tagore’s Gora”, to investigate how the character Gora represented rising nationalism in India during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, alongside themes of self-discovery, religious universality, and humanism. The findings revealed that Gora, initially a nationalist fighting for India’s freedom, evolves beyond religious and caste divisions through his journey of self-discovery. The novel emphasized that true patriotism and religion are universal and not bound by caste or creed. ‘Anandmoyi’, symbolizing ‘Mother India’, represented love, compassion, and

acceptance of all religions. Tagore critiqued sectarianism and advocated for an inclusive, compassionate vision of India free from divisions.

Thakar, R. J., & Singh, R. (2021) analysed “Mary Wollstonecraft’s view on patriarchal society in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*”. The main focus was on how Wollstonecraft took a radical step in challenging the socio-political norms of her time by advocating for women’s education at all levels of society. The analysis proved that although her writings were not well regarded at the time, they were seminal works of feminism and deeply influenced the later generations. The paper suggested that there is need to re-evaluate and give greater recognition to her life at the expense of her personal life as her ideas on women’s education and equality remains greatly relevant even today.

Zhang, Y., & Zheng, M. (2021) examined “Noddings’ Caring Education Theory and its enlightenment to school education”. This study examined Noddings’ Caring Education Theory, its effect on teacher-student relationships, and its implications for modern education. The study utilized a qualitative approach and bibliographic research method, drawing from Noddings’ works as well as secondary sources like research papers and academic articles. Findings indicated that Noddings’ Caring Education Theory stressed fostering caring relationships between teachers and students, promoting mutual respect and empathy. And the curriculum was designed to nurture moral values and love, offering valuable insights for improving teacher-student interactions and reducing competitive pressures in education.

Almassi, B. (2022) explored “Nontoxic: Masculinity, Allyship, and Feminist Philosophy”. This study promoted alternative models, particularly ‘allyship masculinity’, and examined toxic masculinity as a critical lens through which to examine normative masculinity. It examined the differences between males and created a model of masculinity that defies conventional wisdom by utilizing intersectionality and a feminist viewpoint. The results underlined the necessity for a pluralistic, intersectional approach. Also showed that toxic masculinity could undermine cultural expectations. The chapter made the case that masculinity shouldn’t be viewed as a single standard and emphasized the significance of redefining masculinity to include non-binary, feminine, and queer masculinities in order to prevent gender inequality from being reinforced.

Ram, M. (2022) explored “Mahatma Gandhi’s Thoughts and Its Reflection on Indian School Education”. The main goal of this study was to examine Gandhi’s educational ideology and its impact on Indian education system. Historical methodology, secondary data were used. The findings emphasized Gandhi’s educational philosophy, which included honesty, non-violence and vocational training. Gandhi’s theories influenced significant aspects of Indian education, such as women education, adult education, secularism and fostered moral development.

Reang, J. J. (2022) conducted a study on “A Study of Nel Noddings Theory with Special Reference to Life, Work and The Ethics of Care”. The study focused on Noddings contributions to the field of education’s ethics of care. It employed a philosophical methodology to examine primary data from Noddings’ writings and speeches in addition to secondary data from research papers and journals. The findings showed that Noddings placed a strong emphasis on the value of fostering an environment, where kids feel free, cared and loved by their teachers.

Sawhney, U. (2022) explored “Feminism in ‘Where the Mind is Without Fear’ by Rabindranath Tagore”. This paper investigated the ways in which Rabindranath Tagore’s poem ‘Where the Mind is Without Fear’. The poem promotes the advancement and empowerment of Indian women. By relating the poem’s themes of freedom, education, and social change to current feminist ideas, the study used qualitative analysis to investigate the poem’s sociopolitical implications for women’s rights. The poem emphasized the value of education in attaining social and economic equality, according to the findings. The study determined that the poem’s ideal can only be realized when societal views about women are drastically changed, notwithstanding the fact that women still face obstacles to empowerment despite India’s independence.

Tiwari, R. M. (2022) analysed “Tagore’s Universal Greatness of Humanity”. The study concentrated on Tagore’s social philosophy, highlighting the significance of the individual in society and his support for social justice and the well-being of all. Tagore’s humanism, it was discovered the interdependence of people and society by emphasizing selfless service to the impoverished and downtrodden. His universalism, which has love for humanity as its central tenet, called for working to serve the common good in order to embody the ideal of humanity.

Ade, v.v., & Belokar, R. (2023) carried out a study on “Mahatma Gandhi’s Philosophy on Education”. This study examined Mahatma Gandhi’s educational philosophy and the layout of his educational system using secondary sources, such as government documents, scholarly works, and census data. The findings showed that the main goal of Gandhi’s educational philosophy was to produce self-sufficient individuals in communities that were cooperative. Gandhi’s theories, which placed a strong focus on informal education, gave self-control, independence and experiential learning top priority. By encouraging cooperation and strong bonds between educators and learners, the approach aided Gandhi’s goal of both individual and group growth.

Adhikari, A., Saha, B., & Sen, S. (2023) investigated “Nel Noddings’ Theory of Care and its ethical components”, to explore how interpersonal relationships were positioned at centre of morality in Noddings’ ethics of care. The findings highlighted the providing care necessitated for both empathy and reasoned judgement. It also emphasized promoting respect for one another and

moral development for both the caregiver and cared person. Here care was mentioned as more than just a practice. It was the cornerstone of moral behaviour, guaranteeing that actions aligned with the welfare of others.

Adhikari, A., Saha, B. (2023) conducted a study on “The three epochs of education: Outlining Mary Wollstonecraft, Maria Montessori and Nel Noddings”. This study examined Mary Wollstonecraft, Maria Montessori and Nel Noddings’ educational contributions, along with their effects on women education, ethics and child care. The educational ideologies of these significant educators were examined by using a comparative historical method and secondary sources. The findings showed that Noddings created the ‘ethics of care’, focused on relational ethics in education. Wollstonecraft addressed societal inequalities in education, which sparked continuous conversations. And Montessori introduced Montessori Method, which emphasized experiential learning. Their contributions still have an impact on discussions about women education, morality and child care.

Ansary, K., Pal, I., & Sutradhar, S. M. (2023) conducted a study on “For the urge of a better future: A study on the great educators”. The paper examined the various educational ideas of notable eastern and western educators. The Study used comparative method to analyse the data. It was discovered that western education placed more emphasis on practical knowledge, individual rights and the empowerment of excluded groups. Whereas eastern education frequently placed more emphasis on moral ideas and spiritual growth. Irrespective of these distinctions, the two traditions were united in their pursuit of more equitable and better society. And they gradually influenced one another to advance social progress and human advancement.

Basu, D. (2023) examined “Rabindranath Tagore and his perception regarding Human Rights and Women Empowerment”, investigated Tagore’s revolutionary contribution to women’s empowerment through his artistic pursuits. Using a qualitative approach, the study examined Tagore’s writings and personal story. The findings demonstrated that Tagore significantly advanced women’s rights and empowerment by portraying women as intellectual, independent beings. His writings challenged social norms and envisioned a world free of slavery, as did the examples set by the ladies in his family. Tagore’s feminist ideas have influenced the field of women’s empowerment for generations and continue to do so now.

Nair, K. S., & Balakrishnan, K. (2023) carried out a study called “Anticipation of Feminism in Rabindranath Tagore’s Works: An Analysis of Selected Short Stories”. This paper showed how Tagore’s short stories were pivoting towards gender equality and feministic ideas during an era where feminism was not widely known. A selection of five stories by Tagore, Exercise-book, Profit and Loss, Giribala, Judge, and Skeleton, were analysed using multi-pronged methods. These pieces shattered the social set within which women were suppressed and sought to discuss important women issues such as freedom, equality, education, and emancipation from the dowry system. Tagore’s progressive ideals in regard to women’s emancipation placed him as one of the key figures in the feminist movement and his stories serve as motivation towards achieving gender equality.

Rayees, A., & Dar, R. (2023) conducted a study on “Educational philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and his educational relevance to the contemporary world”. This research was founded on idealism, naturalism, and pragmatism, investigated Gandhi’s ideals through a qualitative examination of his teachings. The study discovered that Gandhi’s theory of holistic development, which emphasizes moral principles, self-reliance, and lifelong learning, provides useful insights for modern education and meets current difficulties.

Tripathi, A. (2023) explored “An early voice of girl’s education and rationality: Mary Wollstonecraft”. This article focused on Mary Wollstonecraft’s progressive ideals from the 18th century, namely her views on women’s education and empowerment. The study employed a comparative methodology to examine Wollstonecraft’s educational thought within her historical setting and contrast it with contemporary systems. The results showed that her theories were progressive and still applicable today, particularly in the areas of gender equality and education. Her support of coeducation, women’s education, modernized curricula, and extracurricular activities had a big impact on current educational reforms.

Verma, R. K., 7 Tripathi, A. (2023) conducted a study on “Relevance of Mahatma Gandhi’s Thoughts on Education in Present Times”. The purpose of this study was to investigate Gandhi’s contribution to education and on society. A historical method was adopted to study primary and secondary materials. The findings demonstrated that Gandhi’s belief that education was crucial to both personal growth and the advancement of the country. With a focus on character development, Gandhi’s worldview tackled societal problems including moral degradation, unemployment and inequality.

Ammarul, M. (2024) examined “Exploring the educational contributions of Nel Noddings”. Nel Noddings’ educational philosophy and her idea of Ethics of Care in education were the main subject of this paper. Qualitative approach was applied to study the primary and secondary sources. The findings showed that Noddings drew attention to social inequalities that impact education and underlined the necessity of teachers pursuing self-education in order to properly teach care. She emphasized on promoting pleasure in the classroom.

Ansary, M. S., Parween, S., Mahato, I., Ojha, M., & Swain, P. (2024) conducted a study on “Gender Equality in the Context of Tagorean Thoughts and Practices: An Assessment”. The paper aimed to assess Tagore’s involvement in the fight against gender discrimination through qualitative study. The analysis was done on Tagore and Visva-Bharati materials, thus collecting both

primary and secondary data. These findings posit that the educational reforms put forward by Tagore at Visva-Bharati and his writings greatly shifted the attitude towards gender equality and have impacted the modern world immensely.

Baruah, M. (2024) conducted a study on “Rabindranath Tagore’s concept of political freedom”. In his paper, his research focused on Rabindranath Tagore and his understanding of Autonomy. Tagore’s views on surrender were analysed using Tagore’s monologue on Indian self-governance as a case study. Every country’s political structure is defined by the philosophies of the self-improvement and self-liberation of the people, both on a personal level and on a collective level, which is the main argument every political philosophy should centre on. The conclusions emphasized the concept of Tagore’s spiritual and self-fulfilling advancement of the nation against colonial and internal supersession.

Das (Chakraborty), R. (2024) carried out a study titled “Rabindranath Tagore and his ideas of nationalism”. The paper examined Tagore’s unique perspective on nationalism and highlighted his advocacy of a more inclusive, culturally grounded, humanistic approach. The study used an interpretive and comparative approach. According to the findings, Tagore distinguished his view of nationalism from Gandhi’s by denouncing it as exclusive and driven by western capitalism. Tagore emphasized spirituality, teamwork and human values in order to advance an inclusive society.

Das, P. K. (2024) studied “Rabindranath Tagore: The voice of Swadeshi Spirit”, which highlighted Tagore’s life during the struggle for independence and how he contributes towards carving the India’s cultural landscape. Some important aspects of Nationalism and Swadeshi movement were found out by studying Tagore’s literacy works, Tagore’s art significantly shaped the nationalist consciousness in India, which makes him relevant in today’s debates on nationalism and India’s socio-cultural development.

Nagar, A. (2024) studied “Feminism in Tagore’s Gitanjali: A comparative analysis with western feminist notions”. The study was primarily focused on gender politics and Tagore’s criticism of patriarchal structures within Indian Society. The study utilized a careful reading and comparative analysis approach to discuss the feminist notions of Tagore and how Gitanjali looks at the spirituality and the place of women in society. Tagore’s feminism supports western feminism, patriarchy was questioned and the wisdom of women was celebrated. The Gitanjali lingers on and continues to the society for gender justice and equality.

Najar, P.A. (2024) carried out a study on “Educational Thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi and Its Futuristic Relevance- A Study”. This study focused on Mahatma Gandhi’s educational ideology and its applicability in modern life. The study gathered data through qualitative methods from books, research articles and other papers. The findings analysed Gandhi’s ‘Nai Tamil’ that centred on holistically evolving a child through experiential learning and self-realization. While some challenges existed in its implementation, his theories still seem to provide solutions for contemporary social and economic problems. Gandhi’s ideology blended democracy, non-violence and all-encompassing system of education which helped cope up with new issues like social turbulence and job scarcity.

Singh, G. (2024) conducted a study on “Concept of Human Rights: Western Perspective Vis-à-vis Indian Perspective”. The paper favoured the Indian sociological approach that is community based and socially anchored as opposed to the Western focus which is individualistic and state centric. The study focused on essential socio-political and cultural differences and how them in religion and culture enabled distinct Indian approach to human rights. The findings proved that the Indian humanity view is fundamentally communitarian in nature and the state is only one of the many actors unlike the western phenomenon where rights are regarded as state based and individualistic. India did not lose its national character in legal provisions which subordinated individual liberty to social ideals though it accepted some elements of the western legal system.

Conclusion

The pursuits of freedom and equality by societies have been profoundly explained by the ideas provided by Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, Nel Noddings and Mary Wollstonecraft. All these thinkers belonged to different civilizations and eras, but each of them possessed a moral code rooted in humanity, justice and freedom. While their approaches differ, all of them highlighted the struggle between individual liberty, social responsibility and existing societal order.

- **Rabindranath Tagore: Spiritual Liberty and Inclusive Nationalism**

In Tagore’s view, liberty constitutes spiritual freedom alongside political and social liberties. He encouraged love, compassion and acceptance during a time where competitive humanism, caste tribalism and nationalism tore society apart. Tagore advocated for freedom in a way that compelled the self and society as a whole to embrace it and his idealism is incredibly difficult to accept. Unfortunately, in order for this to be a reality, an immense transformation was necessary and did not arise within the duration of his lifetime.

- **Mahatma Gandhi: Non-Violence And Social Equality**

Gandhi’s conception of liberty integrated the principles of non-violence (Ahimsa) and social equality. His understanding of freedom included not only political separation from the British Empire but also social changes like the eradication of untouchability and the advancement of women’s rights. Gandhi’s focus on moral fidelity and peace was idealistic, and he came

under fire for his conservative stance, especially as it related to gender and caste. The emphasis placed on the spirit and social obligation sometimes clashed with the need for social action.

- **Nel Noddings: Care Ethics and Relational Liberty**

Noddings reframed aspects of freedom and equality with her ethics of care by underscoring empathy, emotional upbringing, as well as relational autonomy. She believed that equality is possible only in as much as people are cared for in their communities. Her ethics, however, is critiqued in institutional contexts where efficiency is paramount and social inequalities are largely unaddressed.

- **Mary Wollstonecraft: Rational Liberty and Women's Rights**

Wollstonecraft attempted to emphasize the pursuit of liberty with the help of reason and education, supporting women's rational equality through intellectual and moral growth. She posited that women ought to be given the opportunity to make reasoned choices without patriarchal interference. Nevertheless, her focus on reason as the primary basis for liberty has been criticized for neglecting other kinds of epistemic injustices and not fully considering the class and race effects intersectionality poses on women.

- **Liberty and Equality: Tensions and Synergies**

The analysis of freedom and equality has outstanding differences. Liberty is usually associated with freedom while equality associates with the provision of social services. In the case of Tagore and Gandhi, both of them associated freedom with ethics and social obligation but their passion towards freedom in the social context was one that ignored gender and caste discrimination. Noddings' relational autonomy does shift the responsibility of care to others as a form of citizenship but does not escape the difficulty of how the existing social system can be used to ensure equal rights and social liberty. Wollstonecraft's approach to education as a tool for women emancipation has liberty at its centre and while it is persuasive, it is banal in its approach to freedom.

In summary, the study of liberty and equality in Tagore, Gandhi, Noddings, and Wollstonecraft illustrates the ongoing development in relation to human rights, social justice, and self-governance. While it is clear that all of these philosophers contributed to the discourse concerning freedom and equality, the cultural-historical- philosophical context in which they operated influenced their perspectives, revealing the difficulties around the application of these theories in practice. The gap between personal freedom and social equality remains one of the central concerns in modern politics and philosophy, with each scholar contributing the lens through which the different perspectives of the issues can be viewed, enabling us to understand the more critical dimensions of the problem.

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