

## **'Role of Education in Maintaining Hegemony and Role of Intellectuals in Challenging it by Formative Schools'**

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**Abstract:** Antonio Gramsci, an Italian thinker had profound contribution in the theories pertaining to creation of intellectuals and hegemony in transforming the society. His idea about hegemony and contemporary situation in Italy is presented in the Prison Notebooks. Gramsci highlighted the notion of creation of intellectuals and how they are constituted and their role on changing the society. For him important is the emergence of intellectuals from the subaltern classes. The role of education in transforming the world is inevitably important and how the newly built policies are making the way to maintain the ruling discourse by the intellectuals is analyzed here. How education and different methods started to reconstruct the worldviews are important to study. School makes people ready to face the world and the process of maintaining the ruling narrative by the capitalist domain is immensely important. The outlook is to study how hegemony is maintained by the agents of changes through education y challenging the realm of domination.

**Keywords:** Domination, Intellectuals, Hegemony, Ruling narrative, Education, Capitalism, Subaltern, Culture.

Antonio Gramsci, the Italian thinker had immense significant contribution in the theories regarding creation of intellectuals and hegemony in transformation of society. Gramsci belonged to South Italy a place called Ales and he was heavily influenced by thinkers like Beneditto Croce and Machiavelli's Prince. Gramsci wrote Prison Notebooks; in Italian it is known as Quaderni where his ideas were depicted about hegemony and the contemporary situation of Italy. During Gramsci's time Italy was not

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unified as North Italy was heavily industrialized and South Italy was agriculturally advanced. Later in 1800 Italy was unified under the leadership of King Count Cavour, the then Prime Minister of Northern Italy and Mazzini Garibaldi was the prime minister of Southern Italy hence the Risorgimento occurred (unification). He could not complete Prison Notebooks due to his ill health.

Gramsci was imprisoned by Mussolini while he was the president of Communist party of Italy and how he was influenced by the works of CPI became significant. Gramsci also created the 'Paris Commune'. He was very keen to analyze that the reason of revolution occurring in semi industrialized country like Russia and not in industrially advanced country like Italy. Here upon he focused on the notions of a strong civil society and gaining of consent through art and culture and family. According to him, the Czarist Russia had a civil society which was in a gelatinous state not in a matured state. For him culture played the greatest role here for which he was known as the theoretician of the superstructure. Gramsci spoke of methods of consolidating hegemony and role of civil society by stressing on war of position which implies that in the countries where the civil society is strong it becomes difficult to destroy that.

The war of manoeuvre implies where civil society is weak, destroying the wall of civil society and attacking the state becomes easy there. He defines hegemony as special situation where a class is moving beyond position of resistance and distant of economic progress. For instance, in India after the economic reforms in 1990s the business classes gained importance which created Neo-hegemony. The non hegemonic classes are always the subaltern class. In the creation of hegemony, the culture and education play a pivotal role.

### **Gramsci's views on Intellectuals and their historical -social functions**

Gramsci talked about emergence of a new class called Intellectuals where all men and women for him are intellectuals who possess the ability to reason including educated and manual laborers like the farmers who possesses the knowledge about farming techniques as knowledge is not restricted to institutions alone. According to Gramsci, intellectuals always do not belong to a specific class and they don't have separate class identity (Gramsci, 1971, p.5). There is the presence of Traditional and Organic intellectuals. Traditional are the ones who perform functions like writers, poets, teachers, doctors. Organic intellectuals are viewed as those who possess the ability to organize and think about people of particular society and bring a new social order. Thinkers like Kautsky presented intellectuals belonging from bourgeois class that provided leadership to peasantry (Gramsci, 1971, p.3). Lenin saw intellectuals as part of communist party and Gramsci opined that intellectuals will be present from subaltern classes and they will have more contribution.

As per Gramsci every social group performs a particular function in economic production

for instance capitalist entrepreneurs like Tata, Ambani, they indulge in creating their own set of intellectuals who possesses technical capacity in their own works (Gramsci,1971, p.5). Intellectuals are also created in companies like Apple by Tim Cook and Microsoft by Bill Gates contributing to a change in consciousness of people and helping in company's growth and with them associated are ruling groups which make it conducive for them. The neo-liberal organization like the World Bank started to give funds and diffuses poverty. Neo- intellectuals are ruling groups who organize the state and the intellectuals aligned with them are pro-market agents. The intellectuals are seen to be of a certain class who created conducive conditions for their own classes. In India the capitalist classes indirectly have control over the government and even in feudalism the feudal lords mostly had capacity, the loss of which led to crisis of feudalism and there was a change in main mode of production.

From the peasantry subaltern classes are presented and ruling groups can take their intellectuals from the subaltern classes who were part of the ruling class but they are ostracized from the society. The intellectuals are seen to be present in historical continuity for instance Brahmins were present in continuity in both East and West, religious ecclesiastics were present who were associated with charity or social welfare services too like Ramakrishna Mission and Ramakrishna Math who are rendering services all over the globe. Even religious heads like Ramdev and Sadh guru also indulged in intellectual hegemonic activities mainly through services like Patanjali and Yoga and also by writing books. These religious groups are seen to be associated with certain group having same legal status. The religious heads are part of the superstructure and are seen to be favoring the ruling class as they cannot exist in a vacuum.

Gramsci says that intellectuals can be divided on the basis of activities in social conditions like capitalist, industrial, feudal or theocratic society. Laborers have certain degree of thought like some creative intelligent activity. Certain importance is given to those who perform professional intellectual activity as someone who can articulate, organize and voice opinions viewing it as hegemony which is created. Organic intellectuals can bring about a change in by articulating and agitating. Intellectuals can belong to any class as they have rationality. Eklavya as a student of Dronacharya, being a part of tribal section was not devoid of talent or intellectual activity so it cannot be said that some class is intellectually more superior, for instance some engineering colleges in India Brahmins are allowed which should not be the case. Gramsci says that every human outside of one's profession carries out intellectual activity which can be in form of writing, painting and thinking. They are seen to be participating in a specific conception of their own world and speak of their power to change the society. The subaltern class can also do this task efficiently.

Development in rural studies is imposed from the west as rural folk has their rural

knowledge rural development needs to be brought about by the rural society. From below new mode of thinking or new strata of intellectuals are emerging. There are numerous problems in creating this as creation of proletariat-based institution is important. The new groups are associated with physical labour and organic intellectuals are important as they bring about ideological change. These new groups are dominant social groups. The need is to assimilate traditional intellectuals of each dominant order. Intellectuals who are associated with labour are also significant and they have to assimilate existing ruling class to ideologically conquer them. For ideological conquest the traditional institutions of petty bourgeoisie class can be converted to subaltern class.

### **Gramsci's important views on Education and role of the intellectuals**

Gramsci gave importance on education and its pivotal role in the creation of intellectuals in the modern world for instance the newspaper. The creation of numerous educational institutions along with new specialization paves the way for more complexities in economic cultural world systems. Schools became the medium through which more specialization is constructed and more hegemony is created. For example, in present time in India, an important case study is analyzed on The National Education Policy of 2020 which constructed more specialization and complexities. The western model of development is considered as the best model to emulate hence importance is given recently on emergence of applications and learning coding. These leads to more hierarchies and some historical processes becomes important like North Italy produces engineers and South Italy produces government officials (Gramsci, 1971, p.12). Intellectuals can belong to any class and provide leadership and they do not have link with economic production. The dominant class exerts control over masses and social consent is gained from them. For the dominant groups consent is taken from the masses and that is termed as historically enjoyed by them. That becomes a part of coercive state apparatus.

Numerous activities and laws are created at high or low levels which may not have connection with production. Urban intellectuals are linked with industrialization and acts as a bridge between people and administration. Every social system is based on knowledge production and urban intellectuals are strongly depended on industries. The city becomes important as their ideas are strongly depended on entrepreneurs. They carry out execution plans and prepared the masses for specialized training for gaining jobs. Rural intellectuals bring about a connection between local people and administration. Rural intellectuals like rural teachers are having different living standards and becomes a model for rural peasantry to emulate, peasants are subordinated to intellectual and respects them but also have resentment against them (Gramsci, 1971, p.14). The traditional intellectuals for the rural peasants it is a model for them to improve their status. Peasant groups do not have much respect in society as the

traditional ones. Important is to analyze how attitude of the peasants are changed towards traditional intellectuals. The subaltern has some resentment against the higher classes and intellectuals enjoy a degree of autonomy.

Gramsci speaks of autonomy which is absent in urban scenario he says that through organic intellectuals they are able to exercise greater political influences. For Lenin there is a linkage between formation of communist party and its role as a platform for organic intellectuals to exercise their influence. Political party is a part of civil society because it has an important role of combining organic and traditional intellectuals relating to idea of consciousness of masses leading to development of integral society. Every member needs to be performing important role to direct and organize masses. Gramsci talks of organic intellectuals as important agent of change and spoke of Modern Prince as a strong influence on them. They organize masses and acts as a pervading tool in terms of principles and for example various news channels and linkage with parties can create strong civil society and bring change.

Various factors influence people among them Dalit literature is significant, important ruling narrative is promoted by coding like White Hat Junior. The Centre for attracting intellectuals can be important as various intellectuals come together and hence can be of cosmopolitan character. In countries like Italy, Russia, India, China, France, America, German various ways of creation of intellectuals are seen by separate identity and influencing other intellectuals. In Italy intellectuals emerged with transformation of slavery to idea of free human beings who comprised the traditional intellectuals. Importance of ruling groups in creating the hegemony is vital. Julius Ceaser implemented the policy of giving citizenship to create cultural organizations.

They will come to Rome to make it the Centre of the civilized world, Rome and Italy creates best intellectuals and creates culture for domination. In India, Kautilya, Akbar's Navratna, Tansen, Birbal forms the cultural centers of domination. In the Christian religion Rome would attract and create new knowledge. How Church is seen to be changing and incorporated science is important. The ideas were spread to other parts of world as well. (Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, Archimedes). In Italy there was a great degree of cosmopolitanism and caused the amalgamation of intellectuals like Leonardo Da Vinci and Marco Polo, these are important cases of cultural domination.

In France, ruling class had a relation with a degree of domination and international radiation had imperialist and hegemonic expansions. In England industrialization landowning class merged with ruling class. In Russia, assimilation of culture is important but Russia did not lose its identity because of intellectually awakened people. Antov Chekov, Lenin, Trautsky influenced Russia. In USA there was cosmopolitanism due to immigration. The intellectuals are mostly from outside but national cultures are present. Various intellectuals can influence and ideas are accumulated and this is the way in which hegemony is exercised. In Asia industrial class is separated from people and

institutions and religion is important to analyze intellectuals. In understanding the subaltern mindset, the study of their fight against exploitation becomes important.

### **Role of education in creation of intellectuals**

Gramsci wrote about reforms brought in Italy which were viewed as really advanced reforms which were sterile and were merely instructions according to education minister Gentile (Gramsci,1971, p.24). The method of rote learning was criticized and focus was on educativity. For Gramsci he was critical of this as these were rhetorical or fake. For him the need was to bring about comprehensive way of learning and education needs to be understood from the perspective of class. The ideology should be embedded in the education system. The active education normalizes exploitation as represented in the film 'Parasite'. Gramsci's personal experiences were important to analyze role of education.

In the Neo liberal market change is essential as Narendra Modi's idea of letting students get practical training and vocational education. Gramsci believed in that education which combats folklore by rationality. Gramsci spoke about the creation of intellectuals from the working class. According to him syllabus reformation was extremely complex but it reflected the reformers consciousness for example history of Mughals or Nehru's ideas is often seen as negative whereas Mahabharata, Vedas, Upanishads are seen in positive light, this is how change is brought by formative process.

### **Education as a system and principle and its transformation**

Education has to be transformative and the complexities of modern era leads to creation of schools like hotel management, Painting schools, Law schools or Business management schools. The provision of creating change becomes important here. Traditional schools are called Humanism schools and specialized schools were there which led to various job like data coding job. In present day there are classical and vocational schools (Gramsci, 1971, p.26). Classical ones is for traditional intellectuals alongside technical schools. Education acts as device for changing consciousness of organic intellectuals leading to revolution. In specialized school's student's life is seen to be predetermined leading to new schools like technical schools, Business schools and NIIT, Fashion designing schools.

Provisions for vocational training and opting out of schools can lead to reinforcement of hierarchies and present knowledge does not equip us with critical thinking. Importance is given to eliminating hierarchies and exit options for vocational education enforces inequalities like higher education is reserved for elite sections. Graded autonomy is also quite important as public funding ensures the quality of higher education and focuses on multi-disciplinary approach.

### **Role of education in maintaining Hegemony**

Every school is a deliberative space and it is also seen in the form of forming the syllabus. The formation of syllabus helps in preparing one for jobs and education becomes pivotal for political or social consciousness (Gramsci, 1971, p.28). The syllabus are framed by people who are experts in this field. The expert's value reflects in the syllabus. The elitist perspective reflects that and other factors are important like industries, finance, houses and banks. The education policies are influencing here job markets. The idea of the dominant class reflects the formation of syllabus hence hegemony is exercised here too. Gramsci mentions that education is important for political understanding and hegemony.

Gramsci points out that each and every newspaper has an editorial board and they work for the creation of hegemony. The ideological consciousness is reflected here. The members are experts and they also lead to certain ideology creation (socialist, Marxist, subaltern). The age when children starts to link themselves with social activity is the school age and the state plays vital role in providing education leading to productivity like Kindergarten (Gramsci, 1971,p.29). Schools make one ready for social activity. The joining age becomes important and economic motive is significant. For economic production it is important to know productivity must be ingrained in society. Schools introduce students to ideas of modernity like rights and duties replacing traditional values, change is from family to school (Gramsci, 1971, p.30).

The traditional idea of society is replaced by modern society. From the family one can get influencing viewpoints. School makes one ready for outer job market. Knowledge from families and school creates various worldviews from young age. The creation of secular mindset is important (communalism or casteism)

School serves as a site for social, political, cultural rights. In terms of collective discipline children learn pre-scholastic attitudes. Schools provide with dogmatic ideas but in college one gets exposed to intellectual self-independence (Gramsci, 1971, p.31). Gramsci stressed on creation of formative schools which induces people with discipline and conformism (Gramsci, 1971, p.32). These schools are homogenous, dynamic and it does not link invention which is not in area of innovation providing originality as opposed to convent schools which are like machines (Gramsci, 1971, p.33). He says that creation of large mindsets are important with hegemonic consciousness. He talks about the creative schools and its importance. Gramsci is of the opinion that intellectuals can bring change by transcending to a higher social system with strong connection with peasantry.

### **The change that is brought about by Formative schools**

According to Gramsci discovery of truth and organic knowledge leads to change in relationship between laborers and industrial workers. The social realities and the process of its work are important and organic intellectuals seen to be transcending to

higher system. The creative schools are bringing about independent thinking without any external guidance. The creation of the intellectuals is important for the subaltern class. According to Gramsci, students are taught natural and social sciences to make them aware about society and the process of nation building and how it fights folkloristic ideas are essential. In the words of Edward Said in *Orientalism*, East is influenced by West as a part of 'Common Sense, same ideas are seen in works of Ashish Nandy's *Intimate Enemy* and is influenced by Foucault too. Common sense is embedded in hegemony and in this way, hegemony works without any coercion and also influenced by Marx where idea of school as a site of knowing dialectic world is viewed. Teaching of natural and social sciences and views are seen to be opposing. The ideas of localism and individualism focused on the transformation to bring about changes. This leads to creation of jobs in certain fields. For Gramsci education and job is most important as a connection of an individual with the outside world.

Laws are important to follow too in terms of regulating lives and consent is gained in this manner. Gramsci followed by social contract theorists and Marx opined that property is created.

The paper is based on descriptive analytical study based on qualitative narrative of analysis. This research questions focuses on the process of education and how it helps the intellectuals to create different viewpoint and how hegemony is exercised throughout the society. The objective is to study how the creative schools are transforming the society comprehensively. Also significant is the constitution of intellectuals and the propagation of ruling discourse through cultural domination.

From the analysis it can be said that through work nature is connected and for him school is a site for dialectic understanding. Cultural knowledge helps to remove hindrances, for Gramsci education introduces oneself to the modern world and induces capitalist systems. As, policies are also changing with time hegemony works in terms of rationality and empiricism. Common sense forms in this way and work can be sustained if different knowledge of natural science and law are obtained. The negative impact of capitalism and how these will be accepted by the people and hegemony will be generated is important to analyze. Schools give avenues for different mindset as conservative or liberals. Creative schools are seen to be bringing about change in society by creating a worldview.

Gramsci said that education must act as a bridge between old and modern era which is projected in the way we study history where some norms are rejected and accepted and that is how hegemony works, because it is distorted and not presented in its real form and significant is to focus on self- analytical formative schools. Hierarchies need to be broken by this keeping in mind that students are active agents of change.

In the concluding section it can be said that the work highlights on how organic intellectuals can bring change through education which maintains hegemony by



countering ruling narrative and where civil society plays vital role. The formative schools have a major role in creation of intellectuals independently countering the ruling discourse.

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