

Indian Education Sector and Gandhi's 1942 Movement

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Introduction –

On August 8, 1942, Mahatma Gandhi announced the Quit India Movement. “Do or Dai” was the Slogan of the movement. Freedom first then everything was the aim of this movement. All people of the country were with Gandhi at that time. Students participation was important in this movement. Gandhiji guided the students that freedom first and then everything else. All students, teachers and principals participated in this movement. Gandhiji mobilized people from various communities in the freedom movement through the Satyagrah non-cooperation movement and boycott. He also involved women on a large scale. In the 1942 movement, the role of students as well as educationists became important. These people participated in the movement only because of Gandhiji's guidance.

Use of sources:

Some primary sources have been used to prepare the present research paper. Daily reports police commissioner of Bombay ed. by Dr. A. S. Pathak. Congress bulletin.

Indian Society and Education –

A study medieval India reveals that the ‘Varnashram’ System was widely prevalent here. Only upper class people had the right to get education. The British educated the Indian people to cooperate with the administration. After that the development of education started in India. Many intellectuals contributed to the educational work as a result of which the education sector developed in India. Many educated youths realized their independence and then started participating in the freedom movement.

The present research paper has studied the participation of the students in the movement of 1942 under the guidance of Gandhiji.

Mahatma Gandhi Call to the Nation –

Gandhiji Appealed to the Indian people that “Every man is free to the fullest lengths under “Ahimsa”. Bring about complete deadlock through strikes.

‘Kareng Ya Mareng’ [congress Bulletin 10-8-42]

Message of students -

Give up the schools. Give up the collages. Do not sit at home. Spared yourself in every nook and corner of India. Serve the people. Bring them to your path of freedom.

Gandhi says that – ‘Do or Die’- Must Be Our Slogan

Students, teachers, professor, lawyers, judges Governments servants and all the Sons and Daughters of ENSLAVED India. [congress bulletin]

What have you done to liberate India? As Indians you have been called slaves, of which you must be ashamed. That should prompt you to do something for the liberation of your Motherland.

Student teachers and professor, you are the hope of the enslaved India. Your beloved leaders are behind prison bars, if you, who from the intelligentsia of the masses of India, do not take up the lead at present critical moment to make the present struggle a success, who is going to do it? At such an opportune moment, if you refuse to think to devise methods for the liberation of Motherland and refuse to sacrifice, who is going to do it? Can you conceive of any time when your present and future generation would be able to live in free India and contribute the best that they are capable of to the future progress of the world? Enrich your life by a glorious chapter of efforts and sacrifices to win the independence of India. [Congress bulletin 18-8-42]

Freedom first – Education Next

Bravo – the Bombay students. You have won a moral victory. The principal of collages decided to open the collages last week, while the Senate itself had to dissolve its meeting for political reasons. Now, go ahead with strong picketing and see that no school or college open again till our national struggle is led to victorious conclusion. This is no time for rotten education that is imparted under the yoke of British Imperialism.

EDUCATION CAN WAIT BUT NOT THE FREEDOM

All the collage Halls of other countries which are involved in the present war. Are empty now, as the students are engaged in war activities in their respective countries. Why then the Indian students would our own national struggle for independence has began. Once we have the political power, we can shape the educational system according to our requirements.

We appeal to the professors and Teachers as well to help the students to accomplish this momentous task which the country now demands of them. The professors are the moral and spiritual guides for the patriotic students and intellectual youths. The professors did well in 1920-21 – why not in 1942? The Calcutta university ordered the closing down of all educational institutions till 31st and the situation will again be revived on the 19th August for further decision and action. Students in U.P., C.P., Bihar, Orrisa, Sind, Bengal are playing their part gloriously. [congress bulletin no. 8]

Students participated in the movement in many places in response to Gandhiji's appeal. following are some examples of students and any other persons of education field.

Most of the schools and collages were closed on 10-8-42. Students of the Elphinstone, Sydenham and St. Xavier collages were responsible for acts of hooliganism in the 'Dhobi Talao' area on the morning of the 10th. A corporal of the 7th Ambulance Brigade delivered an anti – British speech to students in the compound over to the Military authorities.

Two students C.D. Jesrani and S. S. Baxi were arrested at Dhobi Talao for assaulting a Tramway Ticket Examiner. `

A crowd of students was dispersed at Dhobhi Talao. It scattered through the lanes nearby and stoned a B.E.S.T. bus at 1st Marine Drive. Another batch pulled the trolley were of a tramcar proceeding along Esplanade Road toward Dhobi Talao, breaking the overhead crosswire.

A few students got into the local train at Marine lines, broke some glass and pulled the alarm chain stopping the train. They pushed passengers out of the train and became unruly. The Railway Police were sent for and they dispersed the students by a lathi charge. posters reading "freedom or Death" should be the 'Motto' were put up at the J. J. School of Art.

Serval students who collected near St. Xavier's Collage, were told by Mrs.NargisBatliwalla to hold a meeting at chupathi in the evening.

Copies of cyclostyled leaflet, issued by 'Arvind Mehata of the Bombay students 'Union, which is controlled by the communists, were distributed among the students.

A few students, including Mrs. Devi S. Dalal were arrested for inciting the borderers of the Wilson Collage to die for their country without minding any consequences. A few students of the Grant Medical Collage Stopped train and bus traffic near the J.J. Hospital. They were chased away.

Students of Ruia and Khalsa collage in the city came out 11 a.m. and proceeded in batches in different directions. Serious trouble followed in the north of city, particularly at Dader and Matunga, where extensive damage was done to Municipal and Railway property, trams and buses were stopped, gas mains, telephones connection and street lights tampered with. The police had to resort to firing to prevent further damage and the curfew order had to be extended to this area. [report of the commissioner of Bombay 11 August 1942]

Conclusion –

In 1942 movement started under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji made this movement widespread by bringing together people from different walks of life. The appeal to the students received a response and a large number of students participated in this movement. Gandhi recognized the importance of professors and involved them in this work.

Reference –

1. congress Bulletin 10-8-42. Edi by Dr. A. S. Pathak
2. congress bulletin 12-8-42.
3. Congress bulletin 18-8-42.
4. congress bulletin no. 8.
5. report of the commissioner of Bombay 11 August 1942.