

The Philosophy of Nelson Mandela for The Reformation of Higher Education

Abstract

Nelson Mandela who has undoubtedly touched people from across the globe. He was a great intellectual of the 20th century, perhaps one of the best social thinkers and reformers that the world has ever seen. His views on every aspect of the individual and social life have profound impact even after century. The Nelson Mandela's ideology carries the integral values for the individual, society, and nation building. The philosophical and educational thoughts of Nelson Mandela are useful in improving the present educational system.

Keywords: Nelson Mandela, Educational Thoughts, Higher Education, Innovation.

Introduction

Mandela was a revolutionary leader who spent almost seven decades of his life in the struggle against white minority rule and for a democratic non-racial society. Nelson Mandela who has undoubtedly touched people from across the globe. He was a great intellectual of the 20th century, perhaps one of the best social thinkers and reformers that the world has ever seen (Meer 1988; Sampson 1999). His views on every aspect of the individual and social life have profound impact even after century. His thoughts and philosophy are highly relevant to the contemporary world, which is suffering from many wicked problems. His ideology focus on the value of education for society and expressed it as, education is an essential right of every person and true education shows right path and paves the direction towards character building and moral grounding.

The Nelson Mandela's ideology carries the integral values for the individual, society, and nation building. The philosophical and educational thoughts of Nelson Mandela are useful in improving the present educational system. Through his words and actions, he also exhibited strong communication skills. Many inspirational properties were reflected in his thoughts and ideology such as, it was in simple, yet expressive language and full of vivid imagery and hope, future positive direction. It was strong, bold and meaningful for society. It was full of persuasive, influential, firm and consistent for the expressions of goals, beliefs and value systems. It was full of honesty and authenticity as Mandela exhibited his own persona and never tried to adopt someone else's style.

Objective of the Study

The objectives of the present research work are: -

1. To analyse the philosophy of the Nelson Mandela in reference to reformation of higher education.
2. To demystify the hidden views of the Nelson Mandela for reformation of higher education.

Review of Literature

Michael Omolewa (2008) examined the question of why Africa has made such slow progress towards the goal of eradicating illiteracy, and why it remains an exceptionally disadvantaged region in this respect. He surveyed the history of the development of literacy in Africa from colonial times to the present day, focusing on the role of adult education in pursuing the goal of universal literacy.

Oppenheim (2012) studied the literatures and biographies of the Nelson Mandela and he revealed that Mandela dedicated his life to fighting for the freedom of his South African kin of all colours against the institution of apartheid. He spent twenty-seven years fighting from within prison, only gaining his freedom when his fellow South Africans could claim it as well. Oppenheim also discussed that how his faith, his spiritual development and his noble purpose can be conceptualised through the lens of Ubuntu: the African ethic of community, unity, humanity and harmony.



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Albina (2016) studied the relevance of educational thoughts of John Dewey to the present educational context: perception of middle school teachers in Sivagangai district. In this study, he sampled the 150 middle school teachers and used a self-made tool to collect the data. He revealed that there is significant difference between male and female middle school teachers with regard to perception on relevance of educational thoughts of John Dewey to the present educational context and its dimension.

Gebremedhin and Joshi (2016) studied the Mandela's thoughts and pronouncements on education and found two major emphases: a view of education as a practical means to economic development, and education as a means to social justice, human rights, and democracy. Assessing the legacy of these twin emphases, they conducted qualitative and quantitative content analysis of turning point documents in education policy and annual reports from the respective South African ministries of education over the last two decades. Their analysis revealed that although a focus on education policy for economic development has consistently remained strong.

Abdi (2017) tried to establish a few observational lines and thematically attached analysis pertaining to the educational formations of Nelson Mandela which he engaged throughout his life. He studied his early and formatively important family education, later complemented by his general schooling and subsequent tertiary education experiences. He pointed out the unique nature of African family-based socialisation systems where children are taught Indigenous ways of enthusiastically and amicably relating to the social and physical environments that surround them in the context of both their immediate and extended family and community locations.

Mngomezulu B.R. (2017) stated that Nelson Mandela's leadership prowess was moulded by informal education and African cultural practices which he obtained when he was still a young boy in the Transkei.

Methodology

The present research work is a type of descriptive research and to accomplish this research work the historical research method was employed. Various data source related to Nelson Mandela were rigorously examined such as various textbooks, research paper, news article written on the Nelson Mandela to find the answers of research problem.

Expression of Philosophy for Higher Education

The educational thoughts of Nelson Mandela highly significant for the improvement of the higher education. Therefore, universities and institutes of higher education can play an important part in fulfilling Nelson Mandela's much-quoted beliefs. As he said "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world". Universities and institutes of higher education can make a contribution in two ways as they are doing, One is empowering individual and second is flowing the generation of knowledge. Empowering individual can create an

intellectual sense among the students and flowing the generation of knowledge can create an endless chain of intellectual people. Both entities are essential component to change the society, nation or world.

The universities and trained people of such institution are able to make a positive contribution to society in various fields. They can produce medical doctors, teachers and engineers; entrepreneurs, artists and scientists. In this way, higher education can change the world by producing the wealth in their country. Furthermore, the educated person can contribute in the nation building as well as to eradicate the poverty. Therefore, further Nelson Mandela said "Education has long been recognised as a route out of poverty for individuals, and as a way of promoting equality of opportunity". Surely, education is solution for the poverty and cause economic upliftment of socially depressed class. Both education and wealth can inculcate the equality in the society, social justice remove the social evils. Therefore Nelson Mandela also said that "... achievement of greater social justice is closely dependent on equitable access by all sections of the population to quality education".

The educational thoughts of Nelson Mandela can be understood as education drive research that generates reliable and relevant knowledge. As our world is facing many wicked problems which are highly complex challenges and whose potential solutions require a creative, interdisciplinary thinking.

Since universities or institutes of higher education are well versed to contribute to the search for solutions to these wicked problems by considering a range of disciplines: environment and climate change, terrorism, conflict management, health, water, food security and social cohesion. Academicians and researchers who are engaged in scientific research, are able to generate new knowledge or solutions to a variety of wicked problems.

The nations who significantly giving attention to the research and development are able to fight the challenges of the modern life and bringing the prosperity and economic flow in their nation. It has been proved by many empirical and theoretical work emphasises that research and development (R&D) is an important contributor to economic growth of the nation and spending on research and development is likely to lead to growth (Romer, 1990; Lucas, 1988). Since innovation is the characteristic of the growing world and innovation can only be proceeded by the quality education or more precisely by research and development. According to Mandela, for growing society or nation, quality education that leads to innovation is an essential entity. In conclusion, the nation who are focusing on innovation will itself dive it for prosperity and expansion.

Conclusion

The philosophy of the Nelson Mandela is relevant to the reformation of current higher education system. Nelson Mandela focused on the growing society that is educated, rational and socially refined, for such cause he suggested to straighten the education system. By straightening the education system every nation can achieve the socio-economic

development as well as ethical development of their citizens.

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